

We pray for places that are devoid of love, where torture, abuse and war is all that is known. For those who are on their own, separated from loved ones, some too afraid or too proud to reach out to others, who do not have enough food, are unable to pay their bills and who face an uncertain future.

We pray for those places who are coming out of lockdown that the virus does not rise up and spread again, that we may be safe and remember those who are still unable to leave their homes and to help where we can.

We pray, also, for people on our hearts whom need your life giving grace and so we lift them silently up to you now.....

We pray for your love to enfold them, your peace to calm them and your healing to transform them.

Lord in your mercy.....

**Hear our prayer.**

God of Glory we worship you with all creation. We worship you with the sun and the stars, all land, sea and sky, all that grows and moves, all that is still and reflective, all that breathes. Merciful Father, accept these prayers, on behalf of others, and we ask this in the name of Jesus. **Amen.**

**Hymn STF 447 Jesus be the centre**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pw6rlwmkV6E>

Jesus, be the centre  
be my source,  
be my light - Jesus.

Jesus, be the centre  
be my hope,  
be my song - Jesus.

*Be the fire in my heart  
be the wind in these sails;  
Be the reason that I live,  
Jesus.*

Jesus, be the centre  
be my source,  
be my light - Jesus.

Michael Frye © 1999 Vineyard Songs  
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### **Blessing and Benediction**

May God deliver you from all that would hurt you; May Christ Jesus calm all that would frighten you; and may the Holy Spirit sustain you in patience and genuine love.

May the blessing of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be among us and remain with us always. Amen.

**Bless the Lord O my Soul**  
*(played by Olivia Maddox)*

Join us for Coffee & Chat,  
on the phone by dialing  
**02203 481 5240**  
Meeting ID: **878 0011 0669 #**  
Participants ID: #  
Password: **336542 #**



**‘Father’s day - “The Parable of the Lost Son”’**  
Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2020 12<sup>th</sup> in Ordinary  
Rev. Nico Hilmy-Jones & Rev. Debbie Poole.  
*This short act of worship has been prepared for you to use as you are unable to attend church. If you are well enough why not spend a few moments with God, knowing that other people are sharing this act of worship with you.*

### **Welcome and The Lighting of the Candle**

#### **Call to Worship**

We gather together to worship, knowing that God is already here among us; knowing that there is nothing that separates us from the presence of our Lord. Wherever we are, wherever we go, God is near. So let us enter into this service of worship with confidence and hope, knowing that God is already with us, and that he stands eager to meet us and bless us with his love. Amen.

#### **Hymn STF 351 In Christ alone**

*Keith Getty (b.1974) & Stuart Townend (b. 1963)*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kPv4vnW6X-Q>

**In Christ alone** my hope is found, He is my light, my strength, my song; This Cornerstone, this solid Ground, Firm through the fiercest drought and storm. What heights of love, what depths of peace, When fears are stilled, when strivings cease! My Comforter, my All in All, Here in the love of Christ I stand.

In Christ alone! - who took on flesh, fullness of God in helpless babe. This gift of love and righteousness, scorned by the ones He came to save: till on that cross as Jesus died, the wrath of God was satisfied - for every sin on Him was laid; here in the death of Christ I live.

There in the ground His body lay, light of the world by darkness slain: then bursting forth in glorious day up from the grave He rose again! And as He stands in victory sin’s curse has lost its grip on me, for I am his and he is mine - bought with the precious blood of Christ.

No guilt in life, no fear in death, this is the power of Christ in me; from life’s first cry to final breath, Jesus commands my destiny. No power of hell, no scheme of man, can ever pluck me from His hand: till He returns or calls me home, here in the power of Christ I’ll stand.

*Stuart Townend (born 1963) and Keith Getty (born 1974)*  
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**Opening Prayer**, *written by the Maddox Family (Olivia Maddox)*

*Hello from our table here in Trinity. Welcome to our celebration. Let us pray.*

Dear Lord our God, thank you for allowing us to still gather together and worship you as a community. This just shows that wherever we are and whatever happens to us, you cannot be separated from us. Because, Jesus says, whenever two or three are gathered in my name, I am in the midst. And this is so even in these testing times in a virtual environment.

Help us to put aside the busy and challenging week and be thoughtful in your presence

And as we consider the story of the Prodigal son and Father's Day, Thank you for the fathers on earth that guide us.

