

**Ripon & Lower Dales
Mission Area
Worship at Home
Sunday 28th June 2026
Bible Month 4 – The joy of giving**

Call to Worship

Rejoice in the Lord always.
The Lord is near,
and the God of peace will be with you.

Hymn (StF) 335

- 1 Rejoice, the Lord is King!
Your Lord and King adore;
mortals, give thanks, and sing,
and triumph evermore:
*Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
rejoice! Again I say: rejoice!*
- 2 Jesus the Saviour reigns,
the God of truth and love;
when he had purged our stains,
he took his seat above:
- 3 His kingdom cannot fail,
he rules both earth and heaven;
the keys of death and hell
are to our Jesus given:
- 4 He sits at God's right hand
till all his foes submit,
and bow to his command,
and fall beneath his feet:
- 5 Rejoice in glorious hope;
Jesus the Judge shall come,
and take his servants up
to their eternal home:
*We soon shall hear the archangel's voice;
God's trumpet-call shall sound: rejoice!*

Charles Wesley

Prayers of Praise, Thanksgiving and Confession

Lord, we praise you for the wonderful world in which we live;
For the beauty of a flower, bird, or child;
For the aroma of a rose, new mown grass or fresh baked bread;
For all these and more we thank you and celebrate with joy.

We praise you for your love, compassion and grace;
For coming to us through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Friend;

In him we see your glory, power and sovereignty;
We praise Christ for setting aside his divinity and walking among as a true humble human, to show us how to live as a citizen of heaven.

For all this we thank you and celebrate with joy.

We praise you for the life we share with Christ,
For the love and fellowship of those who we worship alongside,
And for the opportunity to share the good news of you and demonstrate the fruit and gifts of the Spirit to others.
For all this we thank you and celebrate with joy.

Lord, you give us so much, there really is nothing that we have that didn't come as a gift from you.

We confess we take these gifts for granted and sometimes use them to our own advantage and do not consider other's needs.

Forgive us for not allowing the Spirit to guide our lives,
Or be generous in our service, ready to sacrifice our selfishness and be a good neighbour.

Set us on fire again,
let us celebrate the joy you have in us,
For we know we are assured of your forgiveness. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

This week we come to the final chapter of the letter Paul wrote to the Philippian Church, continuing his theme of joy as he encourages them to continue with the love, consideration and generosity he has experienced from them.

Bible Reading (NLT) Philippians 4

Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stay true to the Lord. I love you and long to see you, dear friends, for you are my joy and the crown I receive for my work.

Words of Encouragement

² Now I appeal to Euodia and Syntyche. Please, because you belong to the Lord, settle your disagreement. ³ And I ask you, my true partner, to help these two women, for they worked hard with me in telling others the Good News. They worked along with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are written in the Book of Life.

⁴ Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again—rejoice! ⁵ Let everyone see that you are considerate in all you do.

Remember, the Lord is coming soon.

⁶ Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need and thank him for all he has done. ⁷ Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

⁸ And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honourable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. ⁹ Keep putting into practice all you learned and received from me—everything you heard from me and saw me doing. Then the God of peace will be with you.

Paul's Thanks for Their Gifts

¹⁰ How I praise the Lord that you are concerned about me again. I know you have always been concerned for me, but you didn't have the chance to help me. ¹¹ Not that I was ever in need, for I have learned how to be content with whatever I have. ¹² I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little. ¹³ For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength. ¹⁴ Even so, you have done well to share with me in my present difficulty.

¹⁵ As you know, you Philippians were the only ones who gave me financial help when I first brought you the Good News and then travelled on from Macedonia.

No other church did this. ¹⁶ Even when I was in Thessalonica you sent help more than once. ¹⁷ I don't say this because I want a gift from you. Rather, I want you to receive a reward for your kindness.

¹⁸ At the moment I have all I need—and more! I am generously supplied with the gifts you sent me with Epaphroditus. They are a sweet-smelling sacrifice that is acceptable and pleasing to God. ¹⁹ And this same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from his glorious riches, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus.

²⁰ Now all glory to God our Father forever and ever! Amen.

Paul's Final Greetings

²¹ Give my greetings to each of God's holy people—all who belong to Christ Jesus. The brothers who are with me send you their greetings. ²² And all the rest of God's people send you greetings, too, especially those in Caesar's household.

²³ May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

Word

Paul's love for the Philippian church is so clear to see, he describes them as his joy and the crown he has earned. Yet they are not perfect, there is disunity - as he's already mentioned in chapter 2.

Two ladies who he regarded as co-workers in Christ have had a falling out, and he's heard about them in prison! He urges the church congregation to help them reconcile, showing Christian community at its best – not perfect, but precious, as they work together to bring peace and harmony. Clement is probably a quiet, wise man who can guide that process. Such people are the unsung heroes of our church communities.

