

The United Benefice of
Warton and Borwick with Yealand



HOLY WEEK

*With thanks to the Land's End Churches in the Diocese of Truro
for the original version of this booklet*

My song is love unknown,
My Saviour's love to me;
Love to the loveless shown,
That they might lovely be.
O who am I, that for my sake
My Lord should take frail flesh,
and die?

He came from His blest throne
Salvation to bestow;
But men made strange, and none
The longed-for Christ would
know:
But oh, my Friend, my Friend
indeed,
Who at my need His life did
spend.

Sometimes they strew His way,
And His sweet praises sing;
Resounding all the day
Hosannas to their King:
Then "Crucify!" is all their breath,
And for His death they thirst and
cry.

They rise and needs will have
My dear Lord made away;
A murderer they save,
The Prince of life they slay.
Yet cheerful He to suffering goes,
That He His foes from thence
might free.

In life, no house, no home
My Lord on earth might have;
In death, no friendly tomb,
But what a stranger gave.
What may I say? Heav'n was His
home;
But mine the tomb wherein He
lay.

Here might I stay and sing,
No story so divine;
Never was love, dear King,
Never was grief like Thine.
This is my Friend, in whose sweet
praise
I all my days could gladly spend.

Keep us, good Lord, under the shadow of your mercy in this time of uncertainty and distress. Sustain and support the anxious and fearful, and lift up all who are brought low; that we may rejoice in your comfort knowing that nothing can separate us from your love in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Amen.

Lord Jesus Christ, you taught us to love our neighbour, and to care for those in need as if we were caring for you. In this time of anxiety, give us strength to comfort the fearful, to tend the sick, and to assure the isolated of our love, and your love, for your name's sake. **Amen.**

Holy Week

1. Act of Worship for the Morning
2. Act of Worship for the Evening
3. Holy Monday
4. Holy Tuesday
5. Holy Wednesday
6. Maundy Thursday
7. Good Friday
8. Holy Saturday

The Morning and Evening Prayers are for you to use however you wish or use whatever works for you at the moment. Following the prayers are some reflections for each day of Holy Week, to use alongside your daily prayers or to stand alone.

Morning Prayer for Holy Week

Opening Prayer by Mother Teresa

People are often unreasonable, irrational, and self-centered.

Forgive them anyway.

If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives.

Be kind anyway.

If you are successful, you will win some unfaithful friends and some genuine enemies. Succeed anyway.

If you are honest and sincere people may deceive you.

Be honest and sincere anyway.

What you spend years creating, others could destroy overnight.

Create anyway.

If you find serenity and happiness, some may be jealous.

Be happy anyway.

The good you do today, will often be forgotten.

Do good anyway.

Give the best you have, and it will never be enough.

Give your best anyway.

In the final analysis, it is between you and God.

It was never between you and them anyway.

Expressions of faith from the Northumbria Community

Lord, You have always given bread for the coming day;
and though I am poor, today I believe.

Lord, You have always given strength for the coming day;
and though I am weak, today I believe.

Lord, You have always given peace for the coming day;
and though of anxious heart, today I believe.

Lord, You have always kept me safe in trials;
and now, tried as I am, today I believe.

Lord, You have always marked the road for the coming day;
and though it may be hidden, today I believe.

Lord, You have always lightened this darkness of mine;
and though the night is here, today I believe.
Lord, You have always spoken when time was ripe;
and though you be silent now, today I believe.

Collect and Reading for the day followed by the Reflection

*Prayers we pray for the world, for our community, for our church,
for our family and friends, and for ourselves in our own words,
concluding with the Lord's Prayer*

**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 you,
now and for ever. Amen.**

Closing Prayers

**Eternal God, our beginning and our end, accompany us in this
day's journey. Dawn on our darkness, open our eyes to praise you
for your creation and to see the work you set before us today. In
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**

**To God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
be praise and glory today and for ever. Amen.**

Evening Prayer for Holy Week

Opening Prayer

Jesus Christ, today you reveal yourself to us

You help us in times of trouble and sustain us through our struggles. **Jesus Christ, today you reveal yourself to us**

You strengthen us when we are weak and guide us when we are lost. **Jesus Christ, today you reveal yourself to us**

You are with us in the flood, in the storm, in the drought and in the chaos. **Jesus Christ, today you reveal yourself to us**

You direct our steps to what is right; You guide our actions to what is true **Thanks be to God, today you reveal yourself to us**

Confession

Lord God, I have failed to be the person you created me to be, at times I have hurt others by word and by deed, by actions and omissions. I am sorry Lord. Please heal me and help me to forgive as I am forgiven. Amen

Forgiveness by Desmond Tutu

Victory is Ours. Goodness is stronger than evil;
Love is stronger than hate;
Light is stronger than darkness; Life is stronger than death;
Victory is ours through Him who loves us.