Lord, help us to make good choices. Help us to listen to you and do what Jesus would do. Thank you for your forgiveness when we make wrong choices. Thank you that your door is always open. Thank you that your arms are always welcoming. Thank you for your love and for taking us back when we come home to you. Amen.

**The Lord's Prayer**  
*(Jasper Maddox)*

**Reflection on Lockdown and Testimony** *(Olivia Maddox)*

**Luke 15:11-32**  
*(Jasper and Olivia Maddox)*

**The Parable of the Lost Son**

11 Jesus continued: "There was a man who had two sons. 12 The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them. 13 "Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living.

14 After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. 15 So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. 16 He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

17 "When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! 18 I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. 19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.'

your values, in the world. We pray that in Churches divided by animosities and in fighting, that they may be made whole again and live as Spirit-led houses of God.

**God of power**, we pray for those who have authority and influence in our world; that they are not easily led, often against their conscience, to do the wrong thing. We pray for a re-aligning of right values and a reawakening of mutual respect and trust that seems to be lacking in Government systems that care more for themselves than the people whom they are serving.

**God of kindness**, watch over our homes and families, our friends and neighbours; those whom are near us and those whom are far away from us. We pray especially for our Father's today, that you will protect and guide fathers everywhere; that You will grant them Your wisdom in loving and teaching their children. For fathers who are young and just beginning. For fathers who are older and who have sometimes found the way hard. For fathers whose children do not have enough food to eat, that they may not lose hope. We pray also for those without fathers, those whom have been hurt by their fathers and those whom struggle in their relationships with their fathers.

We ask that through the storms and difficulties of life that You offer peace and calmness and care for all people whom are struggling and at odds with one another.

**God of compassion**, we pray for those who need your healing grace as they face great difficulties in their life.

We pray especially for those people and places that are divided and at odds with one another. For those who feel de-valued and trodden upon due to systems that do not honour and recognise all people as equal. For those who are protesting for change and finding themselves treated unfairly where peaceful ways sometimes turn into violent encounters and those who are fighting for the rights of others are seen as enemies and they are unheard amongst all the noise.

We pray for those who live in fear based on the colour of their skin or their ethnicity and that through the struggle and hardships, positive change and reconciliation may occur. We pray for those who are ill and who do not have proper health care, especially those who are affected by Covid-19 who are very ill, alone and in hospitals trying to stay alive, and especially for those who have lost loved ones during this most difficult time.

embracing us with his unfailing love.

Jesus told this story, because he understood how complicated our lives can be, and how much we all need to belong and feel loved. He came to show that love, and often said that if people had seen him, they had seen his Father. God had to watch his son die, with his arms spread wide on the cross to love the world. God understands how we feel and is the only one who can. He loves us as we go through the process. God's love even overcame death, and when Jesus was raised to new life, there was such a celebration. He offers that gift of love and life to us all, and Jesus gives us his spirit to help and guide us, through all the up's and downs of life.

Whatever you find yourself experiencing today, know you are not alone, you are part of a worldwide family, and you have a Father in God who loves you and who values you and your love, more than you can ever know. Spend a little time with Him today, and follow Jesus' example, and when life gets tough, be brave and ask for help! Remember, the one who has the Son has it all!

*(Note: The Book referred to in the above is called: The Boy, the mole, the fox and the horse'. It's by Charlie Mackesy and published by Penguin)*

## A time to be still:

**STF 636 O love that wilt not**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nt69WdtYNLo>

O Love that will not let me go,  
I rest my weary soul in thee;  
I give thee back the life I owe,  
that in thine ocean depths its flow  
may richer, fuller be.

O Light that followest all my way,  
I yield my flick'ring torch to thee;  
my heart restores its borrowed ray,  
that in thy sunshine's blaze its day  
may brighter, fairer be.

O Joy that seekest me through pain,  
I cannot close my heart to thee:  
I trace the rainbow through the rain,  
and feel the promise is not vain,  
that morn shall tearless be.

O Cross that liftest up my head,  
I dare not ask to fly from thee:  
I lay in dust life's glory dead,  
and from the ground there blossoms red  
life that shall endless be.

George Matheson (1842-1906)  
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## A visit to MCH Stuart Court with their interviews.

### Prayers of Intercession

Let us pray.....

**God of truth**, we pray that your Church may be a place of refuge for all those in need. May the Church reflect your nature and your will and may it always model

20 So he got up and went to his father. "But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

21 "The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

22 "But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. 23 Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. 24 For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate.

