

Sunday 30th August 2020

This short act of worship has been prepared for you to use whilst we are unable to use Methodist Church premises. If you are well enough why not spend a few moments with God, knowing that other people are sharing this act of worship with you.

Opening Prayer

Lord, I draw near with faith. Open my eyes to see and ears to hear what you have for me, today and every day.

Amen

Hymn: StF 608 All Praise to Our Redeeming Lord

Sing/ Read /pray /proclaim the words or listen to it here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bhE-Moyghul>

All praise to our redeeming Lord,
who joins us by his grace,
and bids us, each to each restored,
together seek his face.

He bids us build each other up;
and, gathered into one,
to our high calling's glorious hope
we hand in hand go on.

The gift which he on one bestows,
we all delight to prove;
the grace through every vessel flows,
in purest streams of love.

E'en now we think and speak the
same,
and cordially agree;
concentred all, through Jesu's name,

in perfect harmony.

We all partake the joy of one,
the common peace we feel,
a peace to sensual minds unknown,
a joy unspeakable.

And if our fellowship below
in Jesus be so sweet,
what heights of rapture shall we know
when round his throne we meet!

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

A Time of Prayer

Lord God, we pray to you, as Father
Son and Holy Spirit, to praise you, For
You are our God. We pray to thank you
for all that You have done for us, for
you are always there. We pray to You
as our God, who made the world, died
for us, rose again to show us the way
to heaven, and lives in us all. We bring
before you the burden of all the sins
we have committed, and we say Lord
God, we are sorry for them. We know
that such is your Love, we are forgiven
our sins. Thanks be to you, Our God,
Amen

Today's Reading from the Old

Testament: Exodus 3:1-15

Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed. Then Moses said, 'I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up.' When the Lord saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, 'Moses, Moses!' And he said, 'Here I am.' Then he said, 'Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.' He said further, 'I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

Then the Lord said, 'I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. The cry of the Israelites has now come to me; I have also seen how the Egyptians oppress them. So come, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt.' But Moses said

to God, 'Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?' He said, 'I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you that it is I who sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God on this mountain.'

But Moses said to God, 'If I come to the Israelites and say to them, "The God of your ancestors has sent me to you", and they ask me, "What is his name?" what shall I say to them?' God said to Moses, 'I am who I am.' He said further, 'Thus you shall say to the Israelites, "I am has sent me to you." ' God also said to Moses, 'Thus you shall say to the Israelites, "The Lord, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you":

This is my name for ever,

and this my title for all generations.

Today's New Testament Reading:

Romans 12:9-21

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honour. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer.

Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but

associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.' No, 'if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads.' Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Time to Reflect

How often have we heard the story of the burning bush? Perhaps you first heard it at school or in Sunday School. Many of us certainly knew the basic plot as soon as we saw the heading. Yet, when we read it now, in these difficult times, perhaps it is the assurance God hears our sufferings that is what we need most from this reading, rather than a familiar story. If on our next walk outside we saw what Moses did, and heard a similar promise, would we rejoice? Yet, God is telling us to do that, without flames amidst our shrubbery.

The reading from Romans tells us, Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. In difficult moments, that is enough, to ask of someone that get through these times. What is astonishing is, it can be

sufficient if we will let it be. Not that we are ever alone.

Listening to what God tells us in our despair is often the hardest thing. Why did God have to burn a bush so that it would keep burning until Moses noticed it? Moses was in the depths of despair. We don't like to listen in our despair to anything of hope. Much of the duty of a Christian is to help one another out of the wallowing. To share our own grief's lessons with those who are in the midst of learning them. We should weep with those who weep, yes, and yet, more than this, we should pass the tissues and try and help them through.

At present, we are much minded to think of all that is wrong in our lives, of those dear to us being taken from us, or at risk of so being. Take thought though of all that is not awful even in our present miseries. For there is more goodness on show than at that burning bush each and every day, if we would but see it. It may be hard to see, yet that is why God gives us such lights. If we light a candle in a dark room, an experiment I recommend, you will marvel at how much such a small light can reveal. So how much more can a burning bush light up? Yet more than this, the light of God is alive in every Christian this very day, and it burns even brighter than the sun itself.

If you doubt this, take the Romans passage, and think of examples you have seen of each verse, one or two a day this week. You will soon see much

light, more than comes in at your windows in the bright summer days.

Do not let the evil that sits in the world overpower you. Leave such to the Lord, He will deal with the evil people, turning them to good. Focus instead on the good you can do. For if we all do what good we can, that is quite enough to make the world a very different place. If we dwell on evil, we will be overwhelmed. Yet instead of decrying all that is wrong, let us concentrate on doing good. If we spend our time doing our bit of Good, we do far more than all the handwringing in history ever accomplished. Do not let yourself think yourself weak, you have prayer, you have the good you can do for others with your God-given abilities. That is quite enough to overcome a lot of evil for other folk, if you would but set to it with a will. Thus, the True Christian does not just hold to what is good in theory. We do good. For are we not True Christians, all of us?

Take a time to sit quietly

A time of prayer

Gracious God, we bring before you our prayers for the world

We pray for all those who lack physical things, food, shelter, water, and all of life's necessities.

We pray for those who mourn, and those who ail. Lord, for those we may help, may our hands work quickly, and for those we personally cannot help, we pray for the hands that will.

We pray for all those who work to provide care and help to others. Lord bless them and keep them from tiredness and error, and those they care for, keep them from despair. We bring the names of those known to us before you...

We pray for all in spiritual distress, who struggle to hear your message, or to come to you in prayer. Lord, help them to heed.

We pray for ourselves. Strengthen us to come through renewed in faith in certainty.

We pray for our land and nation. Lord, help us all to endure, to do our duty and to serve you faithfully. May our land be brightened by the Light of Lord as we leave these times behind.

Lord, we ask these things, knowing that when we pray, wherever we pray, you hear our prayers. Thanks be unto you, Father Son and Holy Spirit, Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father

Hymn: Listen to May the Mind of Christ my Saviour(StF 504)

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/worship/singing-the-faith-plus/hymns/may-the-mind-of-christ-my-saviour-stf-504/>

or sing a verse of a hymn that comes to mind

May the mind of Christ my Saviour live in me from day to day, by his love and power controlling

all I do or say.

May the word of God dwell richly
in my heart from hour to hour,
so that all may see I triumph
only through his power.

May the peace of God my Father
rule my life in everything,
that I may be calm to comfort
sick and sorrowing.

May the love of Jesus fill me,
as the waters fill the sea;
him exalting, self forgetting --
this is victory.

May I run the race before me,
strong and brave to face the foe,
looking only unto Jesus
as I onward go.

Katie Barclay Wilkinson (1859-1928)

A prayer of blessing

Lord, as we go forth, may we see all
the things you long for us to notice.
May we be your people in all we do
and say. Amen

Original Materials by Thomas Smith

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Note: Sunday Worship will be
resuming from September.
Local arrangements will be in
place, including pre booking
your place. Please contact your
Steward for more information.

Video and print at home
services will still be sent each
week until further notice.
Please only attend on Sunday
when you are comfortable.