



The Methodist Church

Ripon and Lower Dales Circuit

Worship at Home

Sunday 30th August 2020

Welcome to worship with the Ripon and Lower Dales Methodist Circuit.

Welcome to worship on this the last Sunday in August. We stand at the turn of the academic and Church year. This has been a very peculiar year for us all so our reflection today is focussed upon Ecclesiastes 3.

So, let us worship God, the same yesterday, today and tomorrow.

StF 136

Morning has broken

like the first morning;
blackbird has spoken
like the first bird.

Praise for the singing!
Praise for the morning!
Praise for them, springing
fresh from the Word!

Sweet the rain's new fall
sunlit from heaven,
like the first dew fall
on the first grass.
Praise for the sweetness
of the wet garden,
sprung in completeness
where his feet pass.

Mine is the sunlight!
Mine is the morning
born of the one light
Eden saw play!
Praise with elation,
praise every morning,
God's re-creation
of the new day!

Words Eleanor Farjeon 1881-1965
Tune Bunessan Gaelic folk melody
Arr Paul Leddington Wright

Let us pray

A Prayer of Adoration

God of the past, present and future we
worship and adore you.

You are the artist who sprinkled the stars on
the canvas of the universe.

You give colour to the tapestry of planet Earth
and all that dwells within.

You have invited human beings to partner,
with you, in the work of creation.

You have gifted us power to create and
destroy to plant and to build up.

You have granted us strength to love and
restrain from loving

Because you have manifest your love in the
person of Jesus Christ our Saviour.

A Prayer of Confession

God of love forgive us for failing to love as
you have loved us.

Forgive us when we have spoken out rather
than remained silent.

Forgive us when we have remained silent
rather than speaking out.

Forgive us when we have failed to mend
relationships.

Forgive us when we, in anger, have torn
things up..

Forgive us when we have failed to sow hope
in people's lives.

A Prayer of Thanksgiving

God of life we thank you for Jesus Christ
who shows us how to live life in all its
fullness.

We thank you for times of laughing and
dancing.

We thank you for times of planting, mending
and healing.

We thank you for the measure of life and
health that is ours.

We thank you for times of weeping and
mourning

When we have been enfolded in the loving
arms and prayers

Of family, friends and neighbours.

Amen

Reading: Ecclesiastes 3 v1-8

To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:

A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted;

A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up;

A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;

A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;

A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away;

A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.

This is the word of the Lord!

Thanks be to God!

Reflection

Ripon and Bedale have much in common. Both had railways and both had canals. The railway in Ripon is long gone. The canal in Bedale never got anywhere far. The railway in Bedale is still in situ, the canal in Ripon now enters the city. Both, in different ways, are linked to the national networks. The A1M skirts both towns.

We are now at the end of August and the turning of the academic and Methodist Connexional year. It is time *to praise God for all that is past and to trust Him for all that's to come*. We live in strange days to sing God's praise.

As we look back over these past twelve months, life has changed considerably for all of us. Covid-19 has meant that we are all obliged to adjust our lives to a new norm. Life, as we have known it, may be changed forever. In the meantime, church buildings

remain closed for weekly worship, although the Church composed of living people is very much alive as we, who participate today, bear witness.

Like the canals and railways that have been transformed from the days of the horse and steam engine, the church has, and is being, transformed by new patterns of worship which hitherto would have been deemed impossible and implausible some six months ago!

In this Circuit, printed service sheets and on-line worship are now the new norm, enabling us to keep in touch with one another. It is essential that we see our mission, in the first instance, towards the church family where no-one is left out or overlooked because we are no longer meeting physically together.

The Austrian philosopher and theologian, Baron Friedrich von Hügel, sums up the challenge as we face the new year before us. He says the following:

*Christ taught us to care.
Caring is the greatest thing.
Caring matters most.*

There is a time and a season for everything on earth. This is a time to care for the earth and for human beings.

Like the canals and railways of old that remain because they have been transformed *to face the challenge of tomorrow's day*, so must the Church of Christ in this age keep on rising from the dead, seeking as a servant church to care for all without reserve. That, I suggest, encourages us to keep the faith and adapt to new ways of being Church and Circuit.

So, with 2020 vision, let us pray for Gareth, Ian and Nigel, the Circuit leadership team and for all who hold office in the local church that they may glimpse a vision of God and the Church for today and the future so that we are transformed to serve the present age!

Amen.

Rev Keith M Phipps

StF 480

The Lord's my Shepherd, I'll not want;
he makes me down to lie
in pastures green; He leadeth me
the quiet waters by.

My soul he doth restore again,
and me to walk doth make
within the paths of righteousness,
e'en for his own name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through death's dark vale,
yet will I fear no ill;
for thou art with me, and thy rod
and staff me comfort still.

My table thou hast furnishèd
in presence of my foes;
my head thou dost with oil anoint,
and my cup overflows.

Goodness and mercy all my life
shall surely follow me,
and in God's house forevermore
my dwelling-place shall be.

Words Psalm 23
Tune Crimond Jessie Seymour arr William McKie

Prayers of intercession

Let us pray

God of the past, we look back at the past
year and thank you that your hand has held
and guided us.

We pray for those for whom the past has
been filled with fear and pain. We remember
the victims of natural disasters, accidents and
all forms of prejudice and abuse.

We think especially of those whose lives have
been affected by COVID –19, those who are
ill and those who have been bereaved.

We thank you for all key workers who have
kept us safe and fed, for those in the NHS
and care homes who have worked tirelessly
to care for those most in need and for
scientists and politicians working through the
pandemic.

God of today, we thank you that you love us
just as we are, wherever we may be. As we
adjust to the new norm, we rejoice that your
hand holds ours amidst the confusion and
uncertainties.

We think of people for whom today is tough.
We think of those living in places affected by
war and terrorism and those who lack the
basic necessities of food and clean water. We
also remember all who are ill or lonely and
those who grieve and mourn.

We thank you for all who work to bring about
a fairer world and who seek to alleviate the
suffering of others.

In silence, we lay before you those we love
who are in any need today. Help them to
know that you are their Shepherd and will
lead them by still waters.

God of tomorrow, we pray for all for whom
the future is unknown and filled with worries,
those anxious about money and jobs, those
young people disappointed after exam results
and those concerned about their health or the
health of those they love.

And we pray for those facing change, think
especially of Helen and Fred beginning life
and ministry in Leicester and for Ian and Lis,
setting amongst us here.

And we pray for one another in this circuit
that we may all be open to the prompting of
the Holy Spirit as we face the challenges of
tomorrow's day.

So, loving and living Lord of yesterday, today
and tomorrow, *we praise you for all that is
past and trust you for all that's to come.*

Amen

The Lord's Prayer
(words overleaf)

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**

StF 394

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.

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!

Without your help we fail our Lord,
we cannot live His way;
we need Your power, we need Your strength,
following Christ each day.

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.

Tune: Skye Boat Song arr Paul Leddington Wright
Words Margaret V Old 1932-2001

A Blessing

May the road rise up to meet you
May the wind be always at your back
May the sun shine warm upon your face
May the rains fall softly upon your fields
Until we meet again
May God hold you in the hollow of his hand.

A Gaelic Blessing

And the Blessing of God
Father, Son and Holy Spirit
Grant you peace
Now and always.

Amen.