Paul urges the church, and us, to focus on finding joy in the Lord, whatever is happening around them. Celebrate the good things, and if times are difficult be a positive, half-full glass of a person, not a negative half-empty one. In other words be confident in God's assuring love and

ongoing work in your life; trust in Him by looking for the true, and honourable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable things going on around you. Then you will find peace and can be truly thankful for all that God is doing well for you. Julian of Norwich's famous words of "All shall be well, and all shall be well and all manner of thing shall be well" spring to mind here for me. She said these words during a time of plague and illness, so knew about suffering. Paul finds the same peace whilst in prison. In our world today we need that same trust and belief in Christ, and at a time when mental well-being is often mentioned, we would do well to heed Paul's teaching here.

Paul continues to hope and place his trust in Christ "who strengthens me" and finds contentment through that, meaning that when he thanks the Philippian church for their generous gift, he says he was content to start with as he can live whether empty or full. He treats their gift as their offering to God not himself, pleasing to Him and one that assures "this same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from his glorious riches, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus".

When we make our offerings to God in church, we often overlook the true value of what we do. Our financial gifts may help keep the roof on, and pay our ministerial staff, but they allow us to do so much more through our outreach into our communities. And our offerings are not just financial, we offer our time, our love and care and compassion and prayers. I love to attend our Mission Area Gatherings; it is wonderful to hear the things going on in all our churches, as it also is to pray for those who are struggling and need encouragement, even sometimes being offered practical help. Together we are One Church, and it is good to celebrate that with joy.

Paul's letter ends with greetings to the Philippians, not just from himself and the

co-workers with him such as Timothy, but also from the new believers turning to Christ who are part of Caesar's household – a lovely reminder that we can make new disciples for Christ wherever we are and whatever the situation, a truly joyful ending as we press onwards with our lives, seeking comfort and peace, praying for a growing Christian fellowship around us, and Christ's love to ever enfold us. Amen.

Hymn 639

1 Through the love of God our Saviour
all will be well.
Free and changeless is his favour ;
all, all is well.
Precious is the blood that healed us,
perfect is the grace that sealed us,
strong the hand stretched forth to shield us ;
all must be well.

2 Though we pass through tribulation,
all will be well.
Christ has purchased full salvation,
all, all is well.
Happy still in God confiding,
fruitful, if in Christ abiding,
holy, through the Spirit's guiding ;
all must be well.

3 We expect a bright tomorrow ;
all will be well.
Faith can sing through days of sorrow
all, all is well.
On our Father's love relying,
Jesus every need supplying,
then in living or in dying,
all must be well.

Mary Peters

Prayers of Intercession

Lord, we pray for the church, the worldwide church of today, founded on churches such as the one found in Philippi so long ago.
We thank you for the fellowship shared in times long past, and for the continuing fellowship we share today.
May we continually press onward into deeper ways of sharing with each other, in tolerance, in understanding and with consideration of differing cultures and traditions.
Lord, make us joyfully one with you.

Lord, we pray that our eagerness to spread the Good News may never diminish,
that we can support and pray for all missionary work around the world; and for charities such as Christian Aid and All We Can to be adequately resourced financially, and with volunteers to carry out their aims and visions.
Lord, make us joyfully one with you.

Lord, we pray for world leaders, that they will find ways to work together in unity, for the sake of our planet, and all humanity.
We pray for our politicians, that they will seek your guidance to serve their communities in the way Christ would, not seeking power for themselves.
We pray for all grassroots politics – local government and parish councillors; may they be filled with a desire to serve with compassion and care for the people they live alongside.
Lord, make us joyfully one with you.

Lord, we pray for those in need; Those who are unwell or dying. May they feel your healing touch.
We pray for the carers, social workers, nurses, doctors and consultants who provide such compassionate care. May they be strengthened by You when they find their role is so stressful today.
We pray for those struggling with debt and poverty,
Those seeking employment,
Those who have lost their way in life and turn to drink or drugs when You would be a much better option.
We pray for our families and friends, especially where there is disunity and broken relationships. Help us to be peacemakers.
Lord, make us joyfully one with you.

We pray for ourselves;
Fill our minds with all that is true, and honourable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable, especially on those days when we are feeling discontented.
Bring us the peace that passes all understanding so that we can always find

joy in You and may Your grace be with us always. Amen.

Hymn 526

1 Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy, whose trust, ever childlike, no cares could destroy,
be there at our waking, and give us, we pray, your bliss in our hearts, Lord, at the break of the day.

2 Lord of all eagerness, Lord of all faith, whose strong hands were skilled at the plane and the lathe,
be there at our labours, and give us, we pray, your strength in our hearts, Lord, at the noon of the day.

3 Lord of all kindness, Lord of all grace, your hands swift to welcome, your arms to embrace,
be there at our homing, and give us, we pray, your love in our hearts, Lord, at the eve of the day.

4 Lord of all gentleness, Lord of all calm, whose voice is contentment, whose presence is balm,
be there at our sleeping, and give us, we pray, your peace in our hearts, Lord, at the end of the day.

Jan Struther (Joyce Placzek)

Blessing

May God enfold you,
Christ uphold you,
and the Spirit keep you in heaven's sight;
so God may grace you,
heal and embrace you,
and lead you through darkness into the light.

Rejoice in the Lord, always.

Amen.

Kathy Lowrie