

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Perth
Sunday, April 6th, 2025
Rev. Gerry Gallant

Sufficient
Fifth Sunday in Lent
John 6:1-13

Welcome

Announcements

Call to Worship

God says to us: I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers flow in the desert.
The LORD does great things for us, and we rejoice.

God says to us: Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old.
The LORD does great things for us, and we rejoice.

God says to us: I am about to do a new thing.
The LORD does great things for us, and so we worship God with songs of joy and prayers of thanksgiving.

Prayer of Adoration and Invocation

O God,
Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer of all life,
we come to you today with grateful hearts,
cheered by the return of spring,
days lengthening, the sun's warmth growing stronger.
We praise you for your creation and its reliable rhythms.
We praise you, too,
for Christ and his ministry that we seek to continue;
we seek the light of the hope he offers.
Break into these days of turmoil and uncertainty
with the mercy and grace we meet in Jesus.
By the power of your Spirit, lighten our hearts in this time of worship,
and help us brighten the lives we touch this week in Jesus' name.
And so we praise you, O God,
Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer of all life,
and offer you all glory and honour,
this day and every day, now and evermore. **Amen.**

Children's Video

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession

There are many times we think we love you well, O God.
 But upon hearing your call to love you with all our heart,
 and all our mind, and all our strength,
 we confess that our love for you is a diluted love,
 made insipid and flat by lesser loyalties and a divided heart.
 Our love seems pure only for brief moments;
 soon our affections are drawn away.
 How easily our devotion dies.
 Forgive us;
 in deep mercy spare us,
 despite our lost first love for you;
 in grace rekindle our love for you
 in seeing anew Jesus' love for us.
 Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Hear the good news:
 This saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance,
 that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.
 He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross,
 that we might be dead to sin, and alive to all that is good.
 I declare to you in the name of Jesus Christ,
 you are forgiven.
 Thanks be to God.

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors
 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one
 For Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory,
 Forever and ever, Amen.

Hymn #774: "God Forgave my Sin/Freely, Freely"

God forgave my sin in Jesus' name,
 I've been born again in Jesus' name,
 and in Jesus' name I come to you
 to share his love as he told me to.

Chorus:
 He said:
 'Freely, freely you have received;
 freely, freely give.
 Go in my name and because you believe,
 others will know that I live.'

All power is given in Jesus' name,
 in earth and heaven in Jesus' name,
 and in Jesus' name I come to you
 to share his power as he told me to. (Chorus)

Responsive Reading

Psalm 126

¹ When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion,
 we were like those who dream.

**² Then our mouth was filled with laughter,
 and our tongue with shouts of joy;
 then they said among the nations,
 "The Lord has done great things for them."**

³ The Lord has done great things for us;
 we are glad.

**⁴ Restore our fortunes, O Lord,
 like streams in the Negeb!**

⁵ Those who sow in tears
 shall reap with shouts of joy!

**⁶ He who goes out weeping,
 bearing the seed for sowing,
 shall come home with shouts of joy,
 bringing his sheaves with him.**

Anthem (Music Ministry): "King Jesus is A- Listenin"

Prayer for Illumination

Scripture

John 6:1-13

6 After this Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias. **2** And a large crowd was following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing on the sick. **3** Jesus went up on the mountain, and there he sat down with his disciples. **4** Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand. **5** Lifting up his

eyes, then, and seeing that a large crowd was coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, “Where are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat?”⁶ He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he would do.⁷ Philip answered him, “Two hundred denarii worth of bread would not be enough for each of them to get a little.”⁸ One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, said to him,⁹ “There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are they for so many?”¹⁰ Jesus said, “Have the people sit down.” Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, about five thousand in number.¹¹ Jesus then took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated. So also the fish, as much as they wanted.¹² And when they had eaten their fill, he told his disciples, “Gather up the leftover fragments, that nothing may be lost.”¹³ So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves left by those who had eaten.

