**Morning Prayer for the Sixth Sunday of Easter**

Sunday 25th May 2025 at 9.30 (call in from 9.15)

Join Zoom Meeting

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85649430168?pwd=QzFzNytXM01TQTc5cTROaHc2aElvZz09

Meeting ID: 856 4943 0168

Passcode: 336782

**Telephone instructions:**

\* Dial: 0131 460 1196

\* You are then welcomed to Zoom and asked to type in the meeting ID ie. 856 4943 0168

\* If the next instruction is to add your personal ID just press # to ignore

\* When passcode requested type numbers i.e. 336782 plus #.

\* At this point you should be admitted to the call.****

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**Preparation**

Let us be glad and sing for joy,

lifting praises to our Gracious God

whose light shines upon us.

Everlasting God, the one who knows all things,
we gather together to bring you praise.
We gather as your people,
knowing that we are often guilty of thinking
we know and can do all things.
Forgive us, Lord, and help us learn afresh today to follow you,
even into unexpected and uncomfortable places.
**Amen.**

Lord God, you called Paul to cross tricky seas.
Sometimes our lives can be turbulent like the waves,
like the stirred-up waters of the pool at Bethesda.
You can call us to tricky things,
and sometimes we hesitate.
We come today to this your house,
knowing we need you,
ready to experience your guiding hand.
Lord, make us open to hear you,
and be prepared for anything. **Amen.**

**A prayer of confession**

Jesus asked, ‘Do you want to get well?’
and the man trusted him to heal.
Sometimes, Lord, we are frightened of putting our whole trust in you.
We get stuck in our old ways, nervous of what you might call us to do.
Forgive us, Lord, when we fall so far short of your best for us.
Be our guide in all the storms of life, and lead us forward. **Amen.**

**Assurance of forgiveness**

The best time for healing is when the water in the pool is stirred.
You, God, stir our lives, as the waters at Bethesda were stirred.
You find us and forgive us in the turbulence.
The waters of your true and lasting forgiveness wash us and make us new. **Amen.**

**The Word of God**

First reading:Acts 16: 9-15

**9**During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.” **10**After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.

### Lydia’s Conversion in Philippi

**11**From Troas we put out to sea and sailed straight for Samothrace, and the next day we went on to Neapolis. **12**From there we travelled to Philippi, a Roman colony and the leading city of that districtof Macedonia. And we stayed there several days.

**13**On the Sabbath we went outside the city gate to the river, where we expected to find a place of prayer. We sat down and began to speak to the women who had gathered there. **14**One of those listening was a woman from the city of Thyatira named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth. She was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul’s message. **15**When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. “If you consider me a believer in the Lord,” she said, “come and stay at my house.” And she persuaded us.

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**



Psalmody: Psalm 67

 **1**May God be gracious to us and bless us
     and make his face shine on us—[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=PSALM%2067&version=NIV#fen-NIV-14895b)]
 **2**so that your ways may be known on earth,
     your salvation among all nations.

 **3**May the peoples praise you, God;
     may all the peoples praise you.
 **4**May the nations be glad and sing for joy,
     for you rule the peoples with equity
     and guide the nations of the earth.
 **5**May the peoples praise you, God;
     may all the peoples praise you.

 **6**The land yields its harvest;
     God, our God, blesses us.
 **7**May God bless us still,
     so that all the ends of the earth will fear him.

*All* **Glory to the Father and to the Son**

**and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

Second reading: John 5: 1-9

**5**Some time later, Jesus went up to Jerusalem for one of the Jewish festivals. **2**Now there is in Jerusalem near the Sheep Gate a pool, which in Aramaic is called Bethesda[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John%205&version=NIV#fen-NIV-26213a)] and which is surrounded by five covered colonnades. **3**Here a great number of disabled people used to lie—the blind, the lame, the paralyzed. **[4]**[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John%205&version=NIV#fen-NIV-26215b)] **5**One who was there had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. **6**When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, “Do you want to get well?”

**7**“Sir,” the invalid replied, “I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me.”

**8**Then Jesus said to him, “Get up! Pick up your mat and walk.” **9**At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked.

The day on which this took place was a Sabbath.

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*We pause to reflect on the readings before turning to prayer.*

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**Prayers of Intercession**

Lord Jesus Christ, walk with us and with all for whom we pray

Lord Jesus Christ, you walked the paths we walk 2000 years ago. You walked amongst your people, seeing need and reaching out, bringing healing and wholeness, comfort and release.

We bring our prayers for those we encounter as we walk hopefully and in your steps. For those who we meet face to face, those who we had planned to meet and those we encounter unexpectedly. For those we hear of near and far, and those for whom life is not plain sailing, comfortable or care free. We bring our prayers for those whose situations and needs challenge and change us and move us to places we hadn’t thought possible, and for those who stir us out of our comfort zone as we step out in faith.

