

WORSHIP AT HOME

SUNDAY, September 6th 2020

Call to Worship: (Ps 149: 1-4, the Message)

Hallelujah!

Sing to GOD a brand-new song,
praise him in the company of all who love him.
Let all Israel celebrate their Sovereign Creator,
Zion's children exult in their King.
Let them praise his name in dance;
strike up the band and make great music!
And why? Because GOD delights in his people,
festoons plain folk with salvation garlands!

Hymn- Let all the world in every corner sing

(StF 57):

- 1 Let all the world in every corner sing :
my God and King !
The heavens are not too high,
his praise may thither fly ;
the earth is not too low,
his praises there may grow.
Let all the world in every corner sing :
my God and King !
- 2 Let all the world in every corner sing :
my God and King !
The Church with psalms must shout,
no door can keep them out ;
but above all, the heart
must bear the longest part.
Let all the world in every corner sing :
my God and King !

George Herbert (1593–1633)

Prayer: (Hallelujah is used to express praise, joy or thanks)

Lord, hear the music in our hearts!
Hallelujah!
We love you and want to make our whole lives
a great song of praise to you.
Hallelujah!
Every day may we 'strike up the band' within us
to praise you with every fibre of our being.
Hallelujah!
How can we thank you for the way you love us,
for the way you delight in us?
In every corner of our home,
we can **say** Hallelujah!
we can **sing** Hallelujah!
we can **shout** Hallelujah!!

For no wall, door, roof
can stop our praises
from reaching you.
Hallelujah!



The Lord's Prayer - Our
Father.....Amen

Today's Reading:

Romans 13: 8-14

(Given below, NIR version)

⁸ Pay everything you owe. But you can never pay back all the love you owe one another. Whoever loves other people has done everything the law requires. ⁹ Here are some commandments to think about. "Do not commit adultery." "Do not commit murder." "Do not steal." "Do not want what belongs to others. These and all other commands are included in one command. Here's what it is. "Love your neighbour as you love yourself."¹⁰ Love does not harm its neighbour. So love does everything the law requires.

¹¹ When you do these things, keep in mind the times we are living in. The hour has already come for you to wake up from your sleep. The full effects of our salvation are closer now than when we first believed in Christ. ¹² The dark night of evil is nearly over. The day of Christ's return is almost here. So let us get rid of the works of darkness that harm us. Let us do the works of light that protect us. ¹³ Let us act as we should, like people living in the daytime. Have nothing to do with wild parties, and don't get drunk. Don't take part in sexual sins or evil conduct. Don't fight with each other or be jealous of anyone. ¹⁴ Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ as if he were your clothing. Don't think about how to satisfy sinful desires.

Reflection:

What would you say is the latest must-have fashion accessory? For me, it is the face mask or face covering which matches your outfit! Face masks of every size, colour, design, and price are now available – perfect for anyone who wants to make a distinctive fashion statement!
We are all wearing face masks, of course, because as the government publicity points out, by wearing my face mask I am protecting you, and by wearing yours, you are protecting me. In many places it is compulsory and there are fines for those who don't (without good reason).

In today's reading, taken from Paul's letter to his friends in Rome, Paul says that the person who loves others has done all that the law commands. Perhaps that is how we can view wearing our face masks – we are wearing them in love to keep others safe, loving our neighbour as ourselves.

Paul goes on to write about other clothing we should wear – using the bold image of 'putting on Jesus' like an outer garment, like a coat or a shawl. To do this Paul says we first need to put aside 'works of darkness', sins like drunkenness, immoral behaviour, quarrelling or being jealous. Then we can 'put on Jesus'.

What does this mean? Perhaps it means to be like Jesus so that when people see what we do, they will see Jesus. If we read the gospels we can see Jesus was forgiving. He was often in the company of people whom the society at the time thought were the lowest of the low. He was often like the shepherd caring for people. He was often praying. He clearly knew the Hebrew scriptures.

Paul calls us to be like Jesus by 'putting him on as if he were our clothing' - it is not compulsory like the face mask – it is entirely voluntary, it is a choice we have to make.

