



Ripon & Lower Dales Methodist Circuit
With God in the City, Towns, Villages and rural areas

29/24 Charity Comm'n No 1133792

Worship at Home

Week beginning 20th November 2022

Call to Worship

Psalm 46 [New International Version]

- ¹ God is our refuge and strength,
an ever-present help in trouble.
² Therefore we will not fear, though the earth
give way and the mountains fall into the heart
of the sea, ³ though its waters roar and foam
and the mountains quake with their surging.
⁴ There is a river whose streams make glad
the city of God, the holy place where the Most
High dwells.
⁵ God is within her, she will not fall;
God will help her at break of day.
⁶ Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall;
he lifts his voice, the earth melts.
⁷ The LORD Almighty is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress.
⁸ Come and see what the LORD has done,
the desolations he has brought on the earth.
⁹ He makes wars cease
to the ends of the earth.
He breaks the bow and shatters the spear;
he burns the shields with fire.
¹⁰ He says, "Be still, and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth."
¹¹ The LORD Almighty is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress.

Welcome to this worship at home service.

Take a moment to be quiet and be still,
recognising that God who we worship calls us
to worship in Spirit and truth.

Take a moment to feel God's loving embrace,
calling us by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit
to be brave in being open to receive and hear
God speak into our lives.

Take a moment to notice the space around
you and notice God, the Father, the Son, and
the Holy Spirit with you in this time of worship.
Consider how you come to offer this act of
worship, praise and adoration to our Lord God.

Let us pray.

Almighty God, we come to worship you with
our hearts full of adoration. We come to you
just as we are because we can come no other
way. We come to glorify your holy name, for
you are worthy of praise from every soul. We
ask you to guide us by your Spirit and
transform us through your grace. **Amen.**

Let us join in voice or quiet reflection in praise.

StF n°331 – King of kings, majesty

¹ King of kings, majesty,
God of heaven living in me.
Gentle Saviour, closest Friend,
Strong Deliverer, Beginning and End,
all within me falls at your throne.
*Your majesty, I can but bow;
I lay my all before you now.
In royal robes I don't deserve,
I live to serve your majesty.*

² Earth and heaven worship you,
Love eternal, faithful and true,
who bought the nations, ransomed souls,
brought this sinner near to your throne;
all within me cries out in praise.
*Your majesty, I can but bow;
I lay my all before you now.
In royal robes I don't deserve,
I live to serve your majesty,
I live to serve your majesty.*

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Let us pray.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayers of
confession.

When you called us to put love in action, we
preferred to be idle. When you called us to love
our neighbour, we failed to be there.

We have fallen short of loving you with all our
heart, with all our mind, with all our strength
and with all our soul.

We have not always put you first in our lives
and have instead at times put our ways first.

We confess that we have sinned and turning
to you, we truly repent of all our sins.

Let us hear the words Jesus spoke upon the Cross whilst he gave his life that we might live.

'Father forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.'

May we know and live forgiveness through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

Reading;

The Epistle of Paul to the Colossians 1:11–20

¹¹ being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, ¹² and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you^[a] to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light. ¹³ For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

The Supremacy of the Son of God

¹⁵ The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶ For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. ¹⁷ He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. ¹⁹ For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

A prayer of thanksgiving

Let us pray.

God of all, source of grace and loves pure light.

As those brought into the body, the church with Christ Jesus our head we bring our prayers of thanksgiving.

We thank you for redemption and the forgiveness of sins through your Son, our Saviour.

We thank you for the invitation to join with you in serving in your kingdom, in being part of your mission.

We thank you for all the gifts we share and the fruit of the Spirit that inspire and encourage us in following Jesus.

We thank you for those whom we love and those who love us. For family and friendships.

We thank you for all our relationships that strengthen who we are as church, as community, as family.

We thank you for the food which sustains us and the heat that warms us. We thank for the shelter and safety of homes.

We thank you for everything which comes from you. For all your goodness towards us, your children. **Amen.**

Let continue to give thanksgiving to God in Song. We thank you Lord, You are Great and worthy of all our praise.

