



The Methodist Church

Ripon and Lower Dales Circuit

Worship at Home

Week beginning Sunday March 6th, 2022

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

Wherever you may be, may you know the love of God enfold you and the Spirit of God lead you in this time of Worship.

Call to worship

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble; therefore, we will not fear. Psalm 46

StF 238

Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us
o'er the world's tempestuous sea;
guard us, guide us, keep us, feed us,
for we have no help but thee,
yet possessing every blessing
if our God our Father be.

Saviour, breathe forgiveness o'er us;
all our weakness thou dost know,
thou didst tread this earth before us,
thou didst feel its keenest woe;
tempted, taunted, yet undaunted,
through the desert thou didst go.

Spirit of our God, descending,
fill our hearts with heavenly joy,
love with every passion blending,
pleasure that can never cloy:
thus provided, pardoned, guided,
nothing can our peace destroy.

Words - James Edmeston (1791-1867)
Music – Mannheim by F Fillitz adapted Lowell Mason

Let us pray

God of heaven and earth we praise you. You are the source of life and health. You have created the world in which we live and we praise you for its glory and for the spring-time signs of new life.

You have spoken through Jesus and shown us how much you love us.

By your Holy Spirit, you guard and guide us on our journey.

So, we offer to you our praise.

Lord, you are constant in your love and infinite in your mercy. We confess to you how often we fail to love and forgive. As we journey into Lent, lead us not into temptation, enable us to hear your living word and to re-examine our priorities.

God of love, through Jesus Christ, you promise us forgiveness. Forgive us today, we pray, and seal us with your presence and peace
Through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Amen.

Reading: Luke 4 v 1 - 13

Jesus returned from the Jordan full of the Holy Spirit and was led by the Spirit into the desert, where he was tempted by the Devil for forty days. In all that time he ate nothing so that he was hungry when it was over. The Devil said to him 'If you are God's Son, order this stone to turn into bread.'

But Jesus answered, 'The scripture says *Man cannot live on bread alone*'. Then the Devil took him up and showed him in a second all the kingdoms of the world. 'I will give you all this power and all this wealth' the devil told him. 'It has all been handed over to me and I can give it to anyone I choose. All this will be yours, then, if you worship me'.

Jesus answered, 'The scripture says *Worship the Lord your God and serve only him!*'

Then the devil took him to Jerusalem and set him on the highest point of the temple and said to him ‘ If you are God’s son, throw yourself down from here. For the scripture says *God will order his angels to take good care of you.* It also says, ‘*They will hold you up with their hands so that not even your feet will be hurt on the stones.*’

But Jesus answered, ‘ The scripture says *Do not put the Lord your God to the test.*’

When the Devil finished tempting Jesus in every way, he left him for a while.

This is the Gospel of Christ!

Thanks be to God

Reflection

Seeing real people, men, women and children, fleeing from Ukraine with only the clothes they are wearing plus the little they can carry, is a haunting scene. We never envisaged seeing this situation in Europe in our lifetime. Driven by their predicament, they travel with fear but also hope, as they seek safety.

We are now in the season of Lent, when we recall Jesus in the wilderness, being tempted to misuse his power as Son of God. We are invited today to re-examine our priorities and engage in a physical and spiritual spring-clean so that we can travel onward without excessive baggage to weigh us down and hold us back.

So, as we travel through Lent, let us pray for the people of Ukraine and the world-wide threat that this conflict poses. Let us take Lent as a God-given opportunity to cherish the people we know and love as, together as pilgrims, we travel in hope and hopefulness.
Amen.

We now reflect further on the Gospel reading as we hear from Mary, mother of Jesus.

(We are using Nick Fawcett’s reflection in his book *No ordinary man 1997*)

Mary, Mother of Jesus

He looked awful, absolutely drained. And it’s hardly surprising, is it? 40 days out in the wilderness – that’s hell enough for anyone, but without food – I ask you? He was lucky to be alive! Barely was, mind you, when he came staggering back into Nazareth. A complete wreck, he was, just about done in!

‘Why did you do it?’, I asked him. ‘What got into you?’ and all he could say was that he had to, that everything depended on it.

