

**10th May 2020 -Arusha Community Church – Morning Worship Service 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of  
Easter**

**Welcome & introduction**

**Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16**

In you, O LORD, I seek refuge; do not let me ever be put to shame;

**in your righteousness deliver me. Incline your ear to me; rescue me speedily.**

Be a rock of refuge for me, a strong fortress to save me.

**You are indeed my rock and my fortress; for your name's sake lead me and guide me, take me out of the net that is hidden for me, for you are my refuge.**

Into your hand I commit my spirit; you have redeemed me, O LORD, faithful God.

**My times are in your hand; deliver me from the hand of my enemies and persecutors.**

**Let your face shine upon your servant; save me in your steadfast love.**

**Gathering worship hymn: Holy, Holy Holy**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MFdObQIE4tA>

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!

Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee;

Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty!

God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

Holy, holy, holy! All the saints adore Thee,

Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;

Cherubim and seraphim falling down before Thee,

Who was, and is, and evermore shall be.

Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hide Thee,

Though the eye of sinful man Thy glory may not see;

Only Thou art holy; there is none beside Thee,

Perfect in pow'r, in love, and purity.

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!

All Thy works shall praise Thy Name, in earth, and sky, and sea;

Holy, holy, holy; merciful and mighty!

God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

**Confessional Hymn: O Thou who camest from above**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R3UYybc7Xa0> (words on the screen)

O Thou who camest from above,

the pure celestial fire to impart

kindle a flame of sacred love

upon the mean altar of my heart.

There let it for thy glory burn  
with inextinguishable blaze,  
and trembling to its source return,  
in humble prayer and fervent praise.

Jesus, confirm my heart's desire  
to work and speak and think for thee;  
still let me guard the holy fire,  
and still stir up thy gift in me.

Ready for all thy perfect will,  
my acts of faith and love repeat,  
till death thy endless mercies seal,  
and make my sacrifice complete.

### **Confession**

Almighty God, we confess that we cannot free ourselves from sin's power. We have sinned against you in thought, word and deed. We have not loved you with our whole heart. We have not loved our neighbor as ourselves. We have strayed from your ways like lost sheep, and have followed too much the desires of our own hearts. We have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and we have done those things which we ought not to have done. O Lord, have mercy upon us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, that we may want to do your will and glorify Your name. Amen.

**Absolution: God gave His Son, Jesus Christ, that whosoever believes in Him will have everlasting life. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Confess, and believe that your sins are forgiven.**

### **Acclamation Hymn: Thank you for the cross, Lord**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZDHXDCWOvds> (words on the screen)

Thank you for the cross, Lord Thank you for the price You paid  
Bearing all my sin and shame In love You came  
And gave amazing grace

Thank you for this love, Lord Thank you for the nail pierced hands  
Washed me in Your cleansing flow Now all I know  
Your forgiveness and embrace

Worthy is the Lamb Seated on the throne  
Crown You now with many crowns You reign victorious  
High and lifted up Jesus Son of God  
The Darling of Heaven crucified  
Worthy is the Lamb Worthy is the Lamb

## **1 Peter 2:2-10**

Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation-if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good. Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in scripture: "See, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame." To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the very head of the corner," and "A stone that makes them stumble, and a rock that makes them fall." They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do. But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

## **John 14:1-14**

Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going." Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him." Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied." Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.

## **Acts 7:55-60**

But filled with the Holy Spirit, he gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus

standing at the right hand of God.

"Look," he said, "I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!"

But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him.

Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him; and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul.

While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he had said this, he died.

### **Hymn: Holy Spirit (You are Welcome Here)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MMJne6wUoag> (words on the screen)

There's nothing worth more, that will ever come close  
No thing can compare, You're our living hope  
Your Presence Lord

I've tasted and seen, of the sweetest of Loves  
Where my heart becomes free, and my shame is undone  
In Your Presence

Holy Spirit You are welcome here  
Come flood this place and fill the atmosphere  
Your Glory God is what our hearts long for  
To be overcome by Your Presence Lord

Let us become more aware of Your Presence  
Let us experience the glory of Your Goodness

### **Ministry of the Word by Vance Bicknell**

Our times are in his hands. Our days, months, and years are under the divine care and protection of our Heavenly Father. These words were written by David during a difficult time for him: The king, Saul, was chasing him, wanting to kill him; David's own friends were growing weary of trying to protect him; he was hiding in caves to keep from getting caught, hiding alone just to preserve his life. But even there, as a wanted man, sought after, troubled from within and without, he knew and acknowledged that all that he is at all times is under God's control.

