

Lord we bring before you those who are sick and those who care for them. We also pray for those whose journey on Earth has ended, for those who grieve, and those who support the grieving.

Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer**

We pray for your Church, united across the world. In this challenging season we pray for encouragement and growth. We also pray for those persecuted for their faith, that you will sustain and protect them.

Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer**

In the silence we bring our prayers to the Lord, trusting in His abounding goodness.

*Silence may be kept*

We bring all of our prayers to you, O Lord, the most high. We join our prayers with those of our sisters and brothers throughout the world as we say the words Jesus taught us

**Our Father, who art in Heaven...**

Final hymn: StF 355 or H&P 528 **Jesus, lover of my soul**

Blessing:

May the blessing of God, Father, Son and Spirit rest and remain with each one of us from this day and forevermore.

**Amen**

Scriptural quotations are from the NIV. This worship sheet was compiled by Isaac Moore, Cleveland and Danby Circuit and Local Preacher On Trial, Newcastle (Central and East).

## **Darlington District Worship at Home** **Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2021** **Second Sunday in Lent**

Call to Worship:

O worship the King, all-glorious above;  
O gratefully sing his power and his love:  
our Shield and Defender, the Ancient of Days,  
pavilioned in splendour, and girded with praise.

(Robert Grant StF 113)

Hymn: StF 455/H&P 63 – **All my hope on God is founded**

Opening prayer:

We come as your children, precious in your sight  
We come in need of forgiveness  
We come to find strength amid uncertainty  
We come to rest in the safety of your pastures  
We come to be nourished  
We come to be challenged  
We come to be renewed  
We come, thankful for your selfless sacrifice  
We come, with a thirst that only you can satisfy  
We come, completely yours and complete with your  
everlasting love

**Amen**

Reading:

**Open our hearts O Lord to your word**

[Psalm 22](#)

### Reflection

We cannot read our psalm today without considering Christ's words on the Cross, expressing the unveiled depth of passion and pain. In fact, whilst the psalm explores the personal suffering of David there is a resonance of the suffering of Christ. We have before us a psalm of two halves: the first explores a deep despair, whilst the second affirms that the Lord has heard the cries for help.

There are times for each of us when we may feel alone, perhaps our thoughts or words have echoed those of the psalmist. In our cries to the Lord, perhaps we can recall occasions when we have petitioned the Lord through cries of lament. Yet amidst the pain and suffering there is the joy of answered prayer, and the immanent presence of God. God suffers alongside us, and works through us in all times, including (and sometimes especially) during times of pain and suffering.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote "the deep meaning of the cross of Christ is that there is no suffering on earth that is not borne by God". In the suffering of the Cross and the echoes within Psalm 22, we can understand God as identifying with all of humanity, especially those who are suffering, afflicted, or persecuted. We behold sacrificial humanity here in psalms and prophecies, all of which ultimately point to Christ, incarnate and suffering with and for the world entire. This is such an encouragement. Our God is present in the most human of situations, pain and suffering. When isolation abounds, when "trouble is near, and there is no one to help", our God draws us close with the intimate knowledge of our thoughts and emotions, comforting and guiding in this intimacy.

As I rest in your presence Lord Jesus,  
Help me to find peace,  
Peace that is deeper than all fears,  
An eternal comfort throughout the ebb and flow of life  
**Amen**

Hymn: StF 636 or H&P 685 **O love that wilt not let me go**

### Prayer of Confession:

Lord of love and compassion,  
We come before you with contrite hearts,  
Cleanse and restore us,  
Renew and re-mould us.  
All that we have done, and failed to do, we lay before you.  
Merciful God, help us to live according to your ways, all the days  
of our life.

**Amen**

### Prayers of intercession:

Lord, we bring to you all who are currently suffering, or despairing. We turn our thoughts especially to those whose suffering goes un-noticed, and those who feel their prayer and petition goes unheard. We ask that you support and sustain them with your unfailing love.

Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer**

We pray for those who lead and govern, that they will know your wisdom to enable them to act justly and with consideration for all of your creation.

Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer**