

Teddington Circuit Worship at Home Sheets

Sunday 27th September

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. With thanks to Jill Harker, Mark Gilks and the Connexional team.

Opening Prayer

As we still ourselves we recognise that wherever we are, we are in God's presence and the God we know in Jesus waits patiently for us.

Lord our God, help us to know your ways and teach us your paths.

Lead us in your truth for you are the God of our salvation.

Hymn: StF3 Eternal God

Sing/ Read /pray /proclaim the words

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/worship/singing-the-faith-plus/hymns/eternal-god-your-loves-tremendous-glory-stf-3/>

Eternal God, your love's tremendous glory cascades through life in overflowing grace, to tell creation's meaning in the story of love evolving love from time and space.

Eternal Son of God, uniquely precious, in you, deserted, scorned and crucified, God's love has fathomed sin and death's deep darkness, and flawed humanity is glorified.

Eternal Spirit, with us like a mother, embracing us in love serene and pure: you nurture strength to follow Christ our brother, as full-grown children, confident and sure.

Love's trinity, self-perfect, self-sustaining; love which commands, enables and obeys: you give yourself, in boundless joy, creating one vast increasing harmony of praise.

We ask you now, complete your image in us; this love of yours, our source and guide and goal. May love in us, seek love and serve love's purpose, till we ascend with Christ and find love whole.

Alan Gaunt (b. 1935)

Let us pray together

Loving God, all worship and adoration belongs to you for you alone are Lord, you alone are the mighty God, Creator of all that is good.

And yet you are closer than our very breath.

You are closer than my breath and I thank you Lord that you are always with me,

whether I know it or not,

whether I recognise it or not,

whether I delight in it or not.

You are always there to comfort and to challenge

Thank you for your saving presence.

Amen

You might like to bring to mind the things you are sorry for this week, confident in God's loving mercy and forgiveness.

Today's Reading from the Old Testament

Psalm 25

Today's Gospel Reading: Philippians 2:1-13

Time to Reflect

I wonder what brings you JOY?

In the opening words from Paul in his letter to the Philippians, he says what is going to complete his **joy**. He is already very happy with the way that the Philippians are responding to his teaching and how they are developing as a church without him being actually present, but there is something more he is looking for.

He seems to sense that there is some difference of opinion among them and that makes him unhappy.

JOY is a very special word – we don't use it very often.

We may say something gives us pleasure or happiness, but joy?

Think over the past few months and I guess there are not many things which you have felt very joyful about. But think back

to that wonderful spring we had – that certainly brought me joy.

Then when the restrictions began to be lifted and we could meet with friends and family that was a **joy**.

Simple things in a way, but it probably increased our awareness of the importance of valuing the out-of-doors and valuing our relationships with people we love and care about.

Now we are able to worship together, do we feel the **joy** of being together in fellowship, even if we cannot sing, which may curtail the **joy** for many of us.

We sometimes sing “Give me joy in my heart keep me praising” and we can’t do that in reality which is hard.

It is very un-Methodist not to be able to sing, or to be able to greet people with a friendly hug or a warm handshake.

But at least we are back to some form of familiarity, though I would not call it normal!

But what was Paul talking about for the Philippians?

What was it that he said would give him joy?

He was calling for unity of spirit – that they be united with God and each other and not allow any discord to arise to spoil that unity of spirit. And how should they achieve that?

By following the example of Christ.

The NIV puts it “**Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus**”, and in the NRSV “**Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus**”.

So what is this attitude or mind that we need to look at? In this

passage Paul says the great characteristics of Jesus’ life were **humility, obedience and selflessness**.

He had come not to dominate but to serve.

He did not come to follow his own way, but only God’s way.

He did not desire to exalt himself, but to give God the praise and glory for anything he achieved.

Words from the Psalm appointed for today show that the Psalmist probably 1000 years before

Christ recognized the need to be humble and obedient and self-effacing. (Psalm 25).

“**Show me your ways, O Lord, teach me your paths; guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Saviour, and my hope is in you all day long. He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way. All the ways of the Lord are loving and faithful.**”

So Paul says “Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus”.

So what did he do?

“**He humbled himself and became obedient to death, even death on a cross**” – he totally submitted himself to the will of God his Father and for the good of all people.

“**God exalted him**” – Jesus didn’t exalt himself, but **God** exalted him and gave him the highest place so that “**every tongue might confess that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of God**”.

By being humble, obedient and selfless Jesus was exalted to be Lord of all.

Paul wants more than anything for them to follow the example of Christ in all they do – to be humble, not trying to dominate others, but considering others better than themselves; to be obedient to God’s guidance on their lives, not following their own selfish desires; and to be selfless by looking to the interests of others rather than their own.

What do these characteristics have to say to us in our present difficult situation?

We need to walk humbly with God, as Hosea encouraged his people 1000’s of years earlier. We need to walk humbly with each other, not pushing forward our own ideas but being prepared to listen to others, and all we do needs to be to the glory of God.

It is a confusing world around us at the moment with the rules changing frequently.

It is not easy to remain calm and just shrug off the difficulties we all face daily.

But being humble I think also means being gentle – gentle with ourselves and gentle with others.

Jesus certainly showed us the way, so let us try to follow his lead. Amen.

May the mind of Christ my Saviour dwell in me from day to day, by his love and power controlling all I do or say. Amen.

Time to reflect – May the mind of Christ my Saviour

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dRTL0cMzTvs>

A time of prayer

Lord we have set aside this time to pray, yet as people and situations pop into our minds today and in the week to come help us to take time to hold them in your love and to pray for them.

Now Lord I use this time to bring my concerns to you. I ask for your Holy Spirit to be in me to guide my thoughts that I may pray in accordance with your will and for your glory.

I pray for those who have suffered this week...

I pray for those who have rejoiced this week...

I pray for those I have seen this week...

I pray for those I have longed to see this week.

I pray for myself..

Lord with me here, take these prayers in the name of Jesus. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father

Hymn: StF 530 To be in your presence

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=typ7cueKdT4>

or sing a verse of a hymn that comes to mind

To be in your presence,
to sit at your feet,
where your love surrounds me,
and makes me complete:

*This is my desire, O Lord,
this is my desire.*

*This is my desire, O Lord,
this is my desire.*

To rest in your presence,
not rushing away,
to cherish each moment --

here I would stay.

Noel Richards (b. 1955)

A blessing for you

May you know the Lord with you each day of your life, may you answer the call to listen and the challenge to follow.

And the blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit will be with you as you go. Amen

Other Original Materials by Rev'd Anne Smith

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