As we find ourselves living through a renewed phase of Lockdown, we see in the Gospel of John (20: 19-23) that, in part, the experience of the disciples, even on the day of Resurrection, was one in which they found themselves locked in and behind closed doors.

Their experience of Lockdown was interrupted by the presence of Jesus as he came and stood among them. He speaks into the depths of their fears and anxieties: ‘Peace be with you.’ We hear these words and know that they speak to us. We listen again for what he will say and discover that Jesus simply repeats himself: ‘Peace be with you.’ As we still ourselves, we hear those words of peace spoken and sense that they are spoken to us and to all who long to hear a word that heals and reassures: ‘Peace be with you.’

We pray:

Living God, speak into the depths of our experience,  
Speak the word that stills our fears  
And calms our anxieties:  
‘Peace be with you.’  
Speak your word to the lonely and to the broken,  
To the bereaved and to those whose world has crumbled:  
‘Peace be with you.’

Faithful God, speak to us behind locked doors  
As we remember others, who risk their own safety,  
In order to serve others:  
Peace be with them.  
Carers and nurses, doctors and ambulance drivers,  
Delivery drivers and shop assistants:  
Peace be with them.

God who inspires Hope, speak to us in the present  
And speak to us of the future,  
For though the doors are locked, in time they shall be open:  
Peace shall be renewed.
For those who lead the life of our Nation: Our Queen Elizabeth, First Minister and Prime Minister, and all who shape our common life, For us all: Peace shall be renewed.

God whose name is love and whose gift is love, Open our hearts to know you and to love you, To love you and to love our neighbour And as we do, to hear again: ‘Peace be with you.’ As we come to the end of our own strength May we find our strength in you and hear again: ‘Peace be with you.’

Signed by:

Rt. Rev. Colin Sinclair, Moderator of the General Assembly, Church of Scotland

Most Rev. Leo Cushley, Archbishop of St. Andrews and Edinburgh, Roman Catholic Church

Most Rev. Mark Strange, Primus, on behalf of the College of Bishops, Scottish Episcopal Church

Rev. John Fulton, Moderator, United Free Church of Scotland

Rev. Dr David Pickering, Moderator, United Reformed Church (Scotland)

Rev. Martin Hodson, General Director, Baptist Union of Scotland

Rev. Mark Slaney, District Chair, Methodist Church (Scotland)

Rev. May-Kane Logan, Chair, Congregational Federation in Scotland

Lt. Col. Carol Bailey, Secretary for Scotland, Salvation Army

Adwoa Bittle, Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

Rev. Jim Ritchie, District Superintendent, British Isles North District, Church of the Nazarene

Pastor Chris Gbenle, Provincial Pastor, Province of Scotland, Redeemed Christian Church of God

Bishop Francis Alao, Church of God (Scotland)/Minority Ethnic Churches Together in Scotland (MECTIS)

Rev. Donald G. MacDonald, Moderator, Free Church of Scotland