Response:

Do you want to put on Jesus as if he is your clothing? If you do, hold this thought in your mind for a few minutes: 'I want to clothe myself with the Lord Jesus Christ'. Let it sink in. Then pray:

Lord Jesus Christ, may you be my clothing today. Help me be more like you each day. May everything I do be an act of praise and worship. Thank you for your grace and forgiveness when I don't get it right. Amen

Prayer: after each sentence please bring to mind people or situations you want to bring before God in prayer

For those feeling weak, may they be strengthened in body, mind and spirit...
Jesus, please clothe them in your love.

For those feeling wearied by the Covid restrictions, may they be refreshed...
Jesus, please clothe them in your love.

For those who are worn down by life, may they be renewed...

Jesus, please clothe them in your love.

For those who are broken by grief may they be restored...

Jesus, please clothe them in your love.

For those who are fearful due to illness, conflict or disaster, may they be comforted...

Jesus, please clothe them in your love.

In your name Jesus we ask these prayers. Amen.

Hymn – Jesus humble was your birth (R&S 196) (tune StF 739 or the tune used for Gentle Jesus, meek and mild)

- 1 Jesus, humble was your birth,
When you came from heaven to earth;
Every day in all we do,
Make us humble, Lord, like you.
- 2 Jesus, strong to help and heal,
Showing that your love is real;
Every day in all we do,
Make us strong and kind like you.
- 3 Jesus, when you were betrayed,
Still you trusted God and prayed;
Every day in all we do,
Help us trust and pray like you.
- 4 Jesus, risen from the dead,
With us always, as you said;
Every day in all we do,
Help us live and love like you.

Patrick Appleford (1925-2018)

Closing Praise and Blessing:

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

May our glorious God bless you and be with you each day of the coming week.

Prepared by Ann Hufton (CCL No. 315086)

WORSHIP AT HOME SUNDAY 13 SEPTEMBER 2020

Call to Worship: (To Chorus of O come all ye faithful)

O Come let us adore Him
O come let us adore Him
O come let us adore Him

Hymn – How Great Thou Art (StF 82)

O Lord my God, When I in awesome wonder,
Consider all the worlds Thy Hands have made;
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder,
Thy power throughout the universe displayed.

Chorus:

*Then sings my soul, My Saviour God, to Thee,
How great Thou art, How great Thou art.
Then sings my soul, My Saviour God, to Thee,
How great Thou art, How great Thou art!*

When through the woods, and forest glades I wander,
And hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees.
When I look down, from lofty mountain grandeur
And see the brook, and feel the gentle breeze.

And when I think, that God, His Son not sparing;
Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in;
That on a Cross, my burdens gladly bearing,
He bled and died to take away my sin.

When Christ shall come, with shout of acclamation,
And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart.
Then I shall bow, in humble adoration,
And then proclaim: "My God, how great Thou art!"

(Stuart K. Hine, British Methodist missionary)

Prayer:

O God of freedom You led Your people of old with
cloud by day and fire by night. You parted the sea with
Your breath, and saved Your people from oppression.

Free us, O God, in our own age, from ...indifference in
the face of poverty, ...ignorance in the face of fact,
...disbelief in the face of evidence before our very
eyes.

Deliver us good Lord, that
we may allow the earth to
heal. Lord of the living and
Lord of the dead, we are
conscious of our sin. We
are weak in faith,
quarrelsome in nature and
there is no health in us.



When we deny the science of climate change,
enlighten us. When we continue to pollute our earth,
convict us. When we exploit Creation, chastise us.
When we fail to cherish the Earth, our fragile home,
change us. When we fail to love the poor and
oppressed, forgive us.

Give us time, O God, even at this late hour, to change,
to turn away from destruction and back to You.

The Lord's Prayer - Our Father.....Amen

Today's Reading: Matthew 18:20-35

The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant

²¹ Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?"

²² Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.^[a]

²³ "Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. ²⁴ As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold^[b] was brought to him. ²⁵ Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt.

