

## Morning Worship for 5<sup>th</sup> July 2020 at 10.30am

Good morning everyone and welcome to worship in these extraordinary times when we are the church but are not in church.

Remember that God is present with us as we gather in his name, and that wherever we are, we are the body of Christ.

### **Opening Prayer:-** *(from Roots)*

We are here today Lord to worship you. As we bow our heads before you, we want to be amazed by your wisdom, bowled over by your love, and completely lost in you. Lord, open our hearts to receive you, in ways beyond whatever we could ever ask or think. Amen

**Hymn STF 445** All my hope on God is founded; he doth still my trust renew. Me through change and chance he guideth, only good and only true. God unknown, he alone calls my heart to be his own.

Daily doth the almighty giver bounteous gifts on us bestow; his desire our soul delighteth, pleasure leads us where we go. Love doth stand at his hand; joy doth wait on his command.

Still from earth to God eternal sacrifice of praise be done, high above all praises praising for the gift of Christ his Son. Christ doth call one and all ye who follow shall not fall. *Robert Bridges (1844-1930) based on Joachim Neander (1650-1680)*

**Prayer:** *(from Roots)* Father God, we are here today, to praise you, to learn from you. Your wisdom, shown to us through Jesus, your most precious Son, is far greater than that of the world. It has the power to confound all our expectations. We approach you now as children, sitting at your feet, bathed in your love, hanging on your every word. Forgive us for what is past and protect us from all that is to come. Amen.

**We say the Lord's Prayer together.....**

**Bible Readings for today: Psalm 145 v.8-14 & Matthew 11 v.16&19 & 25-30** if you do not have a Bible to hand this passage sees Jesus talking about confounding expectations on his ministry. He also reminds his listeners that God reveals things to the simple rather than the "wise" ones of the day.

**Reflection:** I would like to begin today's reflection with some words from the President of the Methodist Conference Revd. Richard Teal's presidential address. Richard spoke movingly of the challenges we all face as people of faith at this time. He reminded us:- "God doesn't practise social distancing, but becomes close and personal, close enough to infect us with grace and love. Inspiring words indeed and encouraging to us all as we try to navigate the minefield of emerging from lockdown and planning for the future. Jesus' words in Matthew ch.11 remind everyone that neither John the Baptist or Jesus himself carried out their ministry in the way people expected of them

and that God reveals God's self to the most unlikely in society – in Jesus' day, children, tax collectors, women, sinners, the lowest of the low as seen through human eyes. Jesus also invites us to share his yoke, something that is unique to Matthew. Given what happens to Jesus on the cross this might not first appear to be something we want to do. However, Jesus is actually offering to share our burdens and free of the weight of weariness and fear we can then see God's revealing the love and grace that comes only through following Jesus as our Lord and our Saviour. What a message for our current circumstances!! Let us, in turn, share this message with the world in so much need and help do our part to bear one another's burdens with gentleness and grace. Amen.

**Prayers of Intercession:** O God of healing love, we pray for all who are in hospital, hospice or ill at home in these anxious days, continuing to hold before you those who are suffering with Covid 19. We remember in our prayers all NHS staff whatever their role and especially commend to you the work of hospital Chaplains. Be near to all those, loving God, who are lonely and vulnerable, for those with dear ones in care homes and those living with a partner with dementia. Bear the heavy load, O Lord, of all carers. We pray for all whose lives are ripped apart by war, violence and abuse and for all who encounter prejudice and live in fear. Draw near to all of the world's children, God of peace, and whatever their circumstances, may they all know your love. We pray for our friends and families who we miss so dearly and for our church family with whom we join in worship and prayer. Strengthen us all, Lord of life, to live to your praise and glory. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

**Hymn: STF 531** What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear!  
What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer!  
O what peace we often forfeit, O what needless pain we bear,  
all because we do not carry everything to God in prayer!

Have we trials and temptations, is there trouble anywhere?  
We should never be discouraged: take it to the Lord in prayer.  
Can we find a friend so faithful who will all our sorrows share?  
Jesus knows our every weakness: take it to the Lord in prayer.

Are we weak and heavy laden, cumbered with a load of care?  
Precious Saviour, still our refuge – take it to the Lord in prayer!  
Do your friends despise, forsake you? Take it to the Lord in prayer;  
in his arms he'll take and shield you, you will find a solace there. *Joseph Medlicott Scriven (1819-1886)*

**Blessing:** The Blessing of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, be with us now and always. Amen

**Please consider this my “virtual” handshake and please stay safe and well.  
If you are in need of anything, please call me on 01765 698288.**