



The Methodist Church

Ripon and Lower Dales Methodist Circuit - Worship at Home – 4 June 2023

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
Wherever you are sharing in this act of worship, you are welcome.

Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth.
Worship the Lord with gladness;
come into God's presence with singing.

Know that the Lord is God.
It is God that made us, and we are His;
we are God's people, and the sheep of His pasture.

Enter the gates with thanksgiving,
and God's courts with praise.
Give thanks to God, bless His name.

For the Lord is good;
God's steadfast love endures for ever,
and His faithfulness to all generations.

Hymn: Singing the Faith 55

Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
in light inaccessible hid from our eyes;
most holy, most glorious, the ancient of days,
almighty, victorious, your great name we praise.

Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,
nor wanting nor wasting, you rule us in might;
your justice like mountains high soaring above,
your clouds which are fountains of goodness and love.

To all you are giving, to both great and small,
in all you are living, the true life of all:

we blossom and flourish, uncertain and frail;
we wither and perish, but you never fail.
We worship before you, great Father of light,
while angels adore you, all veiling their sight;
our praises we render, O Father, to you
whom only the splendour of light hides from view.

Loving Lord,
We come to You, the one who is God of all creation.
The one who brought forth life and light from emptiness and darkness,
Who formed the restless oceans, the soaring skies, the beautiful and
productive land,
Who populated them with the beauty of the creation we see around us and
marvel at each day.
The God who completed creation and who saw that it was good.

Loving Lord, we come to You, the one who created us in Your image,
Who gave us responsibility to steward Your good creation,
Who entrusted Your handiwork to us to care for and to nurture.
But we confess before You that too often we have failed that trust.
Too often, we have failed to guard the goodness and integrity
of the creation which You have entrusted to our care.
Too often spoiled what You have given us,
preferring instead to pollute, to profit from, to exploit.
Too often, failed to give thought
to those with whom we share this beautiful planet –
far less to give glory to the God who made it
and who despairs at the groans of all creation.

Holy Lord, accept from us, we pray
our confession of guilt,
our plea for mercy,
and our turning to You in repentance.

Accept from us
the sincerity and humility with which we bow before You.
Inspire Your people, we pray,
to work tirelessly to care for the world around us.
To be forever mindful of all our fellow inhabitants of this earth,
and to do so to Your eternal glory and honour.

For we ask these things in the name of Your Son, Jesus Christ
Amen

Reading: Psalm 8

¹ Lord, our Lord,
how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory
in the heavens.

² Through the praise of children and infants
you have established a stronghold against your enemies,
to silence the foe and the avenger.

³ When I consider your heavens,
the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars,
which you have set in place,

⁴ what is mankind that you are mindful of them,
human beings that you care for them?

⁵ You have made them a little lower than the angels^[e]
and crowned them^[f] with glory and honour.

⁶ You made them rulers over the works of your hands;
you put everything under their feet:

⁷ all flocks and herds,
and the animals of the wild,

⁸ the birds in the sky,
and the fish in the sea,
all that swim the paths of the seas.

⁹ Lord, our Lord,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!

Reading: Revelation 1: 1 – 8

1 The revelation from Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, ² who testifies to everything he saw—that is, the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. ³ Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.

⁴ John, To the seven churches in the province of Asia: Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven

spirits^[a] before his throne, ⁵ and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.

To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, ⁶ and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.

⁷ “Look, he is coming with the clouds,”
and “every eye will see him,
even those who pierced him”;
and all peoples on earth “will mourn because of him
So shall it be! Amen.

⁸ “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.”

Reflection

This week the Church begins Bible Month, and this year we are encouraged to read Revelation, the last book of the Bible. We might shudder at that encouragement! Revelation for many people is too hard, too cryptic to invest our time working out what it all means.

But, I encourage us to have a go, for the Revelation of Jesus Christ is a mighty treatise of confidence that despite what might happen, persecution, trial, exile, suffering under the yoke of an oppressive regime, Jesus is still Lord and his rule is mightier than any human power.

From verse one of this book we understand that this is the Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond servants the things which must shortly take place. Jesus then sent and communicated this Revelation by His angel to John, in exile for believing. In other words, God the Father wants us to receive this Revelation. John also wrote that whoever reads and hears and takes heed to the things written in the words of this prophecy will be blessed.