Sermon

Today we look at the one miracle or one sign that is recorded in all four Gospels. This sign takes place after all of the events we studied that took place at the pool of Bethesda. The healing of the man and the discourse with the religious leaders.

Jesus has once again returned to the region of Galilee in the North, and to keep you on the timeline of Christ’s life, this is the beginning of his last year of ministry. The Passover that we see mentioned in verse four is the Passover that took place one year before the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

Jesus has taken a boat across the sea of Galilee, and it tells us a large crowd followed him, they were walking along the shore not wanting to be separated from the man they had witnessed doing healing and teaching them. When Jesus reached the shore, the Scripture says that he went up on a mountain, this is not a mountain as we would consider a mountain. The word that is used in Greek here says a higher place, and on the eastern side of the sea of Galilee there were large plateaus known as the Golan Heights, and this is where they were, think of it like a nice flat hilltop that is sitting above the land around it.

This is our setting, a large plateau, that is on the eastern side of the sea of Galilee, a good distance from any towns or cities.

John 6:1-13

⁵ Lifting up his eyes, then, and seeing that a large crowd was coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, “Where are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat?”⁶ He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he would do.

This crowd walked around the Sea of Galilee to get to Jesus, many estimate that they had walked more than ten kilometers to get there. Between the four Gospels we learn that Jesus

had spent some time preaching and teaching them, and then as the evening approached, he looks up and asks Phillip this question.

Why Phillip you might wonder. Most commentators feel it was for one of two reasons. Phillip was known as the most logical and rational problem solver of the disciples. Phillip was the logistical coordinator of the disciples; he looked after the rations and other details as they travelled. He looked at the facts and liked to make his decisions based on those facts. Others believe that it is because it took place near Phillip's hometown in the region of Galilee, so Jesus knew if anyone could find a way to feed the gathered crowd in the region it would be Phillip.

However, the real reason Jesus asked Phillip is revealed to us in the Scripture itself. 'He said this to test him.' Jesus asked Phillip about feeding the gathered crowd to test Phillip.

Jesus Knew what he was going to do, even before he asked Phillip. He was not asking Phillip because he needed Phillip's help, so it must have been for another reason. Which brings us to the first lesson we have in the Scripture today, Jesus asked this question to Phillip so that he could teach something to Phillip and the other disciples.

Jesus was invested in training and teaching his people, He wanted them to learn to do his ministry. God wants his people to learn to do God's work, not just to get the job done.

When God is at work in this world, God uses God's people, so that we can learn. If God only cared about getting the job done, he would just do it. Think about the Great Commission, God's people are told to spread the Gospel to the four corners of the earth. Who is told to do it? God's people. If God's only concern was that the message of the Gospel get to the four corners of the earth, wouldn't he just send his angels to carry the message to everyone and be done with it. They could do it much faster and much more efficiently and effectively than we can. But he does not do that, because he is at work in us, while we are at work for him.

God trains his people to do his work. This is why it is the goal of the church to get as many people involved in ministry as possible, so that people can go out and do God's work. This is why if you have not served within the church on a committee or in some way, today is the day to start, because God wants to be at work in you so he can do His work through you, just as Jesus Christ is doing with Phillip.

'He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he would do.'

Jesus asked Phillip to figure out how to feed the crowd, even though Jesus already knew what he was going to do. Jesus always knows what he is going to do, he does not tell us, we might think we are in a time of trouble, in the abyss, worried about how we are going to deal with an issue or problem, and Jesus already knows what he is going to do. We can always take comfort in that knowledge, that even when we do not know what will happen, we can trust in God because God knows what he is going to do.

John 6:7

⁷ Phillip answered him, "Two hundred denarii worth of bread would not be enough for each of them to get a little."

Jesus asked Phillip, 'How are we going to feed these people.' Remember that Phillip is the one who usually does this for Jesus and the disciples, he is the logical, rational, master of supplies. By the way that crowd that Phillip was calculating for was five thousand men, five thousand men, not five thousand people, Bible commentators say that in the low end it was ten thousand people and on the high end closer to twenty thousand people. So, Phillip is trying to figure out how to feed a real crowd. He looks around at the gathered mass of people, doing some quick calculations in his head, and says that it would take more than two hundred denarii worth of bread to feed the crowd.

