

Whare karakia

Home prayers

29 March 2020

John 11:17-44

Lent 5: Normality

We realize life is a bit different for all of us right now but nonetheless we worship a God who stays the same through every age and season, and is our constant guide. So, like the first disciples we are imagining church in a new way and invite you to 'worship through' the following liturgy on your own or with your family this Sunday 29 March at 10am, from your home. Get yourself a cup of tea and join the community in spirit as we worship from our homes, but with one voice and with one heart!

Let it Go

Lent 5: Normality

Sharing: Name what it is that used to be your normal life and is no more – what have we lost?

From Learne: On Wednesday morning we had about 14 hours to go before lockdown and I started to watch a musical post on youtube. Singers and musicians from all around the world had produced a performance of a popular 70's hit song and when it started the tears welled up and within seconds I was sobbing and could not stop. What was happening? Grief that's what. Grief is loss and it shows up in so many different ways. We have all lost what was our normal life so we may as well let it go as our Lenten theme calls us to do. As we let it go we are grieving and that is what all these emotions are about.

Opening Prayer

Today we gather from different homes to meet with God.

Let us take notice of God's presence with us.

God you are the rising sun in the morning and the evening moon at dusk.

May we know your constancy in this season as we let go of our own patterns of life.

May our faith in you be our normality forevermore.

Amen.

Confession

God of healing,
God of wholeness,
this precious moment
in your presence and power
grant us faith and confidence
that here broken lives
are made whole.

Absolution

May the God of love bring us back to himself,
Forgive us our sins,
And assure us of his eternal love
In Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Song

I love you Lord, and I lift my voice
To worship you, oh my soul rejoice
Take joy my king, in what You hear
Let it be a sweet sweet sound in your ear

Bible Story

John 11:17-44

Take a moment to silently reflect on our reading for today.



CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

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Reflection: From Learne

When he saw and heard the wailing and weeping over the death of Lazarus “Jesus wept”. I am so bold as to say that right now Jesus is weeping. Weeping at the pain and fear that people are experiencing as they grieve over the death of so many people in the world, but also as we grieve over the way this invisible tiny microscopic thing has robbed us of our normal lives. We don’t normally feel like this all the time. We don’t normally live like this all the time. For now the new normal is grief and fear and uncertainty as we have lost normality; and economic certainty; and social engagement; and physical touch with those outside of our bubble and for some of us that means total lack of touch; and freedom to live how we once lived.

In the Lazarus story we see people overwhelmed (know that feeling?) and Jesus breaks through their grief and breaks the power of death right in that moment by raising Lazarus from the dead – I know it’s hard to get our heads around that one but if God is only allowed to do what my puny mind can get its head around that possibly makes God a puny God...but I digress. Jesus calls Lazarus out of the tomb and says to his friends and family take off the grave clothes and let him go. This is always the good news of Jesus Christ – now maybe more than ever we need to hold onto what our God offers us (and find a way to offer it to others) that our normal from last week can be replaced by the goodness of Jesus and the peace that passes understanding and connectedness in Christ as we live through this new normal for a season. Don’t let the new normal be fear. “Perfect love casts out fear’ and in Jesus we see perfect love.

Intercessions

In our prayers today, we put all our thoughts and worries and hopes into the hands of God. You may like to hold your own hands in front of you as you pray. Create your own prayers for each of the headings below:



The World



The Church



Communities



Sickness



Sorry God

Questions to ponder

- In letting go of what was normal consider what can you embrace in the new normal?
- What can you do to ‘touch’ someone with love and care?

Response Activity

Light a candle if you haven’t already and maybe play some quiet music, you may even like to lie down!

Take three deep deep breaths

As you continue to breathe in and out slowly allow the stillness to soak into us.

We breathe in faith and breathe out thanksgiving.

We breathe in the love of God and breathe out our fear.

We close our eyes, or let them rest gently on the candle.

We take our time resting in the One who holds us.

Closing Prayer

God of hope, in you we see a life that never dies.

Surrounded by death and fear and uncertainty may we never give in to despair,
but rest in you our resurrection and our life,

in the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen

If you are in need of support (prayer or otherwise) please contact us:
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