25 "Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. 26 So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. 27 'Your brother has come,' he replied, 'and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.' 28 "The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. 29 But he answered his father, 'Look! All these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders.

Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. 30 But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!'

31 "'My son,' the father said, 'you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. 32 But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.'" Amen.

### Time to Reflect:

*Revd Debbie Poole*

I'd like to tell you a story, its about an old Man called Martin, and his Son Mark. Martin was an accomplished artist, and he was also immensely proud of his valuable art collection. However, he was even more proud of his son, who was already showing great promise as an artist, with an eye for colour and detail. War broke out and Mark signed up and was posted overseas. Sadly, one day Martin received the dreaded telegram, giving him the news that Mark had died, rescuing another soldier. It was the week before Christmas and the old man fell into a deep depression. The usual joy and excitement gave way to grief and hopelessness.

Then on Christmas afternoon there was a knock on the door. It was a friend of Mark's; he had come to see Martin and to tell him that Mark had saved his life and the lives of many others. He also brought a parcel. It was a painting of Mark, that this young soldier had done. It wasn't particularly good, but there was a likeness, and Martin hung it over the mantle piece where it had pride of place. It helped him feel that Mark was close.

Many years later, the old man died. The art dealers were buzzing with excitement as they knew there were many valuable paintings in the auction. Martin left strict instructions that the auction should take place on Christmas afternoon. Many of the dealers were not happy at leaving the celebrations and their families but they were eager to get what they could. The first lot was the painting of Mark, however, because it wasn't very good, no-one wanted it. The auctioneer said, will no-one give me £50, £20, £10 for it? A Hand went up at the back, it was one of the villagers who had known Martin and Mark and had come along for the warmth and the company, as he had no family. 'I would love to have the painting', he said:

'but I only have £5. The auctioneer agreed he would take the bid of £5 and the gavel went down.

Then, the Auctioneer started clearing everything away. The dealers got incredibly angry: 'what are you doing?' they said: 'we don't want to have to come back again, we have left our homes and families to be here today'. The Auctioneer smiled and said: Martin left strict instructions in his will, he said: 'The one who has the son, has it all!' So, the poor lonely villager, inherited the whole collection, by giving his £5 for the painting of the son.

Today is Father's Day in our part of the world, it's a day when we celebrate and give thanks for Father's and their love. But for many this Father's Day, it will be quite different. For some this has always been a difficult day, but in our current circumstances with so many lives lost and hanging in the balance, today will bring mixed emotions. My dad died the week before Christmas, last year, in Australia where he lived. I didn't get to see him before he died. For others, their relationships with their fathers may not have been a good one, and for some, they may never

have had a biological father in their lives.

The Bible reading today, is a well-known and familiar one. It is often referred to as the Prodigal Son and is a picture of how the love of a father for his child should be. But Tom Wright in his commentary says it would be more accurately called 'the parable of the Running Father.'

Of course, it symbolises God's love for all his children. The unconditional and forgiving love that always welcome's us. Yet, we often miss just how powerful a story this would have been, in the culture and time that Jesus lived. Firstly, for a son to ask for his inheritance while his father was still alive, was like saying: He wished his father were dead. Secondly, in our culture, we bring up our children to fly the nest, and go into the world to live their lives. But, in Jesus culture, the children stayed and worked on the farm and then took care of their parents in their old age. The son's decision would bring humiliation and shame on the family. Thirdly, once he had squandered all his inheritance, he not only had to look after pigs, but eat their food and sleep with them. This was the worst humiliation and shame for the Jewish son, he had hit rock bottom and it is at this point he

decides to go home, not expecting anything, but knowing that even the servants were better treated. Before he even gets there, the Father sees him, and as undignified as it was, he runs to meet him, he embraces him and then celebrates his return.

I have recently, bought a book, it's a beautifully illustrated simple but profound book, by Charlie Mackesy. It has so many inspiring and thought-provoking things in it, but the one that struck me was when the boy, asks the horse; 'What is the bravest thing you've ever said?' 'HELP' replied the horse.

It's OK to struggle with emotions, feelings and situations, but we don't have to do it alone. There are others around you who would be happy to help, listen and support. And, whatever relationship or lack of one, we have with our earthly fathers, we all have the perfect and welcoming Father in God. In 2 Corinthians 6, Paul reminds us that God says he will be Our Father, and we will all be his sons and daughters, no exceptions. But he also loves us enough to let us choose to go our own way. He waits, and watches, and when we ask for help and turn back to him, he runs towards us,