StF n°50 – Great is the Lord

Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise,
the city of our God, the holy place,
the joy of the whole earth.
Great is the Lord in whom we have the victory,
he aids us against the enemy,
we bow down on our knees.

*And Lord, we want to lift your name on high,
and Lord, we want to thank you,
for the works you've done in our lives;
and Lord, we trust in your unfailing love,
for you alone are God eternal,
throughout earth and heaven above.*

Gospel reading: Luke 23: 33 - 43

³³ When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left. ³⁴ Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.

³⁵ The people stood watching, and the rulers even sneered at him. They said, “He saved others; let him save himself if he is God’s Messiah, the Chosen One.”

³⁶ The soldiers also came up and mocked him. They offered him wine vinegar ³⁷ and said, “If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself.”

³⁸ There was a written notice above him, which read: THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

³⁹ One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: “Aren’t you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!”

⁴⁰ But the other criminal rebuked him. “Don’t you fear God,” he said, “since you are under the same sentence? ⁴¹ We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong.”

⁴² Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.”

⁴³ Jesus answered him, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.”

This is the word of the LORD; thanks be to God.

REFLECTION

“Glory to the new-born King!” Next week will be stepping into a new church year, we move into year A of the lectionary, and we begin the advent journey to Christmas celebrations of the new-born King. Yet this week the lectionary year C concludes with Christ the King upon the cross.

Our Christian experience sits within a place which Christ is born among us and at the same time died for us. Whilst studying at Cliff College in Derbyshire, when I was out on a walk, I came across an ewe that had become

stuck in some deep mud at the bottom of a field. Its head between a fence post and stonewall. I contacted the farmer of the sheep and told him of the situation. His response was not one of any urgency, he simply said ‘sheep are born to die’ I’ll come over tomorrow. I couldn’t leave this ewe in distress and with some determination managed to free the ewe.

It was far from graceful, but it went seemingly unharmed. Christ Jesus was born among us, Jesus came and took up his cross, held the cup of sacrifice never giving up on the salvation plan. Jesus was not born to die, although he died upon the cross, death could not hold him. “Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?” (1Cor 15: 55).

No, Jesus was born to live. Jesus was born to bring life, life in all its fullness. Jesus was born to live and model how we should all live, in obedience to God our Father. Jesus was born to show the way of holiness, to illuminate with the truth what love really looks like when lived out faithfully with God. Jesus was born to be our redeemer, being the way to forgiveness of sins because no one else could give such a sacrifice. Jesus came to live and is alive victorious, seated at the right hand of the Father.

We can sometimes become stuck in the mud. We hear the Psalmist David giving testimony to how the Lord heard his cry, how he turned to him and lifted him out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; how he set his feet on a rock. (Psalm 40:2). Sometimes we can find ourselves crying out to our Lord for help. In those times of being or feeling like we are stuck in the mud and mire, the slimy pit, cry out to God because God hears our cry.

God heard the cry of the broken, lost, and sinful world. A world that has fallen into the slimy pit of evil, mudded with sin and lost in the mire of despair. By no means was the ewe going to be able to free itself, the more it tried by its own efforts the more stuck it became. In the same way, by no means can the people of the world have the ability to free themselves of sin and death.

The more we try by our own efforts, the more we turn away from God, the more stuck we

become. Only by the means of grace can we live and only through the death and resurrection of Jesus can we be free from all that would keep us stuck in brokenness, in sin and keep us lost from finding Jesus who is the way, and the truth, and the life.

The account of Jesus upon the cross with the two criminals on either side of him and the dialogue that unfolds contains such powerfully beautiful words. It is as if in that moment the whole world becomes a blurred backdrop like on those fancy professional photographs. The focus is upon Jesus and the criminal that saw that Jesus was innocent, undeserving of the cruel Crucifixion.