Lord Jesus Christ,
**walk with us and with all for whom we pray**

We pray for those whose economic, religious and social backgrounds force them into poverty, hunger, homelessness and need. We pray for those whose lives are in danger because of their ethnicity and the place and the culture and the religion they were born into. We pray for those who face isolation and segregation through no fault of their own.

Lord Jesus Christ,
**walk with us and with all for whom we pray**

We pray for those ordinary folk who seek to live in peace and harmony but whose political leaders seek to stir up trouble and fear and hate with neighbours. We pray for those dragged into fighting for their survival, livelihood and future.

We pray for those dragged into the Russian-Ukrainian war, for the suffering, death, grief, fear and deprivation that they all have to endure, and for the lives, families, histories, and nations changed forever.

We pray for those in Gaza and Israel and those across the Middle East who struggle with hopes and fears trying to find ways forward to bring peace, comfort, fairness and hope.

Lord Jesus Christ,
**walk with us and with all for whom we pray**

We pray for those in our own countries, towns, cities and villages who struggle with the present economic and social challenges. Those who once felt comfortably off who now face a far bleaker future, and for those who need a helping hand from those of us who can offer one. We pray for those who once found life plain sailing but who now find themselves in the midst of a storm, with waves of fear and pain, need and anguish.

Lord Jesus Christ,
**walk with us and with all for whom we pray**

We pray that we, as your followers, have faith enough to step out in your name to reach out to those around us who challenge our presumptions and plans. Give us an acceptance of the leading of your Spirit. May we offer, where we can, words of faith, hope and love, and tables of fellowship and hospitality.

Lord Jesus Christ,
**walk with us and with all for whom we pray**

We pray for these and all those whose names and needs rest heavily on our lives this day, we remember them now ...(prayer list)

Lord Jesus Christ,
**walk with us and with all for whom we pray**

walk with us we pray Lord Jesus, this and every day.
**Amen**

The Collect for the Sixth Sunday of Easter

God our redeemer,

you have delivered us from the power of darkness

and brought us into the kingdom of your Son:

grant, that as by his death he has recalled us to life,

so by his continual presence in us he may raise us

to eternal joy;

through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,

who is alive and reigns with you,

in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

one God, now and for ever.

*All* **Amen.**

The Lord’s Prayer

Rejoicing in God’s new creation,
as our Saviour taught us, so we pray

*All* **Our Father in heaven,**

**hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.**

**A sending out prayer**

All-knowing God, go before us this week
and give us grace to see your handiwork.
Travel with us as we go through the ups and downs
that will come our way.
Lead us to be more like Jesus, loving those we meet with an
extravagant and unexpected love.
**Amen.**

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**What’s on ….**

**Exe Valley Community Lunches**

The next lunch is at Stoodleigh Village Hall on June 12th from 12.30pm. Please let the church office know if you will be joining us and if you need transport.

**Prayer Breakfast**

The next prayer breakfast with Steph at The Rectory Withleigh is on 31May at 9.00am. Everyone is welcome.

**Bible Study**

Our next Bible Study is on June 10th at The Cottage Washfield at 2.30pm with Tim Gorringe.

**Prayer Chain**

The Exe Valley Mission Community are starting a telephone prayer chain. If you like to be included for prayer or know someone who would like to be included, please contact Steph at the church office 01884 250417. Only first initials will be used on the prayer chain to ensure total confidentiality.

**Coffee and Chat with Steph**

Steph will be at Banburys from 10.15am on Friday June 20th for coffee and a chat if you would like to join her.

**Discipleship Course**

Please join us as we continue with our discipleship course at the Rectory Withleigh. The next meetings will be on Thursday May 15th at 7.00pm and Thursday June 19th at 11.00am and 7.00pm

**Withleigh 8 June**

Withleigh’s service on June 8th will take the form of a ‘Songs of Praise’ to celebrate the refurbishment of the organ. The guest organist will be Paul Whitty, son of Rev. Harold Whitty. Refreshments will be served from 10am onwards and the service will start at 10.45am. All are welcome at this service and the collection will go to the organ fund.

**Contacting Church Office**

**PLEASE NOTE THAT THE CHURCH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED THURSDAY 5TH JUNE – SUNDAY 15TH JUNE**

Monday, Wednesday and Friday 10.00am -12 noon

Email: office@exevalleymissioncommunity.org

Tel: 01884 250417 or 07733949295

**Giving**

**Giving to the Exe Valley Mission Community**

If you would like to make a contribution to the work of The Exe Valley Mission Community please make a gift using the Exe Valley Group of Churches BACS details. Please use the reference EVMC Services.

**Account Name:** Exe Valley Group of Churches

**Sort Code:**60-21-27

**Account No:** 54731690

Cheques should be made payable to: 'Exe Valley Group of Churches'