A denarius was a single day's wage for a working man, so two hundred denarii is somewhere between 7- and 10-months wages, depending on if you work 5 or 6 days a week. Phillip did all of his calculations, figured out the number of people, the amount of bread that it would take to stave off their hunger, because he says that cost is for each of them to have a little.

It must have been challenging for Phillip to be standing there facing this problem of feeding the crowd, knowing that no matter how many times or in how many ways he tried the calculations the answer was always the same. There was nothing they could do. Phillip knew that they did not have enough money to get the food for everyone, he also knew that because of where they were, that the reality was even if they had the money, there was nowhere nearby where they could buy that much food on short notice.

Phillip was facing a problem, given to him by God, to which there was no solution.

Phillip was facing a problem, to which Jesus already had an answer, he just did not think to go to Jesus.

Remember this is the beginning of their third year together. Phillip has seen many miracles and signs by this point. He has seen Jesus do the impossible, turn water into wine, heal all forms of disease and infirmity, and yet he looks at Jesus and says it is impossible to feed this crowd. He tells Jesus we just do not have the financial ability to feed this crowd, even if we only gave them each just a little bit.

Don't be too hard on Phillip, he is like most of us when we face earthy problems, we look at the resources around us and figure out if it is possible or not. Many of us have probably been in a situation like Phillip's, where no matter how we look at the situation we see no solution. And this is precisely why Jesus asked Phillip the question, to teach him, and to teach us, something about our lives when we are in those impossible situations.

As Phillip gives his answer of defeat to Jesus, Andrew shows up. Andrew was called the friendly disciple. He was always bringing people to Jesus, He brought his brother Peter, he now brings this little boy to Jesus, he brings gentiles to Jesus. Andrew loved to go out meet people and bring them to meet Jesus.

John 6:1-13

⁸ One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, ⁹ "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are they for so many?" ¹⁰

Andrew brings this boy, in the Greek it is a double diminutive, so it says a 'little, little, man' so it means a boy that was not yet a teenager. This little boy had his lunch with him, the one his mom had given him for the day, 5 barely loaves and two fish.

Now you might be thinking that it seems like a pretty good lunch for a little boy, but once again the meaning is lost in the translation, those barely loaves are hard crackers a little larger than the size of your palm, and the fish are called bread fish, or something like a sardine. Barely loaves were considered low food in those days, it was the food of the poor.

So, it was not a couple of trout and some big sourdough loaves, it's some crackers and sardines. This is why Andrew says, 'what are they for so many?' There is no way that 5 crackers and 2 sardines can feed the crowd.

Andrew points out that even with the little food they have they are in an impossible situation, even if they could divided those little barely crackers between two or three thousand times and distribute them among the masses it would serve no purpose.

Both Phillip and Andrew have told Jesus we are in an impossible situation. There is nothing we can do, there is no hope that we can feed these people.

John 6:10

¹⁰ Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, about five thousand in number.

At this Jesus tells the disciples to have the crowd sit down, no panic, no worry, no fear. Go out and tell all those gathered to sit down and get ready to eat.

Jesus basically tells all those gathered, 'I will feed you, but you need to submit to me and sit down.'

Again, there is a lesson here, if you want to be fed by the Lord you better be willing to submit to him. To do what he tells you to do in this world. You better be converted, committed and changed by him.

So, he tells this mass of people sit down and you will be fed, and when they do, the sign takes place.

John 6:11

¹¹ Jesus then took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated. So also the fish, as much as they wanted.

Jesus took those five barely crackers, and those two little sardines and thanked God for them. Facing the challenge of feeding somewhere between ten and twenty thousand people, Jesus thanks God for that insufficient portion that is in his hands.

