

# Teddington Circuit Worship Sheets

**Sunday 9<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.

## **Opening Words Psalm 98:1**

Sing to the Lord a new song,  
for he has done marvellous things.

**Hymn: [All heaven declares, StF 293](#)**

All heaven declares  
the glory of the risen Lord;  
who can compare  
with the beauty of the Lord?  
For ever he will be  
the Lamb upon the throne;  
I gladly bow the knee,  
and worship him alone.

I will proclaim  
the glory of the risen Lord,  
who once was slain  
to reconcile us to God.  
For ever you will be  
the Lamb upon the throne;  
I gladly bow the knee,  
and worship you alone.

*Noel Richards (b. 1955) and Tricia Richards (b. 1960)*

Let us pray together:

Gracious and loving God,  
today we bring our praises to You, because:  
You are the maker and sustainer of all creation,  
upholding all things by Your hand;  
out of Your great love for the world, in Jesus  
You chose to leave the holiness and purity of  
Heaven, embracing life on earth, to live as  
carpenter and preacher, leading His disciples  
into all truth and calling them to mission;  
in Jesus, You showed Your care for all people  
and call us to receive the gift of life won at the  
cost of His death on the cross;  
to receive your forgiveness for sin through  
repentance and faith and Your healing by the

power of Your Holy Spirit that we might live in  
Your power and be transformed into the image  
of Jesus, in whose Name we pray. Amen.

## **Today's Bible Readings:**

### **Today's Gospel Reading: John 15:9-17**

Time to Reflect

In the middle of the Council Estate I grew up on  
was a large square of grass. It was known,  
somewhat unimaginatively as "the Green".  
There was no play equipment on it, not even  
the odd goalpost, it was simply grass. I suspect  
that the Council thought that any facilities  
would be vandalised.

The "Green" was not lit by streetlights so at  
night it was wise not to cross it on your own.  
But in daylight it was the location where lads  
(sorry, it really was only boys) played football. A  
gang would gather when someone's parents  
could afford a ball, and two goals were created  
out of jumpers on the floor. Then a ritual bit of  
humiliation took place. The two best footballers  
lined the rest of us up and took it in turn to pick  
the best players for their teams. Now given that  
my ball control was that of an injured  
rhinoceros I was always one of the very last to  
get picked. I would have loved to have been  
one of the chosen ones, but it never happened.

In life being chosen, other than being last to be  
picked, gives us a feeling of ownership, perhaps  
even one of honour. Knowing that you are  
valued is a key human need, and that's as true  
for adults as children.

However, in a competitive world, it's easy to  
feel underrated and unvalued. There's always  
someone brighter at school, faster on the  
sports field, more dynamic at work, or simply  
more physically attractive.

Yet the amazing thing is that so many people do  
not realise that they ARE chosen. Yes, chosen  
by the greatest judge ever, the creator of all  
there is and has ever been!

Jesus tells his followers (John 15:9-17), in  
discussions he shares with them immediately

prior to his savage death, that they did not choose him, he chose them.

The disciples may have reasonably thought it had been them who had decided to follow this incredible teacher for the best part of three years. But, oh no! Jesus chose them.

And the stunning truth is that Jesus also has chosen YOU. Why?

Most of us have realised that we are probably not going to reach the dizzy heights of fame and fortune. So, why has Christ chosen us?

What did we do to get picked to play for God?

The joy is ..... we didn't!

The choice of us has nothing to do with our talents or lack of them. We are chosen because we are loved!

The Gospels rightly say a great deal about love. Loving your enemies is a striking feature of the Sermon on the Mount, and Jesus endorses the golden rule of treating others as you would have them treat you. But this passage in John's Gospel is making two particular points about love.

In order to fully grasp these two points, we need to say something about the word "love". The problem is that the word is ambiguous for it translates several different New Testament Greek words. So, we need to borrow the word that Jesus is using in our John passage. It's the word "agape".

Agape is the quality that God has, it's about the good of others, rather than the good of your own self. It's the love that God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit share with each other. It's the love that means you'll give your life for someone else, just as Jesus gave his life for us.

When you are a Christian, you develop a good relationship with God. You take on God's characteristics as your own and you learn to love one another as God loves you.

And this is the first aspect of our love, our agape. It's a Christian community thing.

Jesus calls on the disciples to render to one another the kind of love that he has shown for them. Our love for fellow Christians is to be modelled on Jesus's love for us.

For the church family to effectively work in the world all its members need to experience the support and love- to-the-death of one another. We are to be a community of love.

This is a high bar, but we are empowered by the very love from Jesus to achieve this in our lives.

This empowerment drives the second feature of love/agape in John's Gospel. Love is action, in fact it is radical action.

The word "agape" is translated into Latin as "caritas", hence the English word "charity". Our love, our agape is to bear fruit. We don't just believe and worship, we act out that love. In the dark days of the Pandemic, it was so often Churches, large and small, who have run charitable projects. And this week we rally around "Christian Aid" to show our love in radical giving.

So, Brothers and Sisters, lift up your hearts for you have been chosen by Christ. You are chosen to be loved. You have been chosen to be empowered by that love.

To misquote the Beatles - All you need is Agape!

**Mark Gilks**

**Hampton Mission Partnership**

Take time to sit quietly and ask, this week, for whom could the way you live and act show that your faith in Jesus who truly lived, died and rose reflect the reality of the life changing nature of your faith?

**Prayers for others**

Lord our God, we pray for our mixed up, muddled and compromised world. May those who lead peoples and nations be inspired to work in ways that benefit all whom they are called to serve. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Where tyranny, violence or oppression spread injustice, may those who know the truth be stirred to challenge and transform situations, for the good of all. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Thank you for those who provide health and vaccination services. May such resources be shared among nations, that all humanity may attain fulness of life. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

We pray for Your Church that we may demonstrate the humility and love of Jesus, declaring in word and deed your immeasurable love. By Your Holy Spirit may we live ever to Your glory, that others may come to know their place in Your family. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

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

**Hymn: Listen to [Living Hope by Phil Wickham](#) or sing a verse of a hymn that comes to mind**

### **A prayer of blessing (based on Jude 24-25)**

To him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy – to the only God our Saviour be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and for evermore! Amen.

Original Materials by David Miller  
Hymns reproduced under CCLI: 1144191.  
Local Churches please insert CCLI No here

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.