

## **Cathedral Prayers. April 20<sup>th</sup>. 2023 at Ely Cathedral at**

**10.30 am.**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83847809128?pwd=VVhXUGlNWkpaeGkyMUdwWHQvcC9tQT09>  
ID. 838 4780 9128/Passcode 338053

**Focus:** Supporting each other in Faith.

Welcome to our service this morning, let us start with a prayer.

Heavenly Father,

Give us the faith to look to Jesus crucified

And risen from the dead.

Faith to see the invisible and do the impossible.

Faith invincible in the face of evil and death.

Faith to pass on the good news of Jesus to the next generation,

Faith to live in sustainable ways to bless the earth you created.

Faith to take up our cross and follow Jesus all our days

until we come to our eternal home.

In Jesus` name. **Amen**

Our reading this morning is from the Gospel according to St. John Chapter 20 verse 29.

Thomas said "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said" Because you have seen me you have found faith. Happy are they who never saw me and yet have found faith."

### **The Meditation**

There were many other signs which Jesus performed in the presence of his disciples. John has written some so that we may hold the faith that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God and that through this faith we may possess life by His name.

We are all in different positions with our faith, some still learning, others well and truly knowing what they are doing and all of us going the right way and still learning. We have not seen Jesus visibly, as we see each other, but our faith knows He is there, watching over us, guarding and guiding.

In our village we have a relatively new Pastor at the Baptist church at the crossroads. Boards, outside the church, have been moved and one at the moment says "Come as you are, all shapes and sizes" These are easily seen by drivers who are waiting in the traffic queues. Quite apt for our reflection today?

Well we haven't had the same experiences as Thomas has but we have the same faith, by readings from the Bible, prayers and hymns and sermons and Lent groups, and Quiet Days, which somehow `grab you` and make you think ---- and Jesus is all part of them.

To start at the beginning, when you are present in a baptism there is a part where everyone can join in and re-affirm their faith and belief in Jesus Christ and saying it together somehow means a lot more than saying it by yourself. Re-affirming the strong belief in the doctrines of our religion and the spiritual conviction. There is complete trust and confidence.

In the Sunday Eucharist we have a chance to affirm our faith by saying the Creed and also in the peace below:

'We are the body of Christ. In the one Spirit we were all baptised into one body. Let us then pursue all that makes for peace and builds up our common life`

Our own faith is in prayer and the purpose of that is to maintain our relationship with God and allow Him to come into our lives and take control.

One thing about prayer is not to be too disappointed. God will say `yes` - or `no`, or - you may have to wait.

We learnt much in our confirmation classes , furthering our Knowledge and trust but that is with hindsight, only really appreciated as you get older.

Mothers` Union is founded in prayer and at our meetings it is one of the parts which I look forward to, the togetherness.

I am hoping that we get better at praying the older we get?

The three churches in our village used to have a Holiday Club during the summer holidays aimed for Primary school children. There were adult helpers there from each church and at the end of each morning session we had a quick discussion as to how the morning had gone.

Now at the very end one adult finished by a prayer. The Methodist chosen did well, no notes just said what they wanted to say, the Baptist did exactly the same thing, the Church of England (guess who?) - and was given 24 hours notice - had copied a prayer to read from a prayer book - no initiative? No confidence? Probably true but really none up to that point - and definitely needed that piece of paper?

I often feel that praying comes easily when I see nature evolving - time to thank God for winter going and new life beginning, the sun setting, those wonderful colours, obvious in the fens and a chance to remind grandchildren.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby once said “The Mothers’ Union campaigns excellently. It nurtures wonderfully. But above all and beneath all, it prays - thank God.”

He is right - we do. Everything we undertake in the name of Mothers’ Union, our projects and initiatives, our campaigning for social justice, our care for one another, all are built on a foundation of prayer. And once up and running are supported by an on-going reliance on prayer.

If we are honest, many of us would admit to finding it hard to always know what to pray and to know how to pray. The Bible says ‘pray continually’ or ‘pray and don't give up,’ sometimes this can be seen as an impossibility. But God values every faltering attempt and appreciates all our efforts. And Jesus said “Happy are they who never saw me and yet have found faith”.

I shall finish with a well-known prayer.

Teach us good Lord, to serve Thee as Thou deservest,

To give and not to count the cost,

To fight and not to heed the wounds,

To toil and not to seek for rest.

To labour and not to ask for any reward,

Save that of knowing that we do Thy will. **Amen**

### **Intercessions**

This morning we will start our prayers with a short period of silence. Time for our own thoughts, and time for those we know who need them. Our families and our friends.

**Lord hear us, Lord graciously hear us.**

We ask for God’s blessing on Beverley Julien, our Chief Executive, Sheran Harper our Worldwide President, Kathryn Anderson our Provincial President and Julia Jameson our Zonal Trustee. We pray for Hazel Williams, the Trustees, the Task Group leaders and all who work in Mary Sumner House.

We remember in our prayers our MU links world wide, Lusaka, Shyogwe, Sokoto and Ikka, Karimnager and our Diocesan links with Kigali and Vellore.

Together with confidence we will say The Lords` 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 those 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.**

We can join in with the Thursday prayer.

**Heavenly Father, you have called us apart to share in a worldwide fellowship of  
Christians united in prayer. Take our prayers we humbly ask, fill them with your  
love and power, and use them in the cause of your glorious kingdom.  
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

We can stand to sing: There is a Redeemer.

**There is a Redeemer,  
Jesus, God`s own Son.  
Precious Lamb of God, Messiah,  
Holy One.**

***Thank you, O my Father,  
For giving us your Son,  
And leaving your spirit  
Till the work on earth is done.***

**Jesus, my Redeemer,  
Name above all names,**

**Precious Lamb of God, Messiah,  
O for sinners slain.**

***Thankyou, O my Father.....***

**When I stand in glory,  
I will see his face.  
And there I`ll serve my King for ever,  
In that holy place.**

***Thankyou, O my Father.....***

***words and tune (Melody Green).***

..... And there is another story to go with this hymn.

We will finish with the grace.

**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the  
Holy Spirit, be with us all, evermore. Amen**