

Sunday 20 June 2021

This short act of worship has been prepared for you to use whilst we are unable to use Methodist Church premises. We invite you to spend a few moments with God, knowing that other people are sharing this act of worship with you.

Opening Prayer

God of power and majesty, in the silence and stillness of the time I give to you, be with me as I worship you. If I am weak in my faith, let me cling to the awesomeness of you and lead me to complete trust in you again. If I am faith filled, let me not take this season for granted and help me to grow deeper in love with you. Come, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Hymn: StF 20 Be still for the presence of the Lord. Sing/ Read /pray /proclaim the words or listen to it here
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y5S-zhHfDA>

Be still,
for the presence of the Lord,
the Holy One, is here;
come bow before him now
with reverence and fear:
in him no sin is found --
we stand on holy ground.
Be still,
for the presence of the Lord,
the Holy One, is here.

Be still,
for the glory of the Lord
is shining all around;
he burns with holy fire,
with splendour he is crowned:
how awesome is the sight --
our radiant King of light!
Be still,
for the glory of the Lord
is shining all around.

Be still,
for the power of the Lord
is moving in this place;
he comes to cleanse and heal,
to minister his grace:
no work too hard for him --
in faith receive from him.
Be still,
for the power of the Lord
is moving in this place.

David J. Evans (b. 1957)

Let us pray together:

God of power and majesty, we adore you!
We adore you for who you are: faithful,
holy, loving, powerful.

You are precious, gracious, merciful and life-giving.

Forgive us when we have taken our relationship with you for granted and have hurt you and hurt others. Hear us in a moment of quiet as we say sorry to you.

God of mercy, if we are sincere, you forgive us our sins and we thank you for that glorious gift of forgiveness.

Gospel Reading from Mark 4:34-41 On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side." And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him.

A great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, as the boat was already being swamped. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. He said to them, "Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?" And they were filled with great awe and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

Time to Reflect

As we turn to the word of God and reflect together, the verse I think that is

important for us in our reading set for today is v. 40. In v. 40 we hear the Lord Jesus saying "Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?" But before we go deeper with that verse, let's explore the reading a little bit more and then consider what those words may mean for our context today.

First, we are presented with the disciples in a boat. It's noted that Jesus is leaving the Jewish area for the first time and crossing over to a Gentile area. The disciples were seasoned fishermen so could have handled a storm, but it is noted that this storm is so terrifying that the disciples couldn't handle it and the waves were going in the boat (reminders of the Old Testament story of Jonah here).

Second, Jesus is asleep during the storm. The stilling of the storm is a story of Jesus' lordship over chaos and evil (water/the sea in the Old Testament is controlled by God and here Jesus is claiming that authority too). Maybe, Jesus sleeping through the storm was showing his authority and toughness.

The gospel according to St Mark (this is debated), is said to have been written to a community who are going through times of trial and suffering and that one of the purposes of St Mark is that it was written to encourage those who are going through such things. In later Christian art, the boat came to symbolise the suffering community and

perhaps would have taken comfort from the disciples' failure to grasp who Jesus is as in our reading.

It's similar for us, isn't it? We've had a tough time lately going through this pandemic. People have lost loved ones, livelihoods, people's mental and physical health has deteriorated. We could perhaps relate to the disciples in a storm and being petrified whether we'll survive. But as followers of Jesus, He calls us to trust Him.

"Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?" In the storms of life, we have two options. We can go our own way and think we know where we are going. Or we can turn to Jesus and trust in His life, death, resurrection, and ascension and follow in His path. May we all grow deeper in our relationship with Jesus, and never lose the awe and wonder of His majesty and power.

Amen.

Take a time to sit quietly.

A time of prayer

We come to the part of our worship now as we pray for others and ourselves. As we do so, I invite you to think about each specific focus in turn and end with "The Lord hears our prayer". "Thanks be to God".

We pray for God's world.

As we pray for God's world, we are mindful that we have not been wise, loving stewards of it. We have been greedy and selfish, rather than focusing

on the beauty and wonder, and encouraging flourishing.

We pray for world rulers, that they would rule with truth and justice, mercy and grace and that they would remember that all authority in heaven and on earth belongs to Jesus Christ.

Take a moment in silent prayer to pray for God's world and world rulers.

"The Lord hears our prayer". "Thanks be to God".

We pray for God's church.

We pray for the church worldwide, that we would unite in the common goal to worship and serve God together in a spirit of unity and holiness.

We pray for the church where we are and in a moment of quiet, we offer up to God our prayers for our church.

"The Lord hears our prayer". "Thanks be to God".

We take time now to pray for those who are known to us. We pray for those who are known to us that are going through times of trial that they would know God's peace and comfort. We pray for those going through times of joy, that they would know your love and not take this time for granted.

We pray also for ourselves, and I invite you to spend some time in prayer to God for yourself.

"The Lord hears our prayer". "Thanks be to God".

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father...

**Hymn: Listen to “My Lighthouse” by
Rend Collective Experiment**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IFBZJGSgyVQ>

A prayer of blessing

As this time of worship ends, we
ponder the words of the grace:

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

Original Materials by
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All

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Local Preachers from around the
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end of August 2021.