²⁶ "At this the servant fell on his knees before him. 'Be patient with me,' he begged, 'and I will pay back everything.' ²⁷ The servant's master took pity on him, cancelled the debt and let him go.

²⁸ "But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins.^[c] He grabbed him and began to choke him. 'Pay back what you owe me!' he demanded.

²⁹ "His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.'

³⁰ “But he refused. Instead, he went *off* and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. ³¹ When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened.

³² “Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. ³³ Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?’ ³⁴ In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.

³⁵ “This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

Reflection:

Broadly speaking, the Christian year beginning at Advent falls into two halves, with the festivals in the first half and the second half focussing on living the Christian life. Today’s reading typifies the latter. “How many times should I forgive?” asks Peter. (The Greek implies he is referring to other followers of Christ) Two chapters earlier Peter has made a massive step in his understanding when in reply to Jesus’ “Who do men say that I am?” he announces, “You are the Christ the son of the living God.” In today’s reading we see Peter beginning to take his status as a follower of Christ seriously when he wants to know how many times he should forgive. The how many of course betrays his Jewish background. To a Rabbi he might have said 3 but knowing Jesus thinks big he stretches it to 7 to be on the safe side. The reply is stunning. It stops Peter in his tracks. 70x7!! An impossible number, completely unthinkable. Put simply it means forgive your brothers and sisters beyond your ability to keep track. You may seem to be kind but keeping track simply means that you are waiting for the line to be crossed beyond which you are no longer willing to forgive. If you keep count, it is not called forgiveness.

In typical Jesus fashion he then tells a parable to reinforce his point. Again we see amazing exaggeration in the amount of debt. An amount with no realistic present day equivalent but it is what the king is willing to loan and forgive. When the servant is unwilling to forgive another for a very small amount, the forgiveness is withdrawn and the king has him thrown into jail. Again exaggeration seems to be the way that Jesus is making his point. He is using hyperbolic language to teach Peter and us about the true nature of forgiveness.

The great irony in all of this is that Peter did not know that ultimately that this was the size of the debt that

Jesus would soon forgive. All the sins of all the believers in all the world through all time. An unbelievably, large debt. This is the way to conceive of the debt owed to the king. And it was a debt which the King of all creation, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords was to pay on the cross. His life so that our incalculable debt could be erased. Forgiveness is not always easy but we love and offer forgiveness even when we feel unable because the forgiving King loves through us. Failing to do so is to challenge the King to reverse his grace and substitute the judgement we deserve.

To think about *Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.*

Hymn – Let Him to whom we now Belong (StF 557)

Let Him to whom we now belong
His sovereign right assert,
And take up every thankful song,
And every loving heart.

He justly claims us for His own,
Who bought us with a price:
The Christian lives to Christ alone,
To Christ alone he dies.

Jesus, Thine own at last receive,
Fulfil our hearts’ desire;
And let us to Thy glory live,
And in Thy cause expire.

Our souls and bodies we resign;
With joy we render Thee
Our all, no longer ours, but Thine,
To all eternity.

(Charles Wesley)

Blessing:

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 forevermore! Amen.

Charlie Mills,

CCL No. 315086

WORSHIP AT HOME

Sunday 20 September 2020

Call to Worship:

The Lord our God is great and to be highly praised. The Lord our God is great beyond our understanding. The Lord our God is loving and full of mercy.

We come to worship him.

Amen.

Hymn: Guide me, O thou great Jehovah (StF 465)

Guide me, O thou great Jehovah,
pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but thou art mighty;
hold me with thy powerful hand:
Bread of heaven, bread of heaven,
feed me now and evermore;
feed me now and evermore.

Open thou the crystal fountain
whence the healing stream shall flow;
let the fiery, cloudy pillar
lead me all my journey through:
strong Deliverer, strong Deliverer,
be thou still my strength and shield;
be thou still my strength and shield.

