Easter 6 Service

Welcome:

We meet in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit

**Amen**.

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you

**and also with you.**

This is the day that the Lord has made

**let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

Alleluia, Christ is risen

**He is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

Today we are celebrating Christian Aid Week. Like many church activities at the moment, Christian Aid Week is being managed differently and digitally this year. But the need is still the same, arguably greater in this time of global pandemic. As we remember those less fortunate than ourselves, may our shared experience unite us in praise and prayer as one family, separate but together in the home that is God’s world.

Opening hymn: Blessed be your name

Blessed be Your name

In the land that is plentiful

Where Your streams of abundance flow

Blessed be Your name

Blessed be Your name

When I’m found in the desert place

Though I walk through the wilderness

Blessed be Your name

*Every blessing You pour out*

*I’ll turn back to praise*

*When the darkness closes in*

*Lord, still I will say*

*Blessed be the name of the Lord*

*Blessed be Your name*

*Blessed be the name of the Lord*

*Blessed be Your glorious name*

Blessed be Your name

When the sun’s shining down on me

When the world’s all that it should be

Blessed be Your name.

Blessed be Your name

On the road marked with suffering

Though there’s pain in the offering

Blessed be Your name

*Every blessing You pour out*

*I’ll turn back to praise*

*When the darkness closes in*

*Lord, still I will say*

*Blessed be the name of the Lord*

*Blessed be Your name*

*Blessed be the name of the Lord*

*Blessed be Your glorious name*

You give and take away

You give and take away

My heart will choose to say

Lord, blessed be Your name

*(Repeat)*

*Blessed be the name of the Lord*

*Blessed be Your name*

*Blessed be the name of the Lord*

*Blessed be Your glorious name*

Confession:

We come to God aware of our need to be washed clean;

to have pure hearts as well as clean hands.

(*You may wish to have a bowl, a jug of water, some soap and a towel to hand).*

David prayed ‘Cleanse me and I shall be clean; wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.’

**As we pour this water into this bowl**

**Pour your Holy Spirit into our hearts.**

**As we wet our hands,**

**renew our thoughts,  
so we might be transformed.**

**As we lather soap over all our hands,**

**purge from us all that brings harm to us and others.**

**Remove the invisible guilt and shame  
that so often keeps us from you.**

**As we rinse our hands,**

**we trust in your overflowing grace,**

**making all things new. Amen.**

May the God of all holiness

Forgive us our sins and cleanse us of all unrighteousness

through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Reading: Mark 4:26-29

Getting our hands dirty:

Hymn: What a friend we have in Jesus

What a friend we have in Jesus

All our sins and griefs to bear!

What a privilege to carry

Everything to God in prayer!

O what peace we often forfeit,

O what needless pain we bear –

All because we do not carry

Everything to God in prayer!

Have we trials and temptations?

Is there trouble anywhere?

We should never be discouraged:

Take it to the Lord in prayer!

Can we find a friend so faithful,

Who will all our sorrows share?

Jesus knows our every weakness –

Take it to the Lord in prayer!

*What a friend we have in Jesus*

*What a friend we have in Him*

*For He knows us and He holds us in His hands*

*And His grace is never failing*

*And His love without an end*

*What a friend we have in Jesus*

*What a friend we have in Him*

Blessed Saviour You have promised

You will all our burdens bear

May we ever Lord be bringing

All to You in earnest prayer.

Soon in glory bright unclouded

There will be no need for prayer

Rapture, praise and endless worship

Will be our sweet portion there.

*What a friend we have in Jesus*

*What a friend we have in Him*

*For He knows us and He holds us in His hands*

*And His grace is never failing*

*And His love without an end*

*What a friend we have in Jesus*

*What a friend we have in Him*

Reading: 2 Cor. 9:6-11

Address:

Chorus: Be still

Be still for the presence of the Lord,

The Holy One is here;

Come bow before Him now

With reverence and fear:

In Him no sin is found –

We stand on holy ground.

Be still for the presence of the Lord,

The Holy One is here.

Be still for the glory of the Lord

Is shining all around;

He burns with holy fire,

With splendour He is crowned:

How awesome is the sight –

Our radiant King of light!

Be still for the glory of the Lord

Is shining all around.

Be still for the power of the Lord

Is moving in this place.

He comes to cleanse and heal,

To minister His grace –

No work too hard for Him,

In faith receive from Him.

Be still for the power of the Lord

Is moving in this place.

Prayers:

Look at your hands. Have a good look.

