

Kingswood 16th May 2021 _____ *Being prayed for by Jesus!*

Welcome and call to worship – At the end of this Christian aid week we hear Jesus saying he has set us apart – sanctified us – he has a special role for his followers, and he gives the Holy Spirit to enable us to follow his example – we celebrate this at our Confirmation, but Jesus remains with us by his Spirit always – (Heather is to be Confirmed today)

Singing the Faith 689 Summoned by the God who made us.

Prayers of adoration and confession – faithful God, you fulfilled the promise of Easter by sending your Holy Spirit and opening the way of eternal life to all the human race. Keep us in the unity of your Spirit that every tongue may tell of your glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit; one God now and for ever. **Amen.**

Gracious and holy God we confess that we have sinned against you and against our neighbour your Spirit gives light, but we have preferred darkness; your Spirit gives wisdom, but we have been foolish; your Spirit gives power, but we have trusted in our own strength. For the sake of Jesus Christ your Son forgive our sins and enable us by your Spirit to serve you in joyful obedience, to the glory of your Name. Amen. There is now no condemnation for those who live in union with Christ Jesus for the law of the Spirit of life has set us free from the law of sin and death. **Amen.**

Thanks be to God.

Confirmation

Reading – John 17:6-19

Message

Despite the difficulties and problems that people face, there are many joys in this life – and one of them is when someone says they will pray for you – even more wonderful when they pray there and then! So, imagine how deeply encouraging it was for the disciples when Jesus prayed this prayer for them. Jesus' greatest desire was for his friends to stay together – so he prayed for protection of that unity for them. He didn't pray that they would be kept out of all the difficulties of the world but that they would have each other – together they would be able to carry out the plans he had for them.

You here are also Jesus' disciples – this prayer that he prays is for you too. Jesus prays to his Father in heaven specifically for you – he even says that this prayer isn't for the world, but for those who follow him. What a joy to know Jesus praying for you. He is encouraging you as he says, "glory has come to me because of my disciples". Hear that – not only during those few years in Palestine was he glorified by his disciples but all down the ages since then the followers of Jesus have been the source of glorification of the one they follow.

And this is because they – we – have taken seriously his commission of us – Jesus calls it "sanctifying" – which means being set apart for a special role. And as we have been hearing the last couple of weeks – Jesus like the vine chooses the 'branches', calls them his friends and enables them to produce fruit. And as his followers remain connected to him the fruit of love and joy and peace, of patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, and faithfulness and even self-control – displaying this fruit gives glory to Jesus.

And all this depends on unity, for each branch in a vine is part of one vine – each brother or sister of Jesus is a brother or sister to each other. Today we are celebrating as Heather receives the confirmation by the Holy Spirit of her belonging in this unity. And also we are reminded that for each of us, out of our unity comes opportunity. So, as you go into the week ahead – hold the joy of having had Jesus pray for you in your heart – and then share it as you let him direct your actions to be the ones that will glorify him! Look out for the good and affirm it; do a random act of kindness each day; or maybe just be a bit more patient than usual!

We can do this – together - and by God's Spirit! **Amen**

Singing the Faith – 588 I come with joy a child of God.

Prayers for others - prayers from Christian Aid 2021

Our souls sing out a joyful song, our souls sing out how great thou art. We consider the works you have made, the stars of the night, the leaves of the trees The birds of the air the oceans and streams.

Our souls sing out a mournful song, our souls grieve before our God. We consider the works our hands have made; The warming of the planet, the rising of seas The wilting of the harvest, devastating communities.

Our souls sing out a contrite song. Our souls bow down low. We regret the works our hands have made; The impact on the poorest, the livelihoods lost, the deepening of poverty, the environmental and human cost.

Our souls sing out a penitent song, our souls turn back to what is right. We consider the good works our hands can make; The words of justice we can speak, the acts of love we can give, the hand of solidarity we can extend, for others to fully live.

Our souls sing out a hopeful song. Our souls look to the Lord, where our hope comes from, We consider the works you call us to; the love of our neighbour, the stewardship of the earth The flourishing of all creation, the wonder of its worth. (Christian Aid/ Jess Hall)

Christian Aid Week Prayer

Great God, Who makes the sun to rise, and opens the heavens Hear the cry of the people Who sow in hope for rain, but reap only despair Hear the cry of the people Seeking shelter from the storm, their hopes and homes submerged Hear the cry of the people, When creation is hitting back, with rage and resistance Give us hope, grant us salvation, Give us a new relationship with creation With reverence to tend this gift from You And say once again of the earth and all you created, It is GOOD. (Bob Kikuyu Global Theology Advisor, Christian Aid) *The Lord's prayer*

Sing – 675 because the Saviour prayed that we be one

Blessing – the Spirit of truth lead you into all truth, give you grace to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord and to proclaim the word and works of God – and the blessing of God: Spirit, Son and Father remain with you always. **Amen**

We go into the world in the power of the Spirit to fulfil our high calling as friends of Christ Jesus. **Amen.**