

# Teddington Circuit Worship Sheets

Sunday 24 January 2021

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

As we prepare for worship this morning – let us sing or say-

## Hymn: Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

<https://youtu.be/UnX1hRZi0-w>

Turn your eyes upon Jesus,  
look full in his wonderful face  
and the things of earth will grow strangely dim  
In the light of his glory and grace.  
*Helen Howarth Lemmel (1863-1961)*

## Hymn: Dear Lord and Father of Mankind (Stf 495)

<https://youtu.be/WqOnjmr9Ah0>

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

Dear Lord and Father of mankind  
forgive our foolish ways;  
re clothe us in our rightful mind;  
in purer lives thy service find,  
in deeper reverence, praise.

In simple trust like theirs who heard  
beside the Syrian sea  
the gracious calling of the Lord,  
let us, like them, without a word  
rise up and follow thee.

O sabbath rest by Galilee!  
O calm of hills above,  
where Jesus knelt to share with thee  
the silence of eternity,  
interpreted by love!

With that deep hush subduing all  
our words and works that drown  
the tender whisper of thy call,  
as noiseless let thy blessing fall  
as fell thy manna down.

Drop thy still dews of quietness,  
till all our strivings cease;  
take from our souls the strain and stress,  
and let our ordered lives confess  
the beauty of thy peace.

Breathe through the heats of our desire  
thy coolness and thy balm;  
let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;  
speak through the earthquake, wind, and fire,  
O still small voice of calm!

*John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-1892)*

## Let us pray together

Lord God, despite the restrictions placed upon us and the circumstances in which we are living in these days, we are thankful that we can turn our eyes upon you to praise and worship you the living God, drawing comfort in the knowledge of your gracious and compassionate nature.

We are conscious Lord of those who have not been able to meet with others, concerned perhaps not to be in other people's company because of health reasons. We think of them now, think of them sitting where they normally would be on a Sunday in church. ....We ask you Lord, to bless them, just where they are now, uniting us together through the love of Christ. Amen.

## Prayer of confession

Gracious God, you offer us new life in Christ, yet so often we try to live in our own way and in our own strength. We stray from the paths you want us to follow. Forgive us for our half-hearted efforts, our self-centredness, our selfish prayers. Challenge our minds and hearts and lead us towards your truth.

Hear good news. For all who put their trust in Christ. Jesus says: 'Your sins are forgiven.' Amen. Thanks be to God

## A Reflection from the Psalms

When you hear or read the word “fortress” what do you picture in your mind? Maybe you visualise one of the many castles or forts that are scattered around our countryside, that you have visited on your holidays or on a day trip.

Most of them are found on high ground so that those inside had a good view of the surrounding area and therefore able to spot any potential invaders. These structures were built to last and many are still completely intact, if a little weather beaten. The walls of such buildings are extremely thick in order to withstand enemy attacks and by and large were very successful in keeping intruders at bay. They would also, in many cases have a lookout tower, which was the highest part of the building and gave a terrific view of the area. Many of these castles and forts are now tourist attractions and a tour around them gives us an insight as to what life was like in a bygone era.

The dictionary definition of “fortress” is – A military stronghold It was a place of safety that an army could retreat to after a long day on the battlefield. The word fortress is often used in sporting circles. It describes a ground where the home team rarely loses. Take Anfield, the home of Liverpool, for example. Liverpool have gone a staggering 68 league games without defeat. Their last time they lost at “fortress” Anfield was way back on 23rd April 2017!! It is certainly a stronghold as visiting teams almost sense defeat before they turn up.

The days of using forts and castles as places of protection in times of war are long gone, but we are involved in a spiritual battle and are in constant need of protection. The Psalms contain several verses describing God as “our” fortress. For example: -  
Psalm 18:2 The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer, my God is my rock in whom I take refuge. He is my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.  
Psalm 31:2 Be my rock of refuge a strong fortress to save me  
Psalm 62:6 He alone is my rock and my salvation; He is my fortress, I shall never be shaken.

The walls of fortresses were built to withstand attacks from the enemy and could not be shaken. They were

built on firm foundations, unlike the foolish man who built his house on the sand.

If our lives are built on the firm foundations of Jesus Christ we can say with the Psalmist that we shall never be shaken, even at a time of a global pandemic and the turmoil that has brought to our lives, because we are found within the stronghold of His protecting arms.

**Amen**

**Today's Reading from the Old Testament** Jonah 3:1-5,10

**Today's Gospel Reading:** Mark 1:14-20

### Time to Reflect

Just as Jesus called Peter and Andrew, James and John, so he calls us to follow him. Just as they had to make a decision to do so, so do we. He calls us because he wishes to make us more useful to him, to make our lives more fruitful in the changing world around us. It's a challenge because to follow him, means letting him take the lead. If he says do it, we do it. If he says don't do it, we don't do it.

Following Jesus means accepting him as the way, as far as our lives are concerned, taking him as the truth. God's truth to us. It means accepting that he is the life, our life, and without him there is no life as God intended it to be.

So, if that is the case, the question is.....How are we doing - answering his call and following him?

You see, following Jesus is a transforming work, a continuing work because the day we came to the Lord was only a beginning of a conversion process that started and goes on and on. It really means 'our becoming something we were not'.

So, are we further forward now than when we made that commitment to be a follower?

We can answer that question for ourselves because we know, if over the years, we have been able to do things that before we just couldn't do. Like, talk to other people about our Christian experience, discuss God's word with one another, share our doubts as well as our joyful discoveries; being aware of the knowledge of God's help at our side at difficult times.

Can we say now that, looking back, we have known his presence and direction in our lives? Do we continue to do so? And what about the future? Those disciples Jesus called had no idea where his call would

take them. They just went with him and continued to follow him which is what he expects of us too.

Take a time to sit quietly

### **A time of prayer**

Lord God, throughout history you have called people to respond to your challenge to follow you, undaunted by the task to which they were called believing that you would guide and lead them, inspire and enable them to fulfil the work to which they were called. We give thanks for those whose faithful discipleship and friendship encouraged and guided us. Help us to learn from their example and to respond faithfully and willingly whenever you call. Help us to have faith to follow wherever you lead.

We ask these prayers in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and share together in the Lord's Prayer

### **The Lord's Prayer**

Our Father who art in heaven  
Hallowed be thy name  
Thy kingdom come.....  
Thy will be done  
On earth as it is in heaven  
Give us this day our daily bread  
And forgive us our trespasses  
As we forgive those who trespass against us  
And lead us not into temptation  
But deliver us from evil  
For thine is the kingdom  
The power and the glory  
For ever and ever  
Amen

***Hymn: Spirit of God unseen as the wind,  
(Stf 394)***

<https://youtu.be/uGiCOx1obNg>

Spirit of God, unseen as the wind,  
gentle as is the dove,  
teach us the truth and help us believe,  
show us the Saviour's love.

You spoke to us long, long ago,  
gave us the written word;  
we read it still, needing its truth,  
through it God's voice is heard.

Without your help we fail our Lord,  
we cannot live his way;

we need your power, we need your strength,  
following Christ each day.

*Margaret V. Old (1932-2001)*

### **A prayer of blessing**

May the Lord bless us and keep us in his love as we answer his call to follow and serve him in the world today. Amen

Original Materials by Keith Edlington

All

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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.