When I tread the verge of Jordan
bid my anxious fears subside;
death of death, and hell's destruction,
land me safe on Canaan's side:
songs of praises, songs of praises,
I will ever give to thee;
I will ever give to thee.
William Williams (1717–1791)
translated by Peter Williams (1727–1796)

Prayer:

God of awe and wonder,
worthy of honour and praise,
you know us through and through,
from our beginning to our end,
and in every day of our lives.
We come into your presence,

amazed by your love for us and your delight in knowing us. We come to worship you, ready to be changed.

Let us praise God, for he is glorious. Let us give thanks, for he is the source of all good things. Let us worship him now, for he is the Lord of glory. Let us adore him, for he is the Lord.



Almighty God, we don't always know how we got to where we are, and we certainly don't always know where we are going; we don't always choose the right path, and we certainly don't always follow it; we don't always deal well with the struggles of life, and we don't always give thanks for the joys of life either; we don't always think of the effects that our choices cause to others, near and far. We are too often selfish, wanting what we want no matter what the cost to others. So almighty God, forgive us, reassure us and cradle us within your forgiveness. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer - Our Father.....Amen

Today's Readings:

Exodus 16 v 2 – 15

Matthew 20 v 1 - 16

Reflection:

How many times have you or somebody you know said 'it's not fair' this year? This year has been challenging in so many ways, that I'm sure the phrase 'it's not fair' has been said many, many times around the world. Today's passages both talk of people grumbling because they feel they are being treated unfairly. In the Exodus passage as the Israelites encountered danger, shortages and inconvenience they complained bitterly and longed to be back in Egypt. In the reading from Matthew the workers who started in the vineyard first thing in the morning grumbled when the owner paid those who started eleven hours later the same as he paid them.

In this parable God is the landowner and his believers are the workers. It's not a parable about

rewards, rather it's about salvation. God gives his grace freely to anyone who turns to him. It doesn't matter whether you've been a Christian for sixty years or five minutes, the gift of salvation that God gives is the same for all, just as the pay for the workers was the same whether they had worked one hour or twelve hours. God's generosity knows no limits.

In the Exodus passage God's generosity is also shown in that he always provides for the Israelites needs. Difficult circumstances often lead to stress and complaining is a natural response. The Israelites didn't really want to be back in Egypt, they just wanted life to be a little easier. When difficulties come rather than grumbling or blaming God, we need to focus on trusting God to provide whatever we need. God provided manna from heaven every day for the Israelites.

In John's gospel (John 6 v 48 – 51) Jesus compares himself to manna. Christ is our daily bread from heaven, sent by God to satisfy our eternal, spiritual needs. Through Jesus, God has provided salvation for all who trust in him. Our challenge is to be as generous to others as God is to us and through our generosity bring more people to faith in him!

Prayer:

Eternal, ever-living, ever-present God, in the struggles and joys of this day, we pray:
For those who are overburdened, weighed down, demoralised, fearful or desolate because of what life has thrown at them..... God be with them.
For those engulfed in pain and anguish, facing illness and death..... God be with them.
For those troubled in mind and spirit, who find no peace or calm..... God be with them.
For those alone and lonely, without friend or comfort..... God be with them.
For those frightened and bewildered, who see no direction or purpose in their lives.....
God be with them. Eternal, ever-living God, bless them all in this and every hour, in this and every step of life's journey. Amen.

Hymn: Dear Lord and Father of mankind (StF 495)

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)

Blessing:

May the generosity of God challenge and inspire
you to include all in your prayers,
invite all to your table and ensure that all are
treated with dignity, fairness and respect. Amen.
Hayley Edmondson CCL No. 315086

WORSHIP AT HOME

SUNDAY, 27th September 2020

Call to Worship:

O give thanks to the Lord, call on his name,
make known his deeds among the peoples.
Sing to him, sing praises to him;
tell of all his wonderful works. Amen.

Hymn – Praise to the Lord (StF 88):

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of
creation !
O my soul, praise him, for he is thy health and
salvation !
All ye who hear, brothers and sisters, draw near,
praise him in glad adoration.

Praise to the Lord, who doth prosper thy work
and defend thee ;
surely his goodness and mercy here daily attend
thee :
ponder anew what the Almighty can do,
who with his love doth befriend thee.