A common criminal that in his final moments believed in Jesus, recognised Jesus as King with a kingdom and asked Jesus to remember him. Jesus' response is such that the criminal has assurance of not being remembered, but rather never being forgotten by being with Jesus in paradise. A criminal who was stuck but not closed to having an open heart and mind that in that dire moment turned to God.

As we embark on a new church year beginning next week on the first Sunday of advent, may we all be mindful of the reason Jesus was born. You. You are the reason Jesus was born, you and me, and all people. And as you recognise Jesus' redeeming love for you stretched out upon the cross, may you have an open heart and mind that turns to God.

Be assured and know that Jesus remembers you, recalling the words spoken at baptism; for you Jesus Christ came into the world; for you he lived and showed God's love; for you he suffered death on the Cross; for you he triumphed over death, rising to newness of life; for you he prays at God's right hand: all this for you before you could know anything of it. In your Baptism, the word of Scripture is fulfilled; 'We love, because God first loved us.' **Amen.**

Let us keep on being people who love because God first loved us. Let us not only love with word but put love into action. May our actions reflect Jesus Christ, seek holiness.

StF n°325 Jesus Christ – Perfect Love

¹ Jesus Christ – Perfect Love,
Holy One that knows no fault,
screen my thoughts, make me clean,
know the motives of my heart.
When I see my selfish choice,
when I glimpse your holiness,
then I realise again
Perfect Love has come to cleanse.

² Jesus Christ – Lord for all,
plant in me the kingdom seed.
Search me, Lord, when I'm found
looking only to my needs.
When I see the way you lived,
how you dignified the poor,
then I realise again
how I need to know you more.

³ Jesus Christ – Lamb of God,
Love resolved to take our place.
Who can write or describe
all your self-giving grace?
When I look at the brutal cross,
innocence and beauty slain,
that's when I realise once more
you fully understand our pain.

⁴ Jesus Christ – King of heaven,
qualified to wear the crown.
In your face, radiant grace
draws us closer to your throne.
When we see your generous heart,
when we touch the world you love,
that's when we realise again;
Perfect Love is Perfect Hope.

Geraldine Latty (b. 1963) and busbee – Words and Music © 2005 Thankyou Music

Prayers of intercession

Lord God, You Love the world, and You gave Your Only Son to bring salvation. We cry out to you who can lift us from the pit of evil and bring healing to our brokenness.

We pray for those who are seeking you with enquiring hearts and exploring the Christian faith. May they open the door to Jesus, know salvation and discover your transformational love.

We pray for those who feel broken in life. For those who have lost their way and turned to criminal ways. May they discover the path back to healing in you Lord, may they know your mercy and grace in being reformed.

We pray for those who are overwhelmed by the horrors of war and conflict. And we pray for all those who are living with trauma because of devastation. We pray for the millions of refugees who are all known and loved by you.

We pray for those impacted by climate change. For whole communities who have lost homes and livelihoods. For those who witness the devastation of natural environments and its inhabitants.

We pray for those who are ill or living with addiction; for those who are lonely and those who are anxious. We pray for those who are feeling harsh cruelty of the cost-of-living crises; for those living in crises and homelessness.

We ask all these prayers in the precious name of Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

As Jesus taught us, we pray.

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed by your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are
yours, now and for ever. Amen.

StF n°481 The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want

¹ The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want;
he makes me lie in pastures green,
he leads me by the still, still waters,
his goodness restores my soul.

*And I will trust in you alone,
and I will trust in you alone,
for your endless mercy follows me,
your goodness will lead me home.*

² He guides my ways in righteousness,
and he anoints my head with oil;
and my cup – it overflows with joy,
I feast on his pure delights.

³ And though I walk the darkest path –
I will not fear the evil one,
for you are with me, and your rod and staff
are the comfort I need to know.

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***“All Need To Be Saved,
All Can Be Saved,
All Can Know Themselves Saved,
All Can Be Saved To The Uttermost.”***

Sending Blessing

May you go with confidence in the knowledge and love of God that through Jesus Christ you have salvation.

And the blessing of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit remain with us now and always. **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord in the name of Christ. **Amen.**