

Ripon and Lower Dales Methodist Circuit  
Worship for Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2021  
Led by Bedale & District Methodist  
Church Worship Leaders

**StF 486 Who would True Valour**

**Opening prayer**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
teach us today to put you first in our lives,  
seeking to honour and serve you  
not as an afterthought, an optional extra,  
or as an occasional pursuit,  
but wholeheartedly,  
genuinely committed to you with body, mind  
and spirit.

May our response to you shape everything  
we do,  
rather than everything we do put time for  
you on hold.  
call us afresh now  
and help us truly to be your people, by your  
grace. Amen

Welcome to worship from the Ripon &  
Lower Dales Methodist Circuit led by the  
Bedale & District Church Worship Leaders.  
The material we are using was prepared by  
Jill Baker for the Summer Edition of the  
Magnet Magazine, entitled "Worship for  
pilgrims" and is divided into seven sections,  
and we are either led on a physical or  
virtual journey with our Lord.

**The invitation**

The invitation to become a pilgrim is an  
ancient call. In different ways God  
summoned Abram and Sarai, Moses and  
Miriam, Simon and Andrew, Martha and  
Mary. Today God summons us, "Come and  
be a pilgrim!"

What do I need to be a pilgrim? You need  
to feel a little restless, wondering if there

is more to life, more to God, than you have  
found so far.

StF 462 Come with me, come wander

**The preparation - let's get ready..**

How do I prepare for this pilgrimage?  
What should I pack in my rucksack?

It's more about what you need to leave  
behind... carry too much, you will become  
tired. Pack a little courage and a sense of  
adventure, don't take yourself too  
seriously.

**We pray-** Journeying God, with  
excitement and a little trepidation I hear  
your voice calling me today to set off on a  
pilgrimage, to travel deeper into you.  
Strengthen my weaknesses and renew my  
resolve to stay close to you, whatever the  
twists and turns of the journey. Open my  
eyes and ears to be attentive to your  
guiding Spirit. Amen.

**The departure**

Ready to set off? Pause, look over your  
shoulder - what are you leaving behind to  
become a pilgrim?

Everything I've ever known! The security  
and comfort of what is familiar!

I'm leaving behind the old me. I need to  
break away from things which have held me  
back...

Keep a few moments of silence to reflect  
on leaving things behind, whether that is  
welcome or difficult.

**The company**

Am I the only one on this journey?

It may feel as if you are. Sometimes a pilgrim walks alone, quietly reflecting, communing with God, paying attention to what is around. Even then you are surrounded by the company of saints, those in every age who have responded to the call to be a pilgrim. Sometimes you may want to lean on them.

Sometimes you will be glad of others around you. You will need them to offer you a hand, a smile, an encouraging word - and sometimes you will need to do the same for them. The pilgrim band is one of the greatest joys of this journey.

**StF 611** Brother, sister, let me serve you  
verses 1-2 here,

Let us pray

Lord we thank you for those in past generations who have heard your voice and responded in faith, offering to you their service undaunted by the cost. We thank you for those we have known whose discipleship has been an inspiration to us, all those who offer an example of what it means to live and walk in faith. Lord help us to hear your call, and in faith respond.

Lord help us to learn from the example of those who have gone before us, and to respond as faithfully, as willingly, and as courageously as they did. Give us ears to hear whenever you call, and faith to follow wherever you lead. Take us and use us, through the power of your Holy Spirit, so that your will may be done and your kingdom come through our lives. Lord help us to hear your call, and in faith to respond. Amen

**StF 611** verses 3-4

Lord, help us to trust in you with all our heart and not lean on our own

understanding but in all our ways submit to you. Make our paths straight and guide us down the right path. We know in this life there will be times of suffering and hardship but help us take heart because we know you have overcome the world. Give us the courage to face the challenges that come. Help us to persevere and not give up. Give us the strength to face these storms. Pour out your peace over us and keep us in your perfect peace. We want to always look to you when trials come. Instead of blaming you or looking elsewhere for the answers we want to look to you and trust completely in you. This is hard to do but we ask you to help us surrender everything to you...our emotions, our thoughts, our actions, and control. Thank you, Lord Jesus, for your help through this extremely difficult time. We know you've got this, and you've got us! We praise you and we put all of our faith and trust in you. Thank you, God, for hearing and answering our prayer. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**StF 611** verses 5-6.

**The path**

I'm worried about getting lost.

What an amazing view!

My feet are getting blistered.

I've never felt so fit!

I'm hungry.

I feel closer to God than I ever have before.

Pilgrimage is wonderful, but also demanding. Like life, it is a mixture of joy

and sorrow, laughter and tears, blessing and pain.

Sometimes we don't know which path to choose, we may have to sit down and wait, or we may choose the wrong way and need to retrace our steps, hurting our pride as well as our feet.

Sometimes the terrain holds dangers and difficulties which we hoped never to face in the journey. We need times of rest, healing and refreshment. All pilgrims do.

**Reading: Luke 9:51-62**

### Reflection

Luke tells us that Jesus "set his face to go to Jerusalem". How much did he know of what awaited him there?

How tempted was he to turn the other way or to hide in Bethany with good friends to care for him?

Perhaps it was his own inner turmoil which led him to speak challenging words to those would-be followers, "No one who puts a hand to the plough and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God."

**StF 481** - The Lord's my Shepherd

### The centre

Does this pilgrimage have a destination in mind?

That's a good question - some do, some don't. But every pilgrimage has within it a sacred centre - an encounter with God.

You can't predict when that will be; you have to be attentive, open to the whisper

of God's Spirit or the crashing of God's waves of love and grace.

It's the glimpse of glory which makes all the blisters seem unimportant!

**Pause:** Light a candle, play some special music...give thanks to the God who is present with you, whether at this moment you sense that or not.

### The return

How do you feel now? Are you glad you came?

I can't put into words how I feel... I long for the comfort of home, yet I don't want this to end...

Everything on this earth ends, but everything is renewed too. The end of every journey is the beginning of the next. Like the voice of prayer, the call to be a pilgrim is never silent.

**StF 662** 'Have you heard God's voice?'

Blessing:

May God the Path-Maker bless you in all your journeying; may Jesus the Pilgrim travel with you every step of the way and may the navigating Holy Spirit guide you each day. Amen.