Collect and Reading for the day followed by the Reflection

Prayers *we pray for the world, for our community, for our church, for our family and friends, and for ourselves in our own words, concluding with the Lord's Prayer*

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 you, now and for ever. Amen.

Nunc Dimittis

**1. Now, Lord, you let your servant go in peace
your word has been fulfilled.**

**2. My own eyes have seen the salvation
which you have prepared in the sight of every people;**

**3. A light to reveal you to the nations
and to the glory of your people Israel.**

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.

Closing Prayer Mother Teresa

“We cannot find God in noise and agitation.

Nature: trees, flowers, and grass grow in silence.

The stars, the moon, and the sun move in silence.

What is essential is not what we say but what God tells us and what He tells others through us.

In silence He listens to us; in silence He speaks to our souls.

In silence we are granted the privilege of listening to His voice.

Silence of our eyes. Silence of our ears. Silence of our mouths.

Silence of our minds. ...in the silence of the heart

God will speak.”

Holy Monday

Collect and Reading

Almighty God, whose Son Jesus Christ fasted forty days in the wilderness, and was tempted as we are, yet without sin: give us grace to discipline ourselves in obedience to your Spirit; and, as you know our weakness, so may we know your power to save; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, Amen.

John 12.1-11

¹Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. ²There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him. ³Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. ⁴But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), ⁵said, 'Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?' ⁶(He said this not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse and used to steal what was put into it.) ⁷Jesus said, 'Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. ⁸You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me.'
⁹When the great crowd of the Jews learned that he was there, they came not only because of Jesus but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. ¹⁰So the chief priests planned to put Lazarus to death as well, ¹¹since it was on account of him that many of the Jews were deserting and were believing in Jesus.

Reflection

Mary brought her dowry to Jesus. Remember that a dowry is the value of the person. This was what some man would take when he took her as wife, she had to pay to be taken in marriage. She brought with her the society's view of her worth. And all of this she

gave to Jesus. Jesus took her gift but saw that the greater gift was that Mary understood his future, she brought the oil to anoint him for burial. This reading is filled with death, Jesus speaks of his own, the priest plot to kill Lazarus, and yet the story is filled with the scent of love, of gift and of value. Mary's gift was to say to Jesus that he was worth everything she had to give, and Jesus' gift you us is to say that we – his children – are worth all he had to give, his life. And he gave his life willingly. What worth has the life of God? He measured his worth in the lives he could save by giving up his own.

Prayers *we pray for the world, for our community, for our church, for our family and friends, and for ourselves in our own words, concluding with:*

Make your ways known upon earth, Lord 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 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. Amen.

Holy Tuesday

Collect and Reading

Almighty God, whose Son Jesus Christ fasted forty days in the wilderness, and was tempted as we are, yet without sin: give us grace to discipline ourselves in obedience to your Spirit; and, as you know our weakness, so may we know your power to save; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, Amen.

1 Corinthians 1.18-31

The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate." Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling-block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength. Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things – and the things that are not – to nullify the things that are, so that no-one may boast before him. It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God – that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. Therefore, as it is written: "Let him who boasts boast in the Lord."

Reflection

Not many wise, not many influential, not many noble... what a relief, for I don't feel wise or influential nor indeed noble, but we all have a place in God's family!

In St Levan there is a wonderful ancient pew end of the Jester. Carved into the beautiful wood next to pilgrim and the images of the passion is a medieval court jester. How unexpected! I think of 1 Corinthians 4.10 where Paul reminds us, we are fools for Christ. Why not today try to think about your fellow fools, those with whom you would have been sharing worship with and pray for them. For these are the very people who God has placed into your lives as family. It is sobering to think of how often families fall out, and yet God has called us to be one family! What does it mean for us to know ourselves as family today? "The foolishness of God is wiser than our wisdom"!

