



# The Methodist Church

Ripon and Lower Dales Mission Area –

Worship at Home: 19 October 2025

This week our service wherever you are using it is about journeying.  
What journey have you made this week and where did you find God in it?

God calls us to gather, to receive grace in our gathering, and to reorient us again to the ways of God.

Come! Let us worship!

So, come, members of the family of God! Bring all that you are to be molded by grace, refocused toward Love, and woven together as community in Christ.

Come! Let us worship! Thanks be to God. Amen.

Hymn STF 51

Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father  
There is no shadow of turning with Thee  
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not  
As Thou hast been, Thou forever will be

Great is Thy faithfulness  
Great is Thy faithfulness  
Morning by morning new mercies I see  
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided  
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me

Summer and winter and springtime and harvest  
Sun, moon and stars in their courses above  
Join with all nature in manifold witness  
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy and love

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth  
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide  
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow  
Blessings all mine with 10, 000 beside

A prayer of the late Pope Francis:

All powerful God, you are present in the universe and in the smallest of your creatures.

You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.

Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty.

Fill us with your peace, that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one.

O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth, so precious in your eyes.

Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it, that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.

Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain at the expense of the poor and the earth.

Teach us to discover the worth of each thing, to be filled with awe and contemplation, to recognize that we are profoundly united with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light.

We thank you for being with us each day. Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle, for justice, love and peace.

A prayer of Thomas Merton:

My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so.

But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you. And I hope that I have that desire in all that I am doing. I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire. And I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road, though I may know nothing about it.

Therefore, will I trust you always though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death.

I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.

## Reading: Psalm 121

I lift up my eyes to the mountains— where does my help come from?  
My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth He will not let your foot slip— he who watches over you will not slumber; indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. The LORD watches over you— the LORD is your shade at your right hand; the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night. The LORD will keep you from all harm— he will watch over your life; the LORD will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore.

## Reflection

“I will lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come?”  
Psalm 121 was written to instill confidence in God’s people as they took the journey up Mount Zion to the hill in Jerusalem. They were looking up. It was written to encourage them that they were not alone, that help was available, and that their trust in the Lord was not in vain. And this beautiful little Psalm has been preserved for us because God loves us. He understands what we face, and he wants us to be confident that he will be an able and faithful helper.

I like how it says, “My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth. It’s almost humorous. It’s like, seriously? If God made the heavens and the earth—look at that amazing feat—if he has that kind of power, come on, whatever you’re facing is a small thing for him! Why would you ever doubt God’s ability to meet you in your difficulty and to give you what you need? This is the one who created everything.

I love what it says about God watching over us 24/7. It says, “He who keeps you will not slumber. Behold, He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.” God’s care is so complete, he never takes a rest; never! He’s eternally on guard.

And then it says it’s the Lord who keeps you. This is humbling. We’re not kept by our own wisdom. We’re not kept by our own strength. We’re not kept by our own power and control. We’re kept by the Lord.

You can answer the question, “Where does my help come from?” It comes from the Lord who made heaven and earth.

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What kinds of overwhelming personal struggles are you going through right now? Where have you typically gone to for help in the past when struggles come? What has prevented you from going to God in the midst of your struggle? Does it spur you on to go to God knowing that he is an able and faithful helper?

How might the biblical perspective that God is watching over you 24/7 help you to face your fears? Why is the fact that God is eternally on guard over you a comforting thing? If your help truly comes from the Lord who made heaven and earth, you are kept by his wisdom, his strength, his power, and his control. How does knowing that make you feel? If this theological truth is simply knowledge for you and not something that has taken root in your heart, stop and pray right now for him to transform your heart so that when difficulties arise in your life, you respond in peace, faith, and comfort.

Hymn: STF 158

Lord, you sometimes speak in wonders,  
unmistakable and clear,  
mighty signs that show your presence,  
overcoming doubt and fear.

Lord, you sometimes speak in whispers,  
still and small and scarcely heard ;  
only those who want to listen  
catch the all-important word.

Lord, you sometimes speak in silence,  
through our loud and noisy day ;  
we can know and trust you better  
when we quietly wait and pray.

Lord, you sometimes speak in Scripture,  
words that summon from the page,  
shown and taught us by your Spirit  
with fresh light for every age.

Lord, you always speak in Jesus,  
always new yet still the same :  
teach us now more of our Saviour,  
make our lives display his Name.

Prayers of Intercession

We pray today for all who are walking a hard journey:

for those whose daily paths encounter barbed wire and guns;  
for those who did not want to leave home but were forced to;  
for those who set out today in search of food and water;  
for those whose journey is shattered by economic hardship;  
for those whose journey is marred by pain or despair,  
and for those who faithfully journey alongside them;  
for those who are making a move and beginning again;  
for those who are clinging on to something that has ended;  
for those who are being bullied, and for those who are bullying;  
for those who have just taken their first breath, and  
for those who today will take their last.

May Jesus,  
give strength and courage to all  
whose journey is far from easy.  
And may it inspire us to risk Christ's Way of love  
as we share the journey with other travellers.  
We make this prayer in his name. Amen.

Hymn STF 465

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 till I want no more, feed me till I want no more.

Open now the crystal fountain,  
whence the healing stream doth flow;  
let the fire and 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.

In my journeying with you,  
may I never lose my sense of direction,  
never lose sight of the landmark  
towards which I travel.  
And should cloud or rain obscure my vision,  
may I draw closer to you,  
so that my feet may tread  
in your footsteps,  
your words be my encouragement,  
and your love my protection  
against the storms that assail me. Amen.