He did not have enough, but he was thankful for what he had. Oh, how I wish the modern world would learn this lesson, to be thankful for what we have instead of chasing what we want. To thank God for every breath we take instead of whining because we do not have the latest and greatest piece of technology.

Jesus thanked God for what those five loaves and fishes were, but also for what they would become, the food to feed the crowd.

I tell you brothers and sisters this is how God sees us, we are not perfect great people when we come to God, we are often broken and insufficient, people trapped in lives of sin. And like that insufficient and broken bread we are changed and become something that is sufficient for God's kingdom and to be used for his purposes.

So that little lunch will feed the crowd, but first something else had to happen. The lunch was the little boy's lunch, and he had to give it to Jesus.

There is an important lesson here for all of us. When that lunch was in the hands of the boy it could do nothing, it could barely even satisfy that little boy's hunger. When it was placed in the hands of Jesus Christ, when it was given freely into the hands of the Lord it became Gods, and it became something much bigger. Little becomes very much in his hands.

So, Jesus takes those crackers and those fish and starts giving them to the disciples and telling them to share them with the crowd. Every time a disciple came back to him; he handed them more food to distribute. Everyone ate their fill as Jesus kept filling the hands of the disciples so that they could feed the crowd.

The disciples did not perform the sign, they were not the miracle men, but they took part in the miracle. Jesus used them to distribute the food to the people. Jesus did not need to do this, he was God, he could have snapped his fingers and had a small lunch packet arrive in front of every seated person, he could have just willed it and the stomachs of every person gathered could have been filled, he could have summoned up a great feast of wild boar and vegetables on tables if he wanted, he was God after all.

He did it this way for a reason, he was teaching and training his disciples to carry on his ministry when he was gone. He was showing them how to care for people with the things they have in this world, to humbly serve others in Christ's name.

I wonder how many times the disciples returned to Jesus before they realized what was happening, how many loaves and fish had they handed out before they started wondering where it was all coming from. The Scripture says that the crowd ate as much as they wanted.

In Jesus's day most people were looking to eat enough to survive, they never got to eat as much as they wanted. The Greek word used means they ate until they were gluttoned. At a time when most people were just eating to stave off hunger, when by Phillips estimates with would cost close to a year's wages to feed them just a little, they ate until they were gluttoned. Everyone ate their fill, including the little boy who had given up his lunch. He ate until he could eat no more.

John 6:12-13

¹² And when they had eaten their fill, he told his disciples, "Gather up the leftover fragments, that nothing may be lost." ¹³ So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves left by those who had eaten.

Everyone ate until they were gluttoned.

Jesus had taken a simple lunch of a poor little boy and feed the crowds. He gave them what they needed, not necessarily what they wanted. Jesus was showing us the giving character of God. He gave an all-you-can-eat lunch to a crowd of more than ten thousand.

This is the character that God is trying to build in his people.

Proverbs 11:24

**²⁴ One gives freely, yet grows all the richer;
another withholds what he should give, and only suffers want.**

The bread was multiplied because it was freely given from the little boy into the hands of Jesus Christ.

This attitude of being a giver is something that develops in people who have given their lives to Christ, a desire to share what they have, even if it is just a little, into the hands of Christ so that it can do His work in the world.

I will not tell you what to give, that is up to you to decide. Paul gives us an idea of giving in his letter to the Corinthians.

2 Corinthians 9:6-7

⁶The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. ⁷ Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

Be a giver to God, that little boy was not coerced or cornered before he gave up his lunch. He was convicted and changed by the Holy Spirit. He gave it up because he believed that Jesus was the Christ.

So be a giver of your time, your talents and your treasures to the Lord, so that they can be used for his kingdom.

Jesus receives and multiplies the gift of the little boy and once everyone gathered has been fed to gluttony, Jesus send the disciples out once more, this time to gather the leftovers.

Jesus freely gives, and he does not waste. There was a lot left over, twelve baskets, and these are not those picnic baskets you see. The Greek word here describes a basket that a fully grown man could fit inside.

God wants us to be both good givers and good stewards. He wants us to be looking at where we are as a congregation and where we should be. He wants us to build his kingdom here on earth.

