**Morning Praise @ Home 3rd April 2022**

**Opening prayer**

Blessed are you, God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, you have blessed us with every spiritual blessing; enable us by your power to be true to our calling and live holy and blameless lives before you all our days, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. **Amen**

**Confession** Let us admit to God the sin which always confronts us.

**Lord God, we have sinned against you; we have done evil in your sight. We are sorry and**

**repent.** **Have mercy on us according to your love. Wash away our wrongdoing and cleanse us**

**from our sin.** **Renew a right spirit within us** **and restore us to the joy of your salvation,** **through**

**Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen** cf Psalm 51

**Absolution** May the Father of all mercies cleanse us from our sins, and restore us in his image

to the praise and glory of his name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

### Bible Readings Psalm 126 John 12: 1 – 8

**Reflection from Ruth**

Three hundred denarii is just too much money to waste. That’s nearly a year’s worth of daily wages, an annual income. Who does that? Why would anyone do that? That’s neither practical nor reasonable. It makes no sense. Why does all of it have to be poured out? Something that valuable should at least be saved for a special time and place. Surely it could be put to better use than feet. Jesus’ feet may smell sweet now but it won’t last. It won’t be long before he leaves the table and steps back into the street, into the dirt and muck of everyday life. Soon his feet will sweat and stink. They will bleed. The fragrance that fills the house today will linger only as a memory, a story in scripture. What difference could Mary’s perfume possibly make anyway? Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?” Judas has a limit. Mary has exceeded it. So if three hundred denarii is too much what about two-fifty? Two hundred? One hundred? What would be acceptable, reasonable? I don’t know what Judas’ number is. We’ll never know. That’s not the point of today’s gospel. The more relevant question is about us. What is my number? What is your number? What is our limit? At what point do we say it simply costs too much to love? That’s what this story is about.

It is not about money or perfume but love. Upon whose feet are we unwilling to pour out the fragrance of our life and love? Those who look, act, or think differently than us? Those who have hurt us? Strangers on the street? Enemies across the world? Those who have made poor choices, choices we know are wrong and would never support? Those who can’t seem to ever get their life together? Those who stand opposite us on a particular issue? If we are really honest about it we all have our limits, our reasons, our fears that keep us from loving and tell us it’s just not practical or reasonable. Not this person. Not right now. Not here. Holy Week takes us to the boundaries of what is practical, what is reasonable, what makes sense, and then asks us to step across. That’s the way of love. That’s the way of Christ.

Yes, the perfume will fade, but “life is eternal and love is immortal.”

**Affirmation of faith**

Do you believe and trust in God the Father, source of all being and life, the one for whom we exist?

**We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Son, who took our human nature, died for us and rose again?

**We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit, who gives life to the people of God and makes Christ

known in the world?

 **We believe and trust in him. This is the faith of the Church.**

**This is our faith. We believe and trust in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen**

**Prayers of intercession led by Tony**

Holy God, as we gather for worship in this place we thank you for our Ecumenical partners in the mission of the Christian Church Worldwide; teach us all to serve you as you deserve, putting aside sectarianism whilst healing any divisions that keep us on the path towards your kingdom.

Creator God, we pray for the nations of the world and for their right dealing one with another, especially between Russia and Ukraine where we pray for a cessation of hostilities and a declaration of peace. We pray for the situation in Afghanistan. May barriers of race, creed, gender and colour be broken down and political freedom established where there is oppression and suppression of new ideas.  We pray for educational development and for a more just economic structure which pays people fairly for their labour.

God of the poor, we pray for all who suffer due to lack of food both abroad and here at home. We give thanks for all who work to bring relief to the refugees around your world.

Father God, we thank you that no matter how widely spread throughout the world our families may be, our hearts may be joined together in prayer.  We also thank you for the means of modern technological communication that enable us to keep so closely in touch with those we love, which means we not only hear our loved ones but also see them.

God of love, we pray for our community that a Christian presence is kept alive and strong to bear witness for you. We pray for all who are working so hard to find a new leader for us here and pray that we too will be open to your leading.

Gracious God, look mercifully upon those whose lives have been shattered by illness. Help them and those who care for them to be freed from resentment and give them the strength to seek your will, whatever it might be, in every situation.

Merciful God, we remember the slenderness of the thread which separates life from death, and the suddenness with which it can be broken. Help us also to remember that whatever occurs in life we are surrounded by your love.  Help those bereaved by the loss of a loved one to find in your love peace and reassurance.

Eternal God, giver of love and power, your Son Jesus Christ has sent us into the world to preach the gospel of his kingdom: confirm us in this mission, and help us to live the good news we proclaim in all that we do and say.

**Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen**

**The Lord’s Prayer** As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

***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 today our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen***

**Closing prayer**

God give you grace to become the people He has called you to be,

that you may live and work to his praise and glory,

and the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit

be with us and remain with us always. **Amen**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. **In the name of Christ. Amen**