

# A LITURGY FOR HOME - PENTECOST V

*When life's circumstances prevent us from attending Church.*

## THE GATHERING

*A candle may be lit as a reminder that God is present in our midst.*

## THE OPENING ACCLAMATION & COLLECT

*Leader* Holy God, you are always with us.

*People* **Open our eyes to your presence.**

*Leader* God's power working in us.

*People* **Can do more than we can ask or imagine: Glory to God!**

*Leader* Let us pray

Father, Lord of heaven and earth, by whose gracious will the mysteries of the kingdom are revealed to the childlike, make us learn from your Son humility of heart, that in shouldering his yoke we may find refreshment and rest. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

*People* **Amen.**

## A WORD OF SCRIPTURE

*Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30*

*Reader* A reading from the gospel of Matthew

Jesus said, to the crowd, "To what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to one another, 'We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not mourn.' For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon'; the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds." At that time Jesus said, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

*Reader* The Word of the Lord.

*People* **Thanks be to God.**

## REFLECTION

- “Come to me, all you who are weary, and are heavy laden,” he says, and maybe he means those who are weary of being judgmental and are just done with it all. Or maybe he means those who are weary of being judged, of being picked apart for falling short. Maybe he means those who are weary of having all the answers, or maybe he means those who are weary of not knowing, who just want to know one thing—just one thing, Jesus. Let one thing be sure. I will give you rest. There’s the one thing, the one thing that is sure. It’s a promise. *Diane Roth*
- Do you hear the invitation from Jesus? "Come to me, all..." I picture the open arms of our Savior reaching out to hug and gather in everyone. Those who are invited are not the powerful and successful. Instead this invitation is for those who are "weary and carrying heavy burdens." We are all the invited ones today as we continue to struggle with the exile experience of our journey with the coronavirus. In a time when social distancing tells us to keep six feet away, there is this beautiful picture of Jesus reaching out to give us a big hug and to welcome us into his arms. For our weariness, Jesus offers rest. I need that picture of Jesus right now. Don't you? *The Rev. Dr. David Hull*
- In these frightening days of a global pandemic, we need to be reminded of what God does for us. The message is very simple. In our pain, weariness, anger, fear, and anxiety, God welcomes us and promises to give us rest. In our confusion, despair, impatience, and distraction, God guides us and teaches us the way of life. This good news does not take our struggles away. But we can find hope in the fact that the arms of Almighty God are lovingly placed around our necks. *The Rev. Dr. David Hull*
- This teaching is freeing; it lightens burdens of oppression. This is the opposite of what some religious leaders of Jesus' day do: "They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on the shoulders of others; but they themselves are unwilling to lift a finger to move them." (Matthew 23:4). By contrast, disciples of Jesus are yoked with him and with one another, intent on lifting the weight born of injustice from the backs of those who are downtrodden. *Barbara Reid, OP*
- Oh yes, perhaps what Jesus urges us to now is to allow ourselves to dance when we hear the music and to grieve when our hearts are broken and through it all to know that a place of rest and peace and hope is always ours to return to. And perhaps if I only lived my life fully engaged in the world, that alone would be powerful witness to those who can't seem to hear the music anymore. *The Rev. Dr Janet Hunt*

## QUESTIONS TO PONDER

- √ Do you suppose that the 'rest' Jesus offers now can be experienced especially as I seek to take Jesus' yoke upon me? And do you suppose that to take Jesus' yoke upon me is to simply engage those I encounter in the world who don't seem to hear the music in the very way that Jesus did?
- √ What does it mean to you to take Jesus' yoke upon you? How do you seek to do so?
- √ How do you think we are called to respond to 'this generation' now?
- √ In the midst of this upside-down world, in the midst of blatant racism, in the midst of COVID 19, death and dying, Is the promise of Jesus' yoke make any difference in you life?

## RESPONSE

*Adapted from the Sisters of Mercy*

*Leader* We offer our prayers to you O God of Life, you created all people as one family and call us to live together in harmony and peace; surround us with your love as we face the challenges and tragedies of this present time.

*Silence may be kept.*

*Intercessor* In this time of bewilderment and fear, we ask you to give us the courage to take care of one another as Jesus did. For those who are ill, especially those who are frightened and alone, for those who cannot access healthcare, for those who are homeless and lost; Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

In the midst of our sadness and grief, we ask you to give us words to comfort one another. For those who are dying, and for those who have already died from this virus, for those who care for them and for those with no one to care for them. Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

In the midst of our own anxiety, we ask for the courage to support one another as you would. For those who are poor, hungry, and homeless; for those who have lost their employment; those who fear the present and the future; for our government and financial institutions and those who lead them; Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

In the midst of our brokenness, we pray that the peace of the risen Christ may heal the wounds of all victims of injustice, exploitation, prejudice, hatred and racism. We pray for our nation to stand up and do the work of uniting us, not dividing us. Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

In the midst of your compassion, you surround us with your yoke of comfort. As we remember the gift of our freedom as a nation, may we strive to be people of justice for all. Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

In the midst of our struggle to ensure a healthy future for all people, we ask you to give us the hope that surpasses our current understanding. For healthcare workers, spiritual leaders and our faith communities, for artists and poets, for prophets and teachers; Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

*Silence may be kept*

*Leader* Gathering our prayers and praises together, we are bold to say:

*People* 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, and the power, and the glory,  
for ever and ever. Amen.

CONCLUDING COLLECTS

*Leader* O God, you have taught us to keep all your commandments by loving you and our neighbor: Grant us the grace of your Holy Spirit, that we may be devoted to you with our whole heart, and united to one another with pure affection; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

*People* Amen.

*A Collect for the Elimination of Racism*

*Leader* Good and gracious God, you invite us to recognize and reverence your divine image and likeness in our neighbor. Enable us to see the reality of racism and free us to challenge and uproot it from our society, our world and ourselves. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

*People* Amen.

*The Rev. Dr Sam Wells*

*Leader* God of healing and hope, in Jesus you meet us in our places of pain and fear. Look with mercy on those who have contracted the coronavirus, on any who are vulnerable, and on all who feel in danger. Through this time

of global concern, by your Holy Spirit bring out the best not the worst in us. Make us more aware of our interdependence on each other, and of the strength that comes from being one body in you. Through Christ our wounded healer.

*People* **Amen.**

*Leader* Let us bless the Lord.

*People* **Thanks be to God.**

*Leader* Go out into the world in peace; have courage; hold onto what is good; return no one evil for evil; strengthen the faint hearted; support the weak, and help the suffering; honor all people; love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

*People* **Amen.**