He was never the same afterwards. I used to joke the sun had got to him. But it wasn’t the sun, of course, it was much more than that. He wrestled out there with himself, with the world, with all the forces of evil, and in some way I don’t quite understand, he won. It was a costly time, there is no doubt about that, a disturbing, frightening time – I could see the pain in his eyes afterwards. He’d had to struggle, make painful choices, confront life at its darkest. And though, I never told him, I admired him for that. It takes courage to face reality, to ask yourself what it’s really all about.

Mind you, I always knew he had it in him. He’d always been such a good boy, right from the start; too good some said. Well, perhaps he was in a way – look where it got him after all.

Yet it wasn’t as easy as many thought. He was still tempted, all too often, and there were times when it would have been so easy for him to give in, so easy to compromise, to bend just the once. I know that’s what he faced out there in the wilderness though he never told me what exactly happened. But he came back stronger, I have to admit it, more certain, more determined. Not that he didn’t have his moments afterwards – don’t make that mistake. It wasn’t all plain sailing from then on. He had to battle like you and I, harder if anything, for the path he took was so much more demanding. Oh no, he endured temptation all right, as real as any we might face. The difference is he overcame it, right to the end. That’s what made him so special. That’s why people follow him, even now.

Let us pray

Gracious God, we thank you for the time spent by Jesus in the wilderness, tested there to the limit but refusing to be deceived. Help us to learn from his example; to be awake to temptation and ready to withstand it; to make time to hear your voice and reflect upon your word. Help us to follow you and to do your will, regardless of the cost. So may we grow closer to you and stronger in our faith,

Amen.

'He looked awful, absolutely drained.
No ordinary man. Nick Fawcett

StF 254

Seek ye first the Kingdom of God,
And his righteousness,
And all these things shall be added unto you;
Allelu, Alleluia:

Ask, and it shall be given unto you;
Seek and ye shall find;
Knock, and the door shall be opened unto
you;
Allelu, Alleluia:

We shall not live by bread alone,
But by every word that proceeds from the
mouth of the Lord:
Allelu, Alleluia:

Words and music – Karen Lafferty b. 1948

Prayers of intercession

As we come to God in prayer, let us remember the words of the Psalmist who reminds us that God is our refuge and strength.

Loving and gracious God, we pray for all for whom today and the future are scary and unknown, remembering especially those with particular needs

- people worried about their own health or the health of those they love
- the bereaved
- the increasing numbers who are anxious about the cost of living
- refugees and asylum seekers, fleeing from war and danger
- those who lack food and clean water

Reassure them all of your constant loving presence and help us all to know that you hold the future in your hands.

We pray for ourselves, our family, friends and church. As we place ourselves and our loved ones into your care, we rejoice that you give us daily bread, just as you have in the past and will do in the future.

Finally, we offer the Methodist Church prayer for the situation in Ukraine.

*Holy and Gracious God
We pray for the people of Ukraine and the people of Russia; for their countries and their leaders.*

We pray for all those who are afraid; that your everlasting arms hold them in this time of great fear.

We pray for all those who have the power over life and death; that they will choose for all people life, and life in all its fullness.

We pray for those who choose war; that they will remember that you direct your people to turn our swords into ploughshares and seek for peace.

We pray for leaders on the world stage; that they are inspired by the wisdom and courage of Christ.

*Above all, Lord, today we pray for peace for Ukraine.
And we ask this in the name of your blessed Son.*

Silence

The Lord hears our prayers
Thanks be to God. Amen.

We conclude our prayers with words of David Adam (from Border Lands)

**O spring in the desert
O shelter from the heat
O light in the darkness
O guide for the feet
O joy in our sadness
O support for the weak
O Lord with us always
Your Presence we seek.**

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 465

Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah,

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.

Words: William Williams (1717-1791)
Trans Peter Williams (1727-1796)

Tune : CWM RHONDDA
Music: John Hughes of Pontypridd (1873-1932)

A Blessing

Let there be...
respect for the earth
peace for its people
love in our lives
delight in the good
forgiveness for past wrongs
and from now on a new start

Millennium Resolution @NewStart2000

The blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy
Spirit be upon you and those whom you love,
on earth and in heaven.

Amen

Thank you for joining us for worship.

We have recorded and written this on
Monday February 28th, aware that the world
situation may have changed by the time you
participate. Consider using some silence for
your own prayers.

Keith and Lynda Phipps