Prayers *we pray for the world, for our community, for our church, for our family and friends, and for ourselves in our own words, concluding with:*

Make your ways known upon earth, Lord 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 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. Amen.

Holy Wednesday

Collect and Reading

Almighty God, whose Son Jesus Christ fasted forty days in the wilderness, and was tempted as we are, yet without sin: give us grace to discipline ourselves in obedience to your Spirit; and, as you know our weakness, so may we know your power to save; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, Amen.

Hebrews 12.1-3

¹Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, ²looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God. ³Consider him who endured such hostility against himself from sinners, so that you may not grow weary or lose heart.

Reflection

“Let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us”
Being away from the building we all love, the church, is challenging but never more difficult than when we are looking at this sacred time of Holy Week and Easter. Yet it is where we find ourselves this week. Not being part of the liturgy and the wonder of the passion, death and resurrection as we normally would be – and I wonder if this will bring us to deeper prayer, or will prayer be more challenging.

For a while I was good friends with a marathon runner, and he would talk about the stages of the race, the beginning filled with energy and hope, enthusiasm and excitement. But a few miles in and the pain began, the muscles would tire, the road seem to rise higher and longer, and doubt would set in. Why do this? Can I do this? Would it matter if I stopped? It is too hard, and it is silly to

push myself. Then the second wind, the sudden rise in confidence and commitment.

As we journey through Holy Week, I pray for you. I pray that you may know the closeness of God, the love of God, the compassion of God to be with you always. This lockdown and virus really are a marathon to run, but this is the race set before us. And Jesus runs with us, and the Spirit will fill us with a second, third fourth, seventy times seven breath to give us the perseverance to the end.

Prayers *we pray for the world, for our community, for our church, for our family and friends, and for ourselves in our own words, concluding with:*

Make your ways known upon earth, Lord 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 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. Amen.

Maundy Thursday

Collect and Reading

God our Father, you have invited us to share in the supper which your Son gave to his Church to proclaim his death until he comes: may he nourish us by his presence, and unite us in his love; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

John 13.1-17,31b-35

It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love.

The evening meal was being served, and the devil had already prompted Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, to betray Jesus. Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel round his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped round him.

He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

Jesus replied, "You do not realise now what I am doing, but later you will understand."

"No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet."

Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me."

"Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!"

Jesus answered, "A person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet; his whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you." For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean.

When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. “Do you understand what I have done for you?” he asked them. “You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord’, and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

“Now is the Son of Man glorified and God is glorified in him. If God is glorified in him, God will glorify the Son in himself, and will glorify him at once.

“My children, I will be with you only a little longer. You will look for me, and just as I told the Jews, so I tell you now: Where I am going, you cannot come.

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

Reflection

Hand washing is now the THING we do. Wash hands not only for hygiene but now we must wash to make ourselves safer – becoming a less welcoming host for the virus. At the first “last Supper” we see Jesus making the disciples, his family clean. Then feeding them, to make them strong and ready for all that lay ahead.

Then he reminded them of their job – to love. Love one another. He said this after Judas had left, but there is no indication that Judas was excluded from this commandment. Love one another. Love the friend, the one who is easy to love, the one who is close, the one who Jesus loves. But also love the betrayer, the one who hurts you, love the one who destroys goodness, love the one who chooses not to love. But love is not excusing someone or giving them free rein to hurt.

When a child or a puppy (!) acts badly you redirect them, you teach them what is right, and what is wrong. That is loving, not the punishment but the desire to help them be the best that they can be, even if it means they won't like you for a while. Loving someone is making sure that your redirecting is kind and appropriate, not cruel or unjust. Loving someone is believing in them to be lovable. Believing in a future for them. Believing that they are worth loving. Loving is tough stuff. It puts the needs of others first and it is costly because those who love will get hurt.

Jesus loved us. He loved God. He loved us so much that for our sake, for the forgiveness of our sins he gave up his life. For you. For me. For those it is easy to love and those it is not. For the saint and for the sinner. Jesus lived died and rose again for them all.

Prayers *we pray for the world, for our community, for our church, for our family and friends, and for ourselves in our own words, concluding with:*

Make your ways known upon earth, Lord 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 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. Amen.

