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**RECOVERY SUNDAY SERVICE 2022**

**[A cross, or picture of a cross, is placed on a table or altar at the front of the meeting room. As everyone arrives, each is given a piece of paper or ‘Post-it’ and a pencil.]**

**Hymn**

Be still, for the presence of the Lord

**Leader**  
Welcome to the Recovery Sunday Wales Worship Service for 2022, an annual event for over a decade now when we have the opportunity to pray for, and give thanks for, recovery in the lives of individuals, in our communities, in our nation and around our world. Recovery from what? All those things that enslave individuals and society in addiction, be they substances, habits or feelings. It is an opportunity to acknowledge challenges, but also to celebrate that there are solutions, and to pray for all those enslaved by addiction and for all those who work to offer them the gift and miracle of freedom. ‘If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.’

We began today with a hymn that calls us to be still. All of us, from time to time on life’s journey, feel a longing for stillness and peace in the sense of getting away from problems, from the things that enslave us or threaten to do so. Sometimes we want to get away from other people. ‘Go away, let me be.’ That’s what we want to say at such times. But ‘peace’ in that sense isn’t always possible – we can’t always simply escape from situations, things or people, and, indeed, it may not be the best thing to do anyway. And people too often escape to places that don’t offer ultimate freedom, but rather addiction – to alcohol and other drugs, gambling, pornography, to name but a few of the possibilities. And work – the ‘workaholic’ syndrome can also be a very real addiction.

But we can all pray for a deeper peace. We have a special word for that kind of peace in Welsh – *tangnefedd* the inner peace that can be ours even in the midst of strife and suffering.

In our service this year, then, we will reflect on cultivating that miraculous inner peace in our own lives and on how we can lead others to experience the same healing.

**Reader [or all recite together]**

Psalm 91

**Leader**

As he approaches the Cross, Jesus promises to share with us the peace which was his own, that peace which was to sustain him in his darkest hour.

**Reader**

John 14:19-27

**Leader**Let us speak to God in prayer.

**All**  
We come before you today, God,   
with all our hopes and fears,  
our rejoicing and our regrets,

our freedom and our fetters,

asking you to fill all our hearts   
with that peace which the world cannot give:

your peace.

Forgive us all our failings,

and give to us anew your Spirit   
that we might walk in freedom  
and share your peace   
with everyone we meet on our paths,  
especially those who are struggling,

perhaps without our knowing and in utter loneliness,  
with any kind of addiction.  
Because in you is found true freedom,

in you is our only hope,

and from you we gain peace

in this world and into eternity.  
Amen.

**Leader**

Peace can offer us quiet and rest. And rest is a crucial part of life. Indeed, we are commanded to rest according to the principle of the Sabbath. And that’s not just about one particular day in seven, but a principle to be embraced every day of our lives – taking a break from time to time is as important, if not more important, than many of the things we otherwise achieve. After all, we are not human ‘doings’, but human beings – too often, we deceive ourselves into thinking that it is the ‘doing’ that defines us. We need to make space in our lives to celebrate our ‘being’.

**[Short time of silence]**

Nevertheless, having this inner peace means more than being calm in the midst of the storm, because this is a dynamic peace – and it’s stronger than the fiercest storm!

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**Reader**Mark 4:35-41

**Leader**In the midst of the storm, and the threat to the lives of everyone on the water that night, it is Jesus alone who is calm and at peace. But once he is awake, he acts in the most powerful way, calming the winds and the waves in an instant. That’s peace at its most dynamic. In fact, the word ‘dynamic’ is derived from the Greek word *dunamos* – power, energy – and the same element occurs in the word ‘dynamite’. God’s peace doesn’t retreat and avoid facing challenges – rather it is a force that allows us to free ourselves from the things which threaten us and enslave us and which also gives us the strength to help others to find freedom.

**[Here, a person can share a story which demonstrates the liberating and restorative force of peace in his or her own life, or how they have seen peace at work in that way in another life or other lives. Alternatively, everyone may be invited to reflect quietly for a few minutes, with gentle music playing in the background, about similar experiences in their own lives.]**

**Leader**  
I would now like to invite you to write on the piece of paper given to you when you came into today’s service one word, or perhaps someone’s first name, that reflecting on inner peace has brought to your mind and spirit. During the singing of the next hymn, please bring the piece of paper and lay it before the cross to present it in thanksgiving and hope before God.

[Tone: Caswall]

God of peace, restore us:  
may our hearts desire  
both the sacred silence  
and the tongues of fire.

Grant us times of resting  
so our strength will grow  
to withstand the hurtings  
that we all must know.

When despair, enslaving,  
tells us hope must go,  
peace, the liberator,  
answers firmly ‘No!’

God of peace eternal  
your recovery give;  
loose the chains that bind us  
that our land may live.

**Leader**

Peace in our hearts is also a force which can restore us when life has gone astray, when no other solution is evident in the face of addiction and depression. But that’s not an easy fix – it requires effort and fostering enduring hope. And we must walk together on the path of recovery. It is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to walk that path alone. Society as a whole, our whole nation, our whole world, all need to experience the miracle of recovery today, to turn us away from the apathy, selfishness and cynicism that can deny us our future as we face threats to our own existence and that of all life on earth, such as climate change and the threat of drifting towards nuclear war.

Let us pray.

**All**

God of peace,

help us to nurture recovery  
in all aspects of our lives.

If we are enslaved by anyone or any thing, lead us to freedom.

If we are oppressed by sin, lead us to repentance.

If we are despairing, surprise us with new hope.

And if we see the needs of others,

give us the wisdom to respond as best as our gifts permit.

We commit to your care   
our churches, our communities, our nation and your world,  
as we commit ourselves to release those who are kept captive,

and to work for freedom and recovery

in the power of your peace  
which you have shared with us through your grace.

Hear us

as we gather together our prayers

in the words Jesus Christ himself taught us.

[The Lord’s Prayer, in the form most familiar to the congregation.]

**Hymn**

Make me a channel of your peace

**Leader**  
May the peace of God that passes all understanding keep our hearts and minds in the knowledge and the love of God, and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**All**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all, now and always. Amen.

Should you require further information, please contact:

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