However your hands look to you, they are most certainly clean in these days of regular hand washing to prevent the spread of coronavirus.

Our hands really are the most remarkable and useful tools, involved in so much of what we do and how we do things, even in these days of social distancing.

Our hands have become even more significant in these days of physical distancing.

We might long to hold the hand of a person we can no longer touch.

We pray for the hands of medics to bring healing and comfort.

We are grateful for hands stacking shelves and delivering groceries and post.

And we are extra wary of everything our hands touch that comes from outside our home.

This Christian Aid Week we also think of how our hands can be far from idle. Though not handing out envelopes or hosting Big Breakfasts or the many things we usually busy ourselves with this week, our hands can still reach out virtually to our neighbours around the world.

Neighbours in refugee camps and cramped living conditions, neighbours without adequate hand-washing facilities, neighbours who face the devastating impact of coronavirus with even less of the medical resources we have struggled with here.

We reach out by clasping our hands together in prayer for our neighbours, and holding our hands open before God as we declare our needs and concerns for their wellbeing and ours.

Let us pray together using our open hands.

God our refuge, we come to you with open hands,  
some of us with hearts full of questions,  
some of us bruised by bereavement,  
some of us fearful of what the future holds,  
all of us stunned by the events of this year.

Draw close to us now in each of our homes  
as we place our honest questions and hopes into your open,

resurrected, yet scarred hands.

*(Hold your index finger and, in silence, ask the question that most burdens your heart or simply sit in silence before God. Hold the silence together.)*

God in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Hear the cry of our hearts, Lord, silent and aloud,  
for bereaved neighbours, near and far.

Comfort those pained by being absent,

and hold close those who are hurting alone.

*(Hold your ring finger and pray for comfort for those you know who are bereaved or simply sit in silence before God. Hold the silence together.)*

God in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

In this season of Easter,  
renew us with resurrection hope  
that while weeping lingers in this night,

joy will come with the morning.

*(Hold your middle finger and in the silence tell God what you are most looking forward to in the future or simply sit in silence before God. Hold the silence together.)*

God in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

On this Christian Aid Week Sunday,

we pray for and with communities across the world who are  
most vulnerable to coronavirus.

We pray for people living in refugee camps and city slums,  
with limited sanitation facilities,  
who are unable to wash their hands regularly,

and have little opportunity to isolate from others.

We pray for Christian Aid partners  
working to provide soap and buckets,

communicating clear, accurate information,

raising the voices of the most vulnerable  
and ensuring they are kept as safe as possible.

*(Hold your thumb as you pray for the most vulnerable, those closest to God’s heart, or  
simply sit in silence before God. Hold the silence together.)*

God in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

For those of us who are self-isolating,

which can sometimes feel like we aren’t doing anything,  
remind us that we are all doing our part,  
and saving lives by staying at home.

*(Hold your little finger and ask God for what you need, or simply sit in silence*

*before God. Hold the silence together.)*

God in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for much wisdom and resources

for those in local and national authority  
for all frontline and key workers  
here in Britain, Ireland and across the world.

*(Put your hands together and pray for the many frontline workers and volunteers and for Christian Aid partners working to help others across the world, or simply sit in silence before God)*

God in your mercy, **hear all our prayers. Amen.**

We draw our prayers to a close with the prayer our Lord taught us:

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.**

**Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses**

**as we forgive those who trespass against us**

**And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil**

**For thine is the kingdom the power and the glory**

**for ever and ever. Amen.**

Closing Hymn: Be thou my vision

Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart

Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art –

Thou my best thought, by day or by night,

Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light.

Be Thou my wisdom and Thou my true word

I ever with thee and Thou with me Lord

Thou my great Father and I Thy true son

Thou in me dwelling and I with Thee one

Be Thou my battle shield, sword for the fight

Be Thou my dignity, Thou my delight

Thou my soul’s shelter, Thou my high tower

Raise Thou me heavenward O Power of my power

Riches I heed not, nor man’s empty praise

Thou mine inheritance now and always

Thou and Thou only First in my heart

High King of heaven, my treasure Thou art

High King of heaven, my victory won

May I reach heaven’s joy, O bright Heaven’s Sun

Heart of my own heart, whatever befall.

Still be my vision O Ruler of all.

Blessing:

May the presence of the Creator refresh you,

may the comfort of the Son renew you,  
may the inspiration of the Spirit restore you

to be love in action, even from a distance,

in our neighbourhoods, near and far,

this day and for evermore. **Amen.**

If you wish to make a donation to Christian Aid, you can do so online at **caweek.org/payin**