God is trying to establish that he will give us all we need, as long as we are good stewards of what he has given us. If you want more Biblical knowledge, do something with the Biblical knowledge God has given you so that he can multiply it. If you want God to do something with your financial wellbeing, then make sure that you are honoring God and doing something for his kingdom with the money you have right now. What ever you want from God you have to be willing to give what you have freely into his hands and have faith that he will use it for his purpose in this world.

This sign reminds us that Jesus Christ is sufficient in every problem we face in this world. Too often we are like Phillip and think that what we are facing is an impossible task, too many times we are like Andrew and think the little we do have is insufficient to do what we need it to do.

This sign reminds us that when we are converted, committed and changed by the Holy Spirit we can give everything over to God, spiritually, financially, physically, emotionally. We can hand over every challenge, every difficulty, every problem, to Jesus Christ. It reminds us that we should have our eyes on Christ in all things, and that we can trust in his sufficiency, to bring us through all things, maybe not in the way we want, but in the way that serves his kingdom, as we walk as the Salt and Light of his Word in this dark and broken world.

Let us Pray,

Give Us Comfort that We Will Never See Death

Lord God, heavenly Father,
 your dear Son, our Redeemer Christ Jesus said,
 'Whoever remains in my word will never see death.'
 Pour out your Holy Spirit into our hearts
 that your Son's Word may come to us
 and that we may hear it, hold it,
 and commit ourselves to it with our whole heart,
 and in the midst of death find comfort
 that we will never see eternal death,
 for the sake of your Son,
 our Redeemer Christ Jesus.

Source: Veit Dietrich, d. 1549, Lent 5

Hymn #548: "Let Us Break Bread Together"

Let us break bread together on our knees;
 let us break bread together on our knees;
 when I fall down on my knees
 with my face to the rising sun,
 O Lord, have mercy on me.

Let us drink wine together on our knees;
 let us drink wine together on our knees;
 when I fall down on my knees
 with my face to the rising sun,
 O Lord, have mercy on me.

Let us praise God together on our knees;
 let us praise God together on our knees;
 when I fall down on my knees
 with my face to the rising sun,
 O Lord, have mercy on me.

Communion

Invitation to the Table

As we gather at the Lord's table we must recall the promises and warnings given to us in the Scriptures and so examine ourselves and repent of our sins. We should give thanks to God for his redemption of the world through his Son Jesus Christ and, as we remember Christ's death for us and receive the pledge of his love, resolve to serve him in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life.

Jesus invites us to this table and now we do as Jesus did.
 We take this bread and this wine, ordinary things of the world.

In these, Jesus has promised to be present.
 Through these Christ can make us whole.
 Come all of you this is the joyful feast of the people of God.

As Jesus offered thanks for the gifts of the earth,
 let us also bless God with great thanksgiving.

The Prayer of Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Holy God, Creator of heaven and earth,
 with joy we give you thanks and praise.

You commanded light to shine out of darkness,
 divided the sea and dry land,
 created the vast universe and called it good.
 You made us in your image
 to live with one another in love.
 You gave us the breath of life
 and freedom to choose your way.
 You set forth your purpose
 in commandments through Moses,
 and called for justice in the cry of prophets.
 Through long generations
 you have been patient and kind to all your children.

How wonderful are your ways, almighty God.
 How marvelous is your name, O Holy One.
 You alone are God.
 Therefore with apostles and prophets,
 and that great cloud of witnesses
 who live for you beyond all time and space,
 we lift our hearts in joyful praise:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
 heaven and earth are full of your glory.
 Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
 Hosanna in the highest.**

We praise you, most holy God,
 for sending your only Son Jesus to live among us,
 full of grace and truth.
 Sharing our joy and sorrow,
 he healed the sick and was a friend of sinners.