The Coming by RS Thomas

And God held in his hand
A small globe. Look he said.
The son looked. Far off,

As through water, he saw
A scorched land of fierce
Colour. The light burned
There; crusted buildings
Cast their shadows: a bright
Serpent, a river
Uncoiled itself, radiant
With slime.

 On a bare
Hill a bare tree saddened
The sky. Many People
Held out their thin arms
To it, as though waiting
For a vanished April
To return to its crossed
Boughs. The son watched
Them. Let me go there, he said.

Good Friday

Today is a solemn day in our Christian life, and one when we may choose to give up something – some do not turn on the TV others do not eat meat. What might you give up for one day as you remember the gift of forgiveness and life given through the death of our Lord?

Traditionally on Good Friday there is a Stations of the Cross Service. A series of prayers, reading and responsive prayer remembering the whole of the passion reading. I wondered if you may like to replicate this at home. The reading set for today is **John 18.1-19.42**. Get your bible and decide how you could divide the reading into the number of rooms in your home – then perhaps on the hour, or between 12 and 3pm the time of Jesus death, go to a room, read the Collect and a portion of the gospel and pray these responses:

**Holy God, holy and strong,
holy and immortal,
have mercy upon us.**

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Collect and Reading

Almighty Father, look with mercy on this your family for which our Lord Jesus Christ was content to be betrayed and given up into the hands of sinners and to suffer death upon the cross; who is alive and glorified with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Gospel John 18.1-19.42

Please use your own bible.

Reflection *used at any point in your worship*

Robert Frost wrote in *Before Mending a Wall*:

*“Before I built a wall I’d ask to know
What I was walling in and walling out,
And to whom I was like to give offense.
Something there is that doesn’t love a wall,
That wants it down.”*

Jesus’ life, death and resurrection were all about pulling down walls, those we build and those that close in around us built by others. The walls of shame and rejection tumble, the walls of exclusion due to health, wealth and faith, all tumble down. The wall between life and death also was destroyed that we can know and have confidence in Jesus’ promises to be with us in John 14.

What walls have you built – not for the proper isolation or social distancing but walls of anger or walls of not trusting or walls of not valuing yourself, or indeed the saddest of all, the walls that try to keep God, faith enclosed to fit our plans.

Jesus does not see walls, he sees people. He sees the needs of the whole person, emotional, physical and spiritual. Let’s spend time during this isolation letting go of guarding our walls, and letting God in, give God a visa for your life!

Closing Prayer

Most merciful God, who by the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ delivered and saved the world: grant that by faith in him who suffered on the cross we may triumph in the power of his victory; 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. Amen.

Holy Saturday

This day is traditionally the day of rest, and of preparing our beloved churches for the Easter services. Why not make an Easter garden, or decorate a branch of spring leaves with painted blown Easter Eggs for your home?

In the evening as the light fades or just before sunrise on Easter morning you could read the traditional vigil readings to prepare for the dawn of Easter.

Vigil Readings

Genesis 1.1 – 2.4a	<i>The Creation</i>
Genesis 3	<i>The Fall</i>
Genesis 7 etc	<i>Noah and the flood</i>
Exodus 3.1-6	<i>Moses and the burning bush</i>
Exodus 14.10-end; 15.1a	<i>Crossing the Red Sea</i>
Jonah 1.1 – 2.10	<i>Jonah and the fish</i>
Daniel 3.1-28	<i>The three young men in the furnace</i>
Daniel 6.1-24	<i>Daniel in the lions' den</i>

You may like to wake early tomorrow and with one of your own candles you can use the prayers for the Easter candle and Easter garden before breakfast! Or you may like to use the vigil readings and then go straight into the candle and/or garden prayers.

Easter Candle and Garden

This is the day when our Lord Jesus Christ was raised gloriously from the dead, crushing the power of sin and destroying the sting of death. Throughout the world Christians celebrate the mighty power of God as Christ calls us out of darkness to share in his marvellous light. May we, and all Christ's people, shine as lights in the world to the glory of God the Father.

May the light of Christ, rising in glory, banish all darkness from our hearts and minds. (Light the candle)

We hold our lit candle

The light of Christ. **Thanks be to God.**

Prayers at the Easter Garden

Alleluia. Christ is risen. **He is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

The angel said to the women, 'Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said.'