To say along with David that our times are in God's hands is to admit that we are not in control. Our times and our very lives are His. We pray and we ask God for help; we ask, "God, deliver us from trouble. Save us from sickness. Protect us from evil." But no matter how many words we use, no matter how much we pray, no matter how deep our desire is for God to act in a certain way, our times are in His hands. If we don't see that God is in control, we think we are, and then we try to control God. And that's when we truly suffer.

Say these words with me: "I am not in control. My life is in God's hands." Say these words as many times as you need to until you can truly give God His proper place as your Lord and King.

Many years after David wrote these amazing words, Jesus told His disciples, "Let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God, believe also in me." Sometimes it's difficult to try and have the faith of David, or Moses, or any of the great people of faith we read about in the Bible. We've heard those stories so many times, and then we look at the world around us and see many problems. Look at any newspaper or news website and you will see that the world is full of trouble and distress. Evil and death lurk around every corner. Fear, distrust, and cynicism are the hallmarks of our times. Then we read about miracles and great acts of deliverance and it seems like that was a world apart from our own. Can we really expect God to miraculously wipe out sickness and disease? I don't have any answers to that. Except to say that I think it's the wrong question to ask. Can God bring comfort into our hearts even in midst of sickness and disease? The answer to that one is a resounding, "Yes." Can God bring healing and peace to a community in the middle of difficulty and division? Yes. Jesus's words carry throughout all time: "Let not your heart be troubled."

So let's pray together as a community. The spirit of God knows no boundary. Even separated by space, we are together in time. And our time is in God's hands. "In you Lord, we have taken refuge."

#### **Offertory hymn: Blessed Be Your Name**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-nnJCNjHeOg> (words on the screen)

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 as 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

#### **Prayers: (Open to the moving of the Spirit)**

*For the offerings: Gracious God, in the abundance of your steadfast love, you call us from idleness to action, from silence to speech, from death to life. With these gifts, we offer*

ourselves to you, and ask that you grant us the strength to give more completely. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, **Amen**

**For the Church of God:**, O Father, you who see how we participate in praise and yet are so prone to deny your Son in the same breath, gather us together by the Holy Spirit, help us to grow in courage to defend you and the cause of the oppressed, the poor, the needy, the helpless, to reach out to those who have lost hope, to prisoners, to believers who are persecuted for your name, to those in sorrow and grief, the sick and sad, the lonely, orphans and widows, elderly Confirm that you live in us by the gifts of your Spirit, that we may give witness to Christ by lives built on faith, hope, love, and obedience. Lord, in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

**For our families and friends:** that by word and example we may always encourage each other to follow Christ. Lord, in your mercy, **Hear our prayer**

**For those who have not chosen you as Friend, who do not love you:** but persecute your church, give us unity to love even them, and to stand steadfast until Christ returns in glory. Lord, in your mercy, **Hear our prayer**

**For all people of every race and nation:** that they may come to know the saving grace of our one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Lord, in your mercy, **Hear our prayer, Amen**

**Hymn: I will offer up my life (words on the screen)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SWP05Fm39sY>

I will offer up my life in spirit and truth  
Pouring out the oil of love, as my worship to you  
In surrender I must give my every part  
Lord, receive this sacrifice of a broken heart

Jesus, what can I give, what can I bring  
To so faithful a Friend, to so loving a King?  
Savior, what can be said, what can be sung  
As a praise of Your name for the things You have done?

Oh, my words could not tell, not even in part  
Of the debt of love that is owed by this thankful heart

You deserve my every breath, for You've paid the great cost  
Giving up your life to death, even death on the cross  
You took all my shame away, there defeated my sin  
Open up the gates of heaven and have beckoned me in

**Passing of the peace:** May the Peace of the Lord be with you.../ **And also with you.**

**Sending Hymn: In Christ alone my hope is found**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=91VuGOADc\\_w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=91VuGOADc_w)

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.

**Benediction:**

May the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all now, and forever. **Amen**

Go in Peace, to love and serve the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**