

## Midweek Meditation from Susan Cresswell

Hello, my friends, it's good to talk again. Up to now we have been thinking of our times spent at home. Now we are moving closer to a time when we can be in church again. We know it won't be as it used to be but it will nevertheless be wonderful to once again go into our own churches which mean so much to us and are loved by us all.

I would like to share some words which I found in my reading something which will remind us of our own worship gatherings:

“On Sundays we hold an assembly of all our members, whether they live in the city or in outlying districts. The memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits. When the reader has finished, the president of the Assembly speaks to us urging everyone to imitate the examples of virtue we have heard in the readings. Then we all stand up together and pray. When we have finished praying, bread and wine and water are brought forward. The president offers prayers and gives thanks as well as possible and the people give their assent by saying “Amen”. Then follows the distribution of the food over which the prayer of thanksgiving has been recited, everyone present receives some and the deacons take some to those who are absent.”

Now, having read it, when do you think it was written? Does it sound a lot like worship today? Well it was actually written by Justin, sometimes called Justin Martyr because he was beheaded for his faith. He was born in Palestine. His dates are about 100 to 165 AD.

Well, aren't we lucky that we belong to such a long history of worship? The Virus has stopped us going to worship in church but it hasn't broken the continuous chain of worship, a chain that is nearly 2000 years old. What a wonderful thing to think about! What a wonderful thing to bring true joy to our hearts that we, along with saints and millions of people, have shared faith together.

We can't wait to get back, can we? Very soon we will be able to go into church for quiet personal prayer. After all the worship in our homes won't that be wonderful, to soak up the atmosphere of our churches, to sit there in silent prayer inside?

At some time in the future we will be able to share worship together - not as it was before but how lovely it will be to share, pray and praise and revel in each others' company.

So think how lucky we are to belong to that huge chain of faith stretching back to Christ himself and organised into formal worship so soon after his death and resurrection. As you think, imagine that chain stretching back into history. Each of us is a link in that chain and think how wonderful it will be to return to worship; to meet once again; to strengthen our bonds of faith.

Here is a blessing of St Columba that he used for his people:

‘See that ye be at peace among yourselves, my children, and love one another. Follow the example of good men of old and God will comfort you and help you both in this world and in the world which is to come.’

Let us carry this blessing with us as we return to our churches to worship however we can, thanking God for that great chain of faith leading back to Jesus and the Apostles.