Praise to the Lord, who doth nourish thy life and
restore thee,
fitting thee well for the tasks that are ever before
thee,
then to thy need he like a mother doth speed,
spreading the wings of grace o'er thee.

Praise to the Lord, who, when darkness of sin is
abounding,
who, when the godless do triumph, all virtue
confounding,
sheddeth his light, chaseth the horrors of night,
saints with his mercy surrounding.

Praise to the Lord ! O let all that is in me adore
him !
All that hath life and breath, come now with
praises before him !
Let the amen sound from his people again :
gladly for aye we adore him.

Joachim Neander (1650–1680)

Prayer:

Holy God, we meet with you today in the comfort
of our own homes, rather than in church but our
motivation is the same; to worship and adore
you, to learn from your word, to pray for others
and for healing of our broken world, and to sit
and wait in your presence. We are reminded Lord
of your awesomeness as we look out of our
windows at the world on our doorsteps. We
thank you God, for the blessings you provide, for
the many promises recorded in your word, that

as we sit quietly and
wait, the richness of
your grace will surely
abound.

And we seek your
forgiveness God for the
times when we have said
or thought things that are hurtful towards others
or indeed ourselves, for the times when we have
acted or failed to act as you would wish us too.
(sit for a moment and offer your failings to God
now)
For the words that Jesus uttered to many he met,
'your sins are forgiven', are the words of promise
we too cling to.
We pray in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord and
Saviour. Amen.



The Lord's Prayer - Our Father.....Amen

Today's Readings:

Exodus 17:1-7, Matthew 20:1-16

Reflection:

From Chapter 16 in Exodus, the Israelites are
making their way through the desert of Shur
having escaped from Egypt. God has promised to
provide for their needs while they journey to the
promised land. But being humans it isn't long
before the crowds begin to complain of the
hardships they are facing and they start to turn
against Moses, the one who led them out of
Egypt. The wilderness was vast and barren. Food
and water was in very short supply, and it is here
that God leads his people, perhaps to test and
shape them into the great nation he wishes them
to become, the role model for the rest of us. Now
the Israelites were certainly facing a difficult time.
There were many dangers in the desert and I
guess they just wanted to march into the
promised land the next day. But that wasn't
God's plan and although God provided for them
they failed to see the blessings, in fact they
bemoaned their 'escape', they'd rather be back in
Egypt. In their distress they couldn't see the

bigger picture, they saw only their immediate suffering, and amidst this they lost their trust in God. Like the Israelites we can only really begin to trust in God and his plan for us by obeying him come what may. By focusing on God in times of trouble rather than the quickest and easiest resolution our faith grows and deepens and the blessings become all the more evident. Amen.

Prayer: Between each verse please take a moment to offer your own prayers and thoughts to God:

Gracious God, we thank you that like those in the wilderness you continue to bless us,
And we pray now for those who are less fortunate than us, and are struggling with life at the time:

God the creator, who breathed life into all things living on earth, heal this broken world.....
Hear us, Lord graciously hear us.

God the healer, we pray for all people awaiting hospital and doctors' appointments, for operations and other treatment. We pray for those who are recovering from procedures and illness, may your blessing be upon them.....
Hear us, Lord graciously hear us.

God the teacher, we pray for all the staff and students back at schools, colleges and Universities, may you guide them in all of their learning.....
Hear us, Lord graciously hear us.

God the carer, we pray for our church family, For those who are praying with us at this time. Continue to bless us and those we love....
Hear us, Lord graciously hear us.

God the provider, we pray for ourselves and all those on our hearts and minds now, that you will continue to provide for all their needs.....
Hear us, Lord graciously hear us.

We pray in the name of Jesus, Amen.

Hymn – Dear Lord and Father (StF 495)

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)

Blessing:

May the grace of God uphold us,
the peace of God surround us,
the love of God flow from us,
and the strength of God protect
and bring us safely through this day. Amen.

Rev. Zena Smith

CCL No. 315086