

Sunday 6th 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

Lord, I reach out to you in this act of worship, I know that you reach out to me in your Son, Jesus Christ. I long to worship you in the company of others, yet even alone I know that I can offer you the worship of my heart. Amen.

Hymn: Singing the Faith No 403 "God is Love"

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

[God is love: his the care \(StF 403\)](http://methodist.org.uk)
methodist.org.uk

God is love:his the care,
tending each, everywhere.
God is love -- all is there!
Jesus came to show him,
that we all might know him:
Sing aloud, loud, loud!
Sing aloud, loud, loud!
God is good!
God is truth!
God is beauty! Praise him!

None can see God above;
neighbours here we can love;
thus may we Godward move,
finding him in others,

sisters all, and brothers:

Jesus came, lived and died
for our sake, crucified,
rose again, glorified;
he was born to save us
by the truth he gave us:

To our Lord praise we sing --
light and life, friend and king,
coming down love to bring,
pattern for our duty,
showing God in beauty:

Percy Dearmer (1867-1936)

Let us pray together.

Lord, I gaze in wonder and thanks on the
World you have made, the World that
offers life, the joy of living, and the
knowledge of you.

I remember when I have failed to do your
will, and have acted, spoken or thought
selfishly and not as you wished.

Yet I know that, through the suffering and
death of your Son, my sins are forgiven
and my life renewed. Amen.

Today's Psalm 138

Thanksgiving and Praise

Of David.

¹ I give you thanks, O Lord, with my whole heart;

before the gods I sing your praise;

² I bow down towards your holy temple and give thanks to your name for your steadfast love and your faithfulness;

for you have exalted your name and your word above everything.*

³ On the day I called, you answered me, you increased my strength of soul.*

⁴ All the kings of the earth shall praise you, O Lord,

for they have heard the words of your mouth.

⁵ They shall sing of the ways of the Lord, for great is the glory of the Lord.

⁶ For though the Lord is high, he regards the lowly;

but the haughty he perceives from far away.

⁷ Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve me against the wrath of my enemies;

you stretch out your hand, and your right hand delivers me.

⁸ The Lord will fulfil his purpose for me; your steadfast love, O Lord, endures for ever.

Do not forsake the work of your hands

Today's Gospel Reading: Mark 3: 20 – 35

^{19b}Then he went home; ²⁰and the crowd came together again, so that they could not even eat. ²¹When his family heard it, they went out to restrain him, for people were saying, 'He has gone out of his mind.' ²²And

the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, 'He has Beelzebul, and by the ruler of the demons he casts out demons.' ²³And he called them to him, and spoke to them in parables, 'How can Satan cast out Satan? ²⁴If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. ²⁵And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. ²⁶And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but his end has come. ²⁷But no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his property without first tying up the strong man; then indeed the house can be plundered.

²⁸ 'Truly I tell you, people will be forgiven for their sins and whatever blasphemies they utter; ²⁹but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit can never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin' — ³⁰for they had said, 'He has an unclean spirit.'

The True Kindred of Jesus

³¹ Then his mother and his brothers came; and standing outside, they sent to him and called him. ³²A crowd was sitting around him; and they said to him, 'Your mother and your brothers and sisters* are outside, asking for you.' ³³And he replied, 'Who are my mother and my brothers?' ³⁴And looking at those who sat around him, he said, 'Here are my mother and my brothers! ³⁵Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother.'

Time to Reflect

To fulfil His mission on Earth, Jesus did not surround Himself with religious leaders nor with His family, but with those willing

to dedicate themselves to God's service. However, He did not reject the idea of families working together, as we see in His calling of Peter and Andrew, also James and John.

Similarly our Christian calling may involve family or be within the context of the church; or it may require us to work with strangers outside the context of our Christian worship.

The current pandemic has been devastating for many who have suffered as a result of illness, or of the illness of others. It has had a profound effect in other ways such as loss of work or ability to meet with others.

It has also meant that many have had to depend on others to meet some of the needs of life. For some this has meant relying on family, friends or neighbours. Others have had to turn to a stranger.

When Jesus speaks of those doing the will of God being his Mother, Brothers or Sisters, He does not mean that they are literally his blood relatives. He means that those people are part of His life, as if family.

As we serve God we should welcome those willing to work with us to proclaim God's Love and to show His Love in the world. It may feel that they mean as much to us as our family. This doesn't lessen the meaning of family, but elevates the importance of fellow workers, those whom we serve and those who meet our needs at this time through Jesus, our Lord.

Take time to sit quietly

A time of prayer

I thank you, Lord, for the gift of your Son: for His life, His sufferings and death and for His Resurrection and Ascension, for the witness, salvation and hope He gives.

I thank you for the gift of Your Holy Spirit to those who have come to you, and especially for the gift of that Spirit in your Church.

I pray for the needs of the World, and for who are in need: for the sick, the hungry, the lonely, those who mourn the loss of loved ones, the homeless, those without hope. I pray for those in need who are known to me (for.....). I give thanks for those who seek to help and comfort those in need.

I pray for those whose lives affect others. May they know Your Love and seek to fulfil your will.

Lord, as we continue to deal with the Coronavirus pandemic I give thanks and pray for those who do your will in dealing with the suffering it causes and helping us to meet the challenges it presents.

I pray that in my own life I can better know your Love, and may be strengthened by your Spirit to follow you. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer *Our Father*

Hymn: Singing the Faith No 685 "In Christ there is no East or West"

<https://youtu.be/GG8hzY1OoM4> or sing a verse of a hymn that comes to mind

In Christ there is no east or west,
in him no south or north,
but one great fellowship of love
throughout the whole wide earth.

In him shall true hearts everywhere
their high communion find;

his service is the golden cord
close-binding humankind.

Join hands then all the human race,
whate'er your nation be;
all children of the living God
are surely kin to me.

In Christ now meet both east and west,
in him meet south and north;
all Christlike souls are one in him,
throughout the whole wide earth.

John Oxenham, pseud. (1852-1941)

A prayer of blessing

Christ be with me, Christ within me,
Christ behind me, Christ before me,
Christ beside me, Christ to win me,
Christ to comfort and restore me.
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,
Christ in hearts of all that love me,
Christ in mouth of friend and stranger.

May the blessing of God the Father, Son
and Holy Spirit be with me and all who
share in your worship this day and for
ever.

(Includes v5 from Hymns and Psalms No
695)

Original Materials by Ralph Frankland

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Local Churches 665310

We are grateful to all the Ministers and
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aim to continue to provide these
resources until the end of August 2021.