It's called “The Revelation,” in the Greek, it is translated, the apocalypse, and it means, “The Revealing,” or “The Unveiling.” When people think of the word ‘apocalypse,’ mass destruction, chaos, and suffering, often come to mind, but God uses this book to reveal Jesus Christ, especially as Lord over all the earth in the latter days. He is the centre of this book. The Revelation was not sent to

strike fear in the church, although for those in the world who don't know Christ there could be considerable cause for concern.

But for the church, it was sent to encourage and strengthen your faith, it was written so you might know that God wrote the end before there was even a beginning. He is Lord over all the nations of the earth and he is our Champion who has defeated death and won for us our victory.

Do not get lost in the details, but try to see the big picture and keep in mind that John wrote this book to encourage believers who were going through persecution. Every generation of Christians has had its antichrist and Babylon, and the hope of the Lord's return has kept those saints going when the going was tough'. Now, yes, it is speaking of the future - hope for tomorrow - but that hope for tomorrow is meant to give you strength for today. It has an application for today: it was a book that wasn't originally given to these early saints to satisfy their curiosity about the future, it was given to them pastorally to comfort them, to give them hope for the days that lay ahead. Remember what we said: it was written by John, a persecuted Christian; it was written to the churches of Asia Minor, persecuted churches; and it was written for the purposes of encouraging and exhorting them, by reassuring them of this central fact - don't miss it - Jesus Christ controls the course and the climax of history! The course and climax of history is in His control! Isn't that good news?

Hymn: Singing the Faith 348

He is Lord, he is Lord,
he is risen from the dead, and he is Lord!
Every knee shall bow, every tongue confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord.

He is King, he is King,
He has conquered ev'ry foe for He is King!
Ev'ry knee shall bow, ev'ry tongue confess
that Jesus Christ is King.

He is God, He is God!
He is sitting on His throne for He is God!
Ev'ry knee shall bow, ev'ry tongue confess
that Jesus Christ is God.

He is Life, he is Life,
He has vanquished death and hell, for He is life!
Ev'ry knee shall bow, ev'ry tongue confess
that Jesus Christ is Life.

Prayers of Intercession

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. Let us pray for the needs of God's world and give thanks to him for his love so freely given.

Loving God we thank you for the beauty and wonder of your creation. Help us to love and respect all that you have made; to share your gifts with our brothers and sisters in need and to protect and nurture all that is fragile and vulnerable on this earth.

Loving God we thank you for the huge diversity of peoples who share this world. We pray for a renewed spirit of longing for peace and reconciliation wherever there is conflict, injustice and oppression. Help us to do what we can to bring peace into our own lives and to seek your ways of peace for the welfare of all your children.

Loving God we thank you for the love and fellowship of friends and families. Help us to be generous with our time, with our love and with ourselves to care for all who are lonely and in need of our support.

Loving God we thank you for all who work to improve care and treatment of those who are physically ill or mentally distressed. We pray that your loving and healing presence will surround all who are suffering today and that your Holy Spirit will comfort and uphold them throughout their troubles.

Loving God we offer you our prayers, trusting that in your love you will use them and us for the fulfilment of your purpose for your creation. In Jesus' name. Amen

Hymn: Singing the Faith 53

How shall I sing that majesty
which angels do admire?
Let dust in dust and silence lie;
sing, sing, ye heavenly choir.

Thousands of thousands stand around
thy throne, O God most high;
ten thousand times ten thousand sound
thy praise; but who am I?

Thy brightness unto them appears,
while I thy footsteps trace;
a sound of God comes to my ears,
but they behold thy face.
They sing, because thou art their Sun;
Lord, send a beam on me;
for where heav'n is but once begun,
there alleluias be.

How great a being, Lord, is thine,
which doth all beings keep!
Thy knowledge is the only line
to sound so vast a deep.
Thou art a sea without a shore,
a sun without a sphere;
thy time is now and evermore,
thy place is everywhere.

The blessing of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be upon us and
remain us for ever. Amen.
Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. In the name of Christ. Amen.