



## Worship@Home

28<sup>th</sup> April 2024

5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter



### Opening Prayer

God of our journey, guide our path, and make us ready in our encounters with others to learn new things about you – for you are the God of surprises. In Jesus' name. **Amen.**

### StF 385: Holy Spirit we welcome you

*Sing/pray/read the words or listen to it here:*

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

- 1 Holy Spirit, we welcome you,  
Holy Spirit, we welcome you !  
Move among us with holy fire  
as we lay aside all earthly desire,  
hands reach out and our hearts aspire.  
Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit,  
Holy Spirit, we welcome you !
- 2 Holy Spirit, we welcome you,  
Holy Spirit, we welcome you !  
Let the breeze of your presence blow  
that your children here might truly know  
how to move in the Spirit's flow.  
Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit,  
Holy Spirit, we welcome you !
- 3 Holy Spirit, we welcome you,  
Holy Spirit, we welcome you !  
Please accomplish in us today  
some new work of loving grace, we pray —  
unreservedly — have your way.  
Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit,  
Holy Spirit, we welcome you !

Christopher Alan Bowater (b. 1947)

## A Time of Prayer

Your love, O God, is for all people no matter where they are from or where they live. Your love accompanies us on our journey through life, through the good and the bad, happy and sad times and all the times between them.

Your love is with us on the mountaintop and in the valley, on roads rough and smooth. You are our sustenance, our guide, our teacher and our friend. For all of this and so much more, we adore you. **Amen.**

We come in penitence for journeys not shared with those who needed companionship. We come in sorrow for not walking with and talking with those who needed us most. We come in sadness that we have let ourselves and others down, and let you down when we have not accompanied those who have been searching for you.

There are times when we could have done more. We confess our failings and seek forgiveness, as we seek also to forgive those who have not walked with us because the burden was too heavy for them as well. In penitence we seek forgiveness. Lord, hear our prayer. **Amen.**

### Assurance of forgiveness

The Lord forgives those who repent of their sins, of their failings and faults, and the Lord travels with us on our journey in life. **Amen.**

### Bible Reading: Acts 8:26-40

### Reflection

A schoolboy was very upset when his father, for economic reasons, stopped him travelling by train to school because he could get a free bus pass. Little did he know that one of the schoolgirls he befriended on those bus journeys would later become his wife! Sometimes something quite ordinary can change our lives completely. At the time it didn't appear to be a nudge by the Spirit as happened to Philip in our Acts reading. However, in retrospect, both saw the hand of God at work. We do not know what a journey can bring us or who we will meet that will profoundly affect our life and purpose. Perhaps this will encourage us to pray before we set out on a journey – not simply for safety in our travels, but for those whom we might meet on the way.

Perhaps one of the most famous stories is of an invitation to Billy, a young farm boy, to drive a vegetable truck packed with youth to a tent crusade. He joined the others inside and the evangelist made such an impression that Billy felt called to become an evangelist, even though he had had very little formal education. Little did he know that he – Billy Graham – would preach to millions, including presidents and world leaders, and many churches would be reinvigorated by those who responded to his call to get out of their seats and come up front.

Probably our own encounters will not be so dramatic as that, but you never know what the God of surprises has in store for you.

However, if the journey we take this week will forge a new friendship, give you fresh insight through a chance conversation, or simply bring solace or hope to a lonely person, that journey will have been worthwhile.

### A Time of Prayer

To all those in need of love:

**let the love of God be known.**

To a world in need of love:

**let the love of God be shown.**

To those in need of food:

**let the love of God be shared.**

By those in need of healing:

**let the love of God be experienced.**

By those in need of peace:

**let the love of God be felt.**

By those in need of hope:

**let the love of God be seen.**

To those in need of joy:

**let the love of God be sung.**

By those in need of justice:

**let the love of God be heard.**

By all those in need of love:

**let the love of God be known.**

**Amen.**

### The Lord's Prayer

*Our Father...*

### StF 619: Thanks for friends who keep on loving

*Sing/pray/read the words or listen to it here:*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TtPAEbDLR00>

- 1 Thanks for friends who keep on loving,  
finding ways to help us grow,  
celebrating our achievements,  
sharing in our pain and woe.  
God is glimpsed where love is faithful :  
mirrored here in time and space.  
Thanks to God for friends who love us :  
Christ revealed in every face.
- 2 Other people help to shape us  
when they take the time to share  
words of wisdom, honest actions  
through our journey in God's care.  
In our faithful, honest learning  
we discover things unknown.  
Thanks to God for friends who teach us :  
seeking talent yet ungrown.
- 3 When we find our friendships challenged  
through mistakes and different views,  
we discover deeper living  
as the love of God renews.

For in Christ we see forgiveness ;

know a strength still to embrace.

Thanks to God for friends who keep us :

making real the gift of grace.

- 4 Praise to God for this great gifting  
of relationship and friend :  
imaging divine relating ;  
found in heaven with no end.  
Bless us Maker, Word and Spirit  
as companions on the way.  
Thanks to God for friends who help us  
to fulfil our lives each day.

Gary Hopkins (*b.* 1984)

### A Prayer of Blessing

May the Lord be with you on your journeys with others and open your eyes to Him. And the blessing of God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer, be with you as you travel with Him. **Amen.**

Worship materials taken from [rootsontheweb.com](http://rootsontheweb.com)