

Service for Week 4<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> May 2026

By Chaplain Andy

### **Our Opening Prayer.**

Loving God, you do not compel us to serve you but you invite us rather to respond to your love.

You do not dictate the course we should take, but instead offer your guidance. Lord, give us wisdom and courage to make the right decisions at the right time, we ask it in Jesus Christ's name. **Amen**

### *The Lord's Prayer*

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 this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses  
as we forgive them who trespass  
against us. And lead us not into  
temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the kingdom,  
the power and the glory  
for ever and ever.

**Amen**

### **Bible Reading John 14:15-21**

"If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever— the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.

I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Before long, the world

will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him."

*Holy words, Holy wisdom,*

***Thanks be to God.***

### **Reflection**

After the resurrection of Jesus and his appearing to the disciples, Jesus is now preparing them for the time when he knows he will be no longer with them. Following the joy of realizing that he had come back from the dead and was alive the disciples must have been very distressed and fearful to learn that Jesus was leaving them.

But Jesus gives them the comforting words that the apostle John records in our bible text. Jesus tells them that he is leaving but is not leaving them alone. He says he is sending God's Holy Spirit to be with them to face their fears and give them strength. Jesus calls God's Holy Spirit the Counselor which he says will be with them forever— "the Spirit of truth."

Jesus assures them, and us, that he is not abandoning them 'leaving them as orphans.' He says that although they will no longer see him, he will remain with them through the Holy Spirit.

Jesus tells them 'You will realize that I



am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you'.

In church the Holy Spirit used to be called the Holy Ghost and still is in the BCP Book of Common Prayer but the word 'Ghost' has come to have a different meaning now.

The world, Jesus says will not accept God's Holy Spirit, which he calls the Counselor. The text refers to this as 'him' because bible translations are strictly gendered either male or female and use masculine forms for the divine. The Holy Spirit has no gender but some find a greater affinity by associating it with the female form. Although the world cannot accept the existence of the Holy Spirit Jesus tells the disciples, and us, that we will know it personally because it is within all of us. All we need to do is to acknowledge it is within us and through the God's Holy Spirit, Christ is with us now and forevermore.

Jesus called the Holy Spirit the Counselor. We think of counselors now perhaps in terms of a mental health therapist but in biblical times a counsellor was a wise advisor who provided spiritual guidance. Someone to refer to when making decisions or seeing the way ahead in difficult circumstances. And this is what having God's Holy Spirit within us means for each of us today.

Sharing our thoughts and prayers helps us to connect to God- a God who is not somewhere out there, above the universe in a hidden place, but within us. As Jesus said 'because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.'

This presence of God's Spirit within us is so special and is in everyone regardless of faith, or no faith, regardless of what religion or denomination we may belong to. It is the life force given to us by God to strengthen us, to guide us, to comfort us in times of sorrow or illness through God's love. We can reject it as the world rejects the existence of such a thing -or we can embrace it.

Other faiths have different ways of realizing God's nature. Jesus tells us that if we love him then he will 'show himself' to us which is how he reveals God's way for our lives through the Holy Spirit.

Jesus says - Because I live, you also will live. **Amen**

### **Closing Prayer**

Gracious God, when I am uncertain of the way ahead, give me guidance, and when I feel discouraged, give me fresh inspiration.

Whatever problems I might face may I still find reason to believe in the future you hold in store. **Amen.**

Prayers inspired by 'Prayfully Yours' by Nick Fawcett