Service for Epiphany 4

Welcome:

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father

and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you

**And also with you.**

**Loving God, we have come to worship you.**

**Help us to pray to you in faith,**

**To sing your praise with gratitude,**

**And to listen to your word with eagerness;**

**Through Christ our Lord.** **Amen.**

Opening hymn: Longing for Light

Longing for light, we wait in darkness,

Longing for truth, we turn to you

Make us your own, your holy people

Light for the world to see.

*Christ be our light!*

*Shine in our hearts,*

*Shine through the darkness.*

*Christ be our light!*

*Shine in your church, gathered today.*

Longing for peace, our world is troubled.

Longing for hope, many despair.

Your word alone has power to save us

Make us your living voice.

Longing for food, many are hungry.

Longing for water, many still thirst.

Make us your bread, broken for others

Shared until all are fed.

Longing for shelter, many are homeless,

Longing for warmth, many are cold.

Make us your building, sheltering others,

Walls made of living stone.

Many the gifts, many the people,

Many the hearts that yearn to belong.

Let us be servants to one another,

Making your kingdom come.

Confession:

The gospel calls us to turn away from sin and be faithful to Christ.

As we offer ourselves to him in penitence and faith,

We renew our confidence and trust in his mercy.

**Most merciful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ**

**We confess that we have sinned in thought, word and deed.**

**We have not loved you with our whole heart.**

**We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.**

**In your mercy forgive what we have been,**

**Help us to amend what we are and direct what we shall be;**

**That we may do justly, love mercy**

**And walk humbly with you, our God. Amen.**

May the God of love and power

Forgive us and free us from our sins

Heal and strengthen us by his Spirit

And raise us to new life in Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Reading: Nehemiah 1:1-11

A godly concern:

Chorus: Faithful One

Faithful One so unchanging

Ageless One, You’re my rock of peace.
Lord of all, I depend on You.

I call out to You again and again.

I call out to You, again and again.

You are my rock in times of trouble,

You lift me up when I fall down;

All through the storm

Your love is the anchor –

My hope is in You alone.

Nehemiah’s choice:

Prayers:

Lord your word says;

If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves and pray and turn from their wicked ways and seek my face, then I will hear from heaven and heal their land.

This week is holocaust remembrance week and for this we light a candle of remembrance for all those who suffered.

**Candle is lit**

Also this week we have passed the 100,000 individuals who have died because of COVID-19. We pray for those left behind, husbands, wives, sons and daughters and ask that you would comfort them in Jesus name. **Amen**

God our rock, we pray for all in our communities, for those who are isolated and are finding life difficult and for our schools and pubs and for those who have lost their jobs and all who fear for the future. We also pray for those affected by the mill disaster as once again it is in the news. Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer**

We pray for refugees and asylum seekers and all those working as slaves in this country and abroad and all suffering from hunger and wars. In Jesus name. **Amen**

Lord this week we ask for your mercy, we feel the wrath of the virus in our lands

The devastation of death

The earthquake of lost income, where families tremble

In this unsettling time allow us to climb on your knee for we are tugging at your garments as Elisha did of Elijah when he was taken up to heaven in a chariot, we will not let go.

We are not empty voices Lord

Look upon us, we seek your face, turn your eyes upon us in this wrathful time,

we ask for mercy, for deliverance from evil. **Amen**

We pray for those working the NHS, for teachers and those who have to keep going into work in spite of the danger of catching Covid 19. We pray for their safety and their families and for rapid vaccination. **Amen**

Finally, Lord we give you thanks for the good things in life for the winter sunshine for the bird’s song for the spring bulbs peeping up. We thank you that we are alive. **Amen**

We conclude our prayers in the words of the grace

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost be with us all forever more. **Amen**

We draw our prayers to a close with the prayer our Lord taught us:

**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.**

Closing Hymn: I, the Lord of sea and sky

I, the Lord of sea and sky,

I have heard my people cry.

All who dwell in dark and sin

My hand will save.

I who made the stars of night,

I will make their darkness bright

Who will bear My light to them?

Whom shall I send?

*Hear I am Lord,*

*Is it I Lord?*

*I have heard You calling in the night.*

*I will go Lord*

*If You lead me*

*I will hold Your people in my heart.*

I, the Lord of snow and rain,

I have borne My people’s pain

I have wept for love of them.

They turn away.

I will break their hearts of stone

Give them hearts for love alone.

I will speak My word to them.

Whom shall I send?

I, the Lord of wind and flame,

I will tend the poor and lame.

I will set a feast for them.

My hand will save.

Finest bread I will provide

Till their hearts are satisfied.

I will give My life to them.

Whom shall I send?

Blessing:

Eternal God, giver of love and power,

Your Son Jesus Christ has sent us into all the world

To preach the gospel of his kingdom:

Confirm us in this mission,

And help us to live the good news we proclaim,

Through Christ our Lord. A**men.**

The love of the Lord Jesus, draw you to himself,

The power of the Lord Jesus, strengthen you in his service

The joy of the Lord Jesus, fill your hearts

and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the holy Spirit

Be with you all this day and forever more. **Amen.**