Obeying you,
 he took up his cross and died that we might live.
 We praise you that he overcame death
 and is risen to rule the world.
 He is still the friend of sinners.
 We trust him to overcome every power that can hurt or divide us,
 and believe that when he comes in glory
 we will celebrate victory with him.
 Therefore, in remembrance of your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
 we take this bread and this cup
 and give you praise and thanksgiving
 as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died,
 Christ is risen,
 Christ will come again.**

Gracious God,
 pour out your Holy Spirit upon us,
 and upon this bread and wine,
 that we, and all who share this feast,
 may be one with Christ and he with us.

Here we offer ourselves to be a living sacrifice,
 holy and acceptable to you.
 In your mercy,
 accept our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.
 Fill us with the joy of eternal life,
 that we may be your faithful people
 until we feast with you in glory.

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ,
 in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
 all glory and honor are yours, almighty God,
 for ever and ever. **Amen.**

The Apostles Creed

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
 creator of heaven and earth.
 I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,**

**who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
 born of the Virgin Mary,
 suffered under Pontius Pilate,
 was crucified, died, and was buried;
 he descended to the dead.
 On the third day he rose again;
 he ascended into heaven,
 he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
 and he will come again to judge the living and the dead.
 I believe in the Holy Spirit,
 the holy catholic church,
 the communion of saints,
 the forgiveness of sins,
 the resurrection of the body,
 and the life everlasting. AMEN.**

Communion

The Lord Jesus on the night he was betrayed took bread,
 and when he had given thanks for it, he broke it, and said,
 'This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'
 In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying,
 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in
 remembrance of me.'
 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup,
 you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Let us pray,
 Eternal God, we give you thanks for this holy mystery
 in which you have given yourself to us.
 Grant that we may go into the world
 in the strength of your Spirit,
 to give ourselves for others
 in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The gifts of God
 for the people of God

Taking of the bread

This is the body of Christ broken for you.

Drinking of the cup

This cup is the blood of Christ shed for you.

Prayer after Communion

Loving God, Christ our Lord, Holy Spirit,

you have nourished us, body and soul, in this meal.
 We have heard your love, so send us out to speak it.
 We have seen your love, so send us out to show it.
 We have been fed by your love, so send us out to share it.
 And let all things be done for your glory. **Amen.**

Invitation to Offering

Offering Prayer

Closing Hymn #707: "More Love to Thee"

More love to thee, O Christ, more love to thee:
 hear thou the prayer I make on bended knee;
 this is my earnest plea: more love, O Christ, to thee,
 more love to thee, more love to thee!

Through all that life may bring joy, grief or pain,
 work out thy perfect plan: true heavenly gain;
 only create in me more love, O Christ, to thee,
 more love to thee, more love to thee!

Pastoral Prayer

Loving Father,
 We come to you in prayer,
 trusting that you are with us in the ups and downs,
 the joys and sorrows of all of our day.
 We give you thanks for every sign of your presence with us,
 for every unexpected kindness,
 every word of comfort or encouragement,
 every sign of courage in the face of injustice,
 every hopeful step towards reconciliation amid conflict,
 and healing in the face of disease or danger.
 Thank you for your presence with us in all things.

We pray for those whose lives are caught up in chose and fear,
 We remember all who find the uncertainty of our times overwhelming and discouraging
 May those living in fear have the courage to go on in your company.

We pray for those who also walk the road of suffering.
 We remember before you
 those whose lives have been plunged into sorrow or despair
 through tragic death,

through critical illness or chronic pain.
and through complicated problems that seem to have no end
May all these know your comfort and compassion.

We pray for all those who are exhausted these days,
juggling more demands and fewer resources in their work or at home,
for those who cannot seem to get it right, whatever they do,
and for all those facing unfair criticism and expectations
in the responsibilities they bear on behalf of others.
May all these be strengthened by your Spirit of justice and mercy.

O God, we need the embrace of your presence, each in our own way.
Anoint us with your Spirit of healing and hope,
and bring peace to our lives and this world you love
In the name of he who died upon the cross for us, Jesus Christ we pray. **Amen.**

Benediction

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit
be with you now and forevermore. **Amen.**