

Morning Prayer – Friday, March 27, 2020  
*New Zealand Book of Common Prayer*

Opening Words  
*(as candle is lit)*

We light a candle  
to remember that we are not alone.

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. (Psalm 46:1)

O come, let us sing to the Lord,  
let us rejoice in the rock of our salvation.  
We sing to you, O God, and bless your name;  
and tell of your salvation from day to day.  
We proclaim your glory to the nations,  
your praise to the ends of the earth.

Glory to the holy and undivided Trinity, One God  
as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be for ever more. Amen.

*(Be still and aware of the presence of the Divine within and all around)*

Scripture – 1 Corinthians 12:27-13:3 (Contemporary English Version - CEV)

Together you are the body of Christ. Each one of you is part of Christ's body. First, God chose some people to be apostles and prophets and teachers for the church. But God also chose some to work miracles or heal the sick or help others or be leaders or speak different kinds of languages. Not everyone is an apostle. Not everyone is a prophet. Not everyone is a teacher. Not everyone can work miracles. Not everyone can heal the sick. Not everyone can speak different kinds of languages. Not everyone can tell what these languages mean. I want you to desire the best gifts. So I will show you a much better way.

What if I could speak  
all languages  
of humans  
and of angels?  
If I did not love others,  
I would be nothing more  
than a noisy gong  
or a clanging cymbal.  
What if I could prophesy  
and understand all secrets  
and all knowledge?  
And what if I had faith

that moved mountains?  
I would be nothing,  
unless I loved others.  
What if I gave away all  
that I owned  
and let myself  
be burned alive?  
I would gain nothing,  
unless I loved others.

*(a time for reflection on the reading)*

Poem – “Praise What Comes” by Jeanne Lohmann

Surprising as unplanned kisses, all you haven't deserved  
of days and solitude, your body's immoderate good health  
that lets you work in many kinds of weather. Praise.

talk with just about anyone. And quiet intervals, books:  
that are your food and your hunger, nightfall and walks  
before sleep. Praising these for practice, perhaps

you will come at last to praise grief and the wrongs  
you never intended. At the end there may be no answers  
and only a few very simple questions: did I love,

finish my task in the world? Learn at least one  
of the many names of God? At the intersections,  
the boundaries where one life began and another

ended, the jumping-off places between fear and  
possibility, at the ragged edges of pain,  
did I catch the smallest glimpse of the holy?

**Prayers**

Make your ways known upon earth, O God,  
your saving power among all peoples.

Renew your Church in holiness,  
and help us to serve you with joy.

Guide the leaders of this and every nation,  
that justice may prevail throughout the world.

Let not the needy, O God, be forgotten,

nor the hope of the poor be taken away.

Make us instruments of your peace,  
and let your glory be over all the earth.

Holy and everliving God,  
by your power we are created  
and by your love we are redeemed;  
guide and strengthen us by your Spirit,  
that we may give ourselves to your service,  
and live each day in love to one another and to you,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*(Time of silence for personal thanksgivings and intercessions)*

Closing words

*(after which candle is extinguished)*

In darkness and in light,  
in trouble and in joy,  
help us, heavenly Creator,  
to trust your love,  
to serve your purpose,  
and to praise your name,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Spiritual Exercises:

- 1) In our reading from Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians we read about being one body. Right now, how we've had to shift how we're a body together – we're trying to maintain spiritual closeness while we physically distance ourselves from one another. Reach out to someone in the body this day. Maybe even someone you don't know very well. Give them a call and let them know you care.
- 2) Design a postcard you'll never send. Sometimes we spiritually distance ourselves one from another because we're holding onto resentments or anger. Maybe we haven't had an opportunity to tell someone how deeply hurt or angry we are with them. Maybe it wouldn't be appropriate or safe to do so. Write or draw your true feelings – you don't have to send it, but might help you to let-go of something weighing you down. Perhaps this might even lead you to pray for them.

Sources:

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Poem: "Praise What Comes" by Jeanne Lohmann from *The Light of Invisible Bodies* (McKinleyville, CA: Fithian Press, 2003).

Scripture: *Contemporary English Version*, American Bible Society, 1995.