Matthew 28.5,6

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. To you be glory now and for ever. In your great mercy you have given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. By your blessing, may we who have prepared this garden in celebration of his victory be strengthened in faith, know the power of his presence, and rejoice in the hope of eternal glory.

Blessed be God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Blessed be God for ever.

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name;
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 you, now and for ever. Amen.

Alleluia Christ is Risen, He is Risen indeed Alleluia!

From Lent Positive Acts daily email

(it is a bit American but worth reading)

Many people love stories, so we're going to start today's mail...with a story. Once upon a time, there was a fluffy little caterpillar named Grace. She lived an ordinary, caterpillar life – crawling around slowly...eating...sleeping...and simply relaxing. Grace always had this feeling that God intended more for her life. More than what she was. However, she just couldn't figure out what God wanted. After all, what else could she do? She didn't have arms ... or legs, she was slow ... her only visible talent seemed to be eating leaves, and she didn't appear to add much value to the world. Still, in the back of her mind, there was that hope – that God would help her. Then, one day, things went from ho-hum to worse.

Her life, as she knew it, started to fall apart. She wasn't able to go out ... get food ... see her friends ... or do anything she used to do. In fact, everything went dark...and she couldn't even move. Grace thought that was the end. Her life was over. Things were dark...scary...and uncertain. And they continued that way for what seemed to be a very long time.

During that dark, uncertain time, Grace was changing in ways that she didn't understand. She thought about the things she could no longer do. And then began to see that, perhaps, some of them no longer seemed as important as they used to.

She remembered the hope she used to have – that God would help

her to become what God really wanted her to be. And she wondered why God would just *leave her* in this dark, scary, uncertain place.

When Grace woke up one morning, she felt a need to stretch, and...when she did, she heard a slight cracking sound. Then she saw a pinpoint of light. To her, it was a ray of hope.

So, although it hurt to do it - she stretched some more, and ...was able to see a little more light. Although it was uncomfortable, and sometimes painful...she continued to stretch, and slowly break through the walls that were keeping her closed in. Each struggle brought more light into her world.

And, when she finally managed to climb out of the chrysalis God had wrapped her in...while he transformed her life – she realized her world wasn't falling apart all that time. It was falling into place!

Grace had turned into what God had planned for her all along – a beautiful, graceful, butterfly! By going through the uncomfortable, painful process of breaking out of her chrysalis – she was now stronger... and able to actually fly, instead of crawling around like she used to.

God *didn't* abandon her. And God *didn't* forget her...or the hope God placed in her – that she was meant for more. However, to get her where she should be, God needed to basically take everything away from her - except her thoughts...and her life itself – while God transformed her life, through a metamorphosis.

Does Grace's story sound familiar?

Think about our current situation. You could say we're all caterpillars – like Grace. We were living our lives the way we thought they should go. And many of us had that same feeling as Grace – the hope that God intended more for our lives...and that God would help us to become what God wanted us to be. But

how?

And then, one day, like Grace, our lives as we know them - start to fall apart. We're not able to go out ... get food ... see our friends ... or do the things we used to do. It can be a dark, scary, uncertain time. Here's the thing: Grace had no control over anything that happened to her while she was in the chrysalis God placed her in – while God transformed her life. We do. We have free will, and powerful minds – that we can use during this time in our own “chrysalis”.

While this is a scary situation... it's also an exciting opportunity. And it can be a blessing in disguise. Our world has been turned upside down, and inside out. Many aspects of our old lives have been taken away from us. And we're surviving without them. We're also able to see a little more clearly what's *really* important in our lives...and in the world - and what's not.

The world will *not* be the same when the pandemic is gone...and all the restrictions are lifted. It can't be.

The real question is: *Will we be the same person?*

Or will we *allow God to transform us* during this time – so that, we entered into this pandemic as a *caterpillar*...and we emerge from it as a *beautiful, graceful butterfly*?

God wanted Grace to be more...and to live a life according to His purpose. However, God didn't simply transform her from a caterpillar to a butterfly – while she was crawling through the grass.

God wants *us* to be more...and to live a life according to His purpose. However, God doesn't simply transform us while we're sleeping...sitting in a classroom...or coaching soccer. God has now put us all in our own “chrysalis” during the pandemic. Whether we emerge from it as a caterpillar...or a butterfly – is up to *us*.

What's it gonna be?