

**Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> May 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.

### **Call to Worship**

Be still, and know that God is with you.

The God who caused creation to burst into being in all its complexity and simplicity.

The Christ who entered life, and embraced its boundaries, finding a straight path through.

The Holy Spirit whose activity enlivened and equipped, and opened possibilities.

God who is three in one and one in three is with you, and all who join with you in worship right now without you knowing who they are.

Be at peace, for as you welcome God's presence, all of you is cherished.

### **Hymn StF 11: Holy, Holy, Holy**

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

<https://youtu.be/JwuDSw-9cUQ>

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!  
Early in the morning our song shall rise to thee:  
holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty,  
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

Holy, holy, holy! All the saints adore thee,  
casting down their golden crowns around  
the glassy sea;

cherubim and seraphim falling down  
before thee,  
who wert, and art, and evermore shalt be.

Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hide thee,  
though the sinful human eye thy glory may not see,  
only thou art holy; there is none beside thee,  
perfect in power, in love, and purity.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!  
All thy works shall praise thy name in earth and sky and sea;  
holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty,  
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

*Reginald Heber (1783-1826) (alt.)*

*Based on Revelation 4:8-11*

Let us pray together

Loving Creator, the source of life and love,  
we praise you for the beauty of this day,  
and thank you for the good things we enjoy.

Jesus, Messiah, we praise you for your courage and kindness in living your life and dying your death for all humankind. We are blessed by your rising from death to life, opening the way for us to follow you.

Holy Spirit of God, you reveal to us the things of God, open our hearts to Love, and shower upon us gifts which build up our brothers and sisters in Christ in peace and joy.

Holy God, amazing Trinity, as you gave yourself to heal us, help us to offer ourselves to you anew today, for you welcome and embrace all who respond in love to you. Amen.

**Today's Reading from the Old Testament**  
Isaiah 6: 1-9

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting high and lofty; and the hem of his robe filled the temple. Seraphs were in attendance above him; each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. And one called to another and said:

"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts;

The whole earth is full of his glory."

The pivots on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke. And I said, "Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; yet my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!"

Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. The seraph touched my mouth with it and said: "now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed and your sin has been blotted out." Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" And I said, "Here

am I; send me!" And he said, "Go and say to this people:

"Keep listening, but do not comprehend; keep looking, but do not understand..."

**Today's Gospel Reading: John 3: 1-17**

Now there was a Pharisee names Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God." Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above."

Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can anyone enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above. The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.'"

Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" Jesus answered him, "Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?"

"Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen, yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if

I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

### **Time to Reflect**

There are times when we enjoy a mystery – it's fun to work out the answer and we feel good if we can get there by our own effort.

But for the same reason, we find the mysteries we face in life more difficult; because our efforts to understand them can be frustrated.

Why is it that we have the health we have, and not that of others?

Why is it that we have the wealth we have and not that of others?

Why do some people suffer, and not others?

Why do some go hungry? Why must some travel far from home to find almost-safety?

What is the purpose of my life at this point in time? And why do I find this difficult if it's meant to be?

Why do so many people of the same faith disagree? Why do some people of faith try to force it on others?

Why is love so difficult to discern sometimes?

Your own mysteries may be very different to these. We listen for God, but do not hear. We look, but do not see. Like the people of Isaiah's generation, we get things wrong.

"The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes."

Jesus explains that no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above. We cannot perceive them as God does in this life; we have to be ready to receive fresh perceptions from the light of a love which came, not to condemn, but to save the world:

Including you: Including your mysteries.

Take a time to sit quietly

### **A time of prayer**

Holy God,

We listen for your voice, but we don't always understand. Help us to find the humility to accept that mystery, and to let you reveal your purposes in your own time; to trust you through every moment of each day, and leave our questions with you.

We wonder about our world, thanking you for the vaccines and medical help received by so many, and praying for any who are still frightened or disadvantaged.

We wonder about those who lead us, and ask you to speak into hearts and minds, to guide them in your ways of mercy and justice.

We wonder about those who are hurting,  
and ask you to be close to them on our  
behalf; to enfold them in love, to comfort  
them with your peace, and to offer to  
them moments of joy and happiness even  
as they travel through their valleys of  
shadow.

We hold before you the thoughts which  
come into our minds as we wait on you; as  
we listen, trying to hear, and look, trying  
to see.

“Lord, grant the courage to change the  
things which can be changed; the serenity  
to accept the things which can’t, but  
simply are; and the wisdom to know the  
difference.” Amen.

*Based on a prayer by Reinhold Niebuhr  
(1892-1971)*

The Lord’s Prayer  
*Our Father .....*

Hymn: Listen to: StF 451 Open the eyes of  
my heart, Lord

[Youtube.com/watch/watch?v=idQ1n3cdgf  
0=](https://www.youtube.com/watch/watch?v=idQ1n3cdgf0=)

or sing a verse of a hymn that comes to  
mind

Open the eyes of my heart, Lord,  
open the eyes of my heart;  
I want to see you, I want to see you.  
Open the eyes of my heart, Lord,  
open the eyes of my heart;  
I want to see you, I want to see you.

To see you high and lifted up,  
shining in the light of your glory.  
Pour out your power and love;  
as we sing holy, holy, holy.

Refrain

To see you high ...

Holy, holy, holy,  
holy, holy, holy,  
holy, holy, holy,  
I want to see you.

*Paul Baloche*

A prayer of blessing

May God the Faith, God the Son, and God  
the Holy Spirit remain with you always, in  
all the glory of mystery, until we see him  
face to face. Amen.

Original Materials by V. Phillips

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We are grateful to all the Ministers and Local Preachers from around the  
Connexion who have contributed to Worship at Home. This resource  
is administrated by Ministries: Vocations and Worship in the Connexional  
Team. We aim to continue to provide these resources until the end of  
August 2021.