*Flowers of hope*

Resource for worship week 3

A vase of flowers on a table

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You will need some flowers, a vase and a cross.

Romans 8:28 ‘In all things God works for the good of those who love him.’

Read through slowly John 14:1-6

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me.**2**My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? **3**And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. **4**You know the way to the place where I am going.”

**5**Thomas said to him, “Lord, we don’t know where you are going, so how can we know the way?” **6**Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

**Reflection:**

Whenever guests come to say, Judith is usually busy getting their room ready, making beds, tidying the room, perhaps putting up fresh curtains and adding those little bits of decoration that are most fitting. Last of all, just before our guests arrive, Judith will pop some fresh flowers in a vase and place it by the bedside. It’s the final touch indicating all is ready. On Easter day in our churches, we have a cross upon which we place a flower in memory of a loved one, as we come up to communion. The cross, which starts of as a bare piece of wood, is transformed into a garden of yellow, red, white and orange carnations. It speaks to me of our Lord’s work being finished. Jesus spoke of his going to prepare a place for us in his Father’s house, a place of peace, joy and everlasting life. By faith we receive this promise and for our loved ones we place a flower on the cross, the final detail that welcomes them home.

**Prayer Activity**

A close up of a flower

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Take hold of a flower(s). Take a moment to lift your loved ones to the Lord. Give thanks to the Lord for his promise of a heavenly home for all who believe, and for his death and resurrection by which it is made possible. Place the flower(s) in the vase by the cross, entrusting all to the Lord.

Reflect on the following poem entitled Empty Cross *by Noelle Briggs*

A windmill on a cloudy day

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Empty cross,

Empty grave clothes,

Empty tomb

Yet each **is** full

Full to overflowing

With love,

With light,

With hope,

With LIFE

Through Your

Amazing sacrifice

Thank you

Think of how our Lord fills our emptiness with his love, our darkness with light, our despair with hope and our death with his life.

**Time of prayer**

In faith and hope we pray to our Lord

Who has overcome death and reigns in glory.

Light of the world,

Illumine the hearts and minds of our leaders

May they be guided by your wisdom

That their policies and decisions may keep us safe and well.  
Lord, hear us,  
**Lord, graciously hear us.**

Lord of life,

We thank you for health service and all carers, nurses and doctors

Equip them and protect them

Uphold them and sustain them

A picture containing drawing

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Encourage and surround them with your love

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

Lord of all hope,

We pray for those in darkness and despair,

Those who are anxious and fearful;

Assure them of your presence

and grant them peace of mind and heart  
Lord, hear us,  
**Lord, graciously hear us.**

Lord of healing,

We pray for the sick and unwell,

For those in isolation and denied family access:

Restore them to health and bring an end to their suffering,

Reunite them with their families and protect all from harm.

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

Lord of all comfort,

We pray for the dying and those who are grieving:

Draw near and speak your words of eternal life.

In your compassion, walk alongside

and assure them of your loving presence.  
Lord, hear us,  
**Lord, graciously hear us.**

Lord of all grace,

We pray for our community,  
Pour out upon us your Spirit of unity and loving concern

That we may care for one another and be sheltered under your wings.   
Lord, hear us,  
**Lord, graciously hear us.**

We commend ourselves, and all for whom we pray,  
to the mercy and protection of God.  
Merciful Father,  
**accept these prayers  
for the sake of your Son,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

*A song to sing or reflect on:*

I will sing the wondrous story

Of the Christ who died for me –

How He left the realms of glory

For the cross on Calvary.

Yes, I’ll sing the wondrous story

Of the Christ who died for me –

Sing it with the saints in glory,

Gathered by the crystal sea.

I was lost but Jesus found me,

A drawing of a person

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Found the sheep that went astray,

Raised me up and gently led me

Back into the narrow way.

Days of darkness still may meet me,

Sorrows path I oft may tread.

But His presence still is with me,

By His guiding hand I’m led.

He will keep me till the river

Rolls its waters at my feet.

Then He’ll bear me safely over,

Made by grace for glory meet.

Yes, I’ll sing the wondrous story

Of the Christ who died for me –

Sing it with the saints in glory,

Gathered by the crystal sea.

*Closing prayer*

May Christ,

who overcame sin and death, being raised to new life,

fill you with renewed hope and joy. Amen.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.