

Ripon and Lower Dales Mission Area
Worship at Home for 11th October 2026

Call to worship:

. 'Let us praise the Lord, for he is good, his steadfast love endures forever.'

Let us come and hear God's call,
come to worship humbly and sincerely.

StF 73

1. Fill thou my life, O Lord my God,
in every part with praise,
that my whole being may proclaim
thy being and thy ways.
2. Not for the lip of praise alone,
nor e'en the praising heart
I ask, but for a life made up
of praise in every part!
3. Praise in the common things of life,
its goings out and in;
praise in each duty and deed,
however small and mean.
4. Fill every part of me with praise;
let all my being speak
of thee and of thy love, O Lord,
poor though I be, and weak.
5. So shalt thou, gracious Lord, from me
receive the glory due;
and so shall I begin on earth
the song for ever new.
6. So shall no part of day or night
from sacredness be free;
but all my life, in every step
be fellowship with thee. *Horatio N Bonar (1806 -1889)*

Prayer of Adoration

God of all time and all places:

You are a kind God, a generous God, a merciful God.

You are our kind of God.

You are a holy God, a loving God, a creative God.

You are our kind of God.

You are an approachable God, a just God, a joyful God.

You are our kind of God.

You are a challenging God, a fair God, a compassionate God.

You are our kind of God.

And we worship you now in Jesus' name.

Amen.

Prayer of confession

Forgive us, merciful God:

when we want quick fixes in our lives and turn away from you;

when we want instant answers and don't listen to you;

when we want gods that are worldly and don't honour you;

when we want to be in control and don't wait on you.

Forgive us and be patient with us,

even when we are impatient with you and those around us.

We ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen.

Assurance of forgiveness

God of all that is healing and holy,

your faithfulness outweighs your frustration,

your forgiveness burns brighter than our mistakes.

You do not give up on us,

even when we give up on you.

Thank you for your constancy

and for your Son, Jesus Christ,

whose life, death and resurrection reunite us with you.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

StF 438

1. Your ceaseless, unexhausted love,
unmerited and free,
delights our evil to remove,
and help our misery.
2. You wait and you are gracious still;
and will with sinners bear,
that, saved, we may Thy goodness feel,
and all Thy grace declare.
3. You goodness and your truth to me
to every soul, abound,
a vast, unfathomable sea,
where all our thoughts are drowned.
4. Its streams the whole creation reach,
so plenteous is the store,
enough for all, enough for each,
enough for evermore.
5. Faithful, O Lord, your mercies are!
a rock that cannot move;
a thousand promises declare
your constancy of love.
6. Throughout the universe it reigns,
unalterably sure;
and while the truth of God remains,
the goodness must endure. *Charles Wesley (1707 - 1788)*

Reading: Exodus 32:1-14 NIV

The Golden Calf

32 When the people saw that Moses was so long in coming down from the mountain, they gathered around Aaron and said, “Come, make us gods^[a] who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who brought us up out of Egypt, we don’t know what has happened to him.”

² Aaron answered them, “Take off the gold earrings that your wives, your sons and your daughters are wearing, and bring them to me.” ³ So all the

people took off their earrings and brought them to Aaron. ⁴ He took what they handed him and made it into an idol cast in the shape of a calf, fashioning it with a tool. Then they said, “These are your gods,^[b] Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt.”

⁵ When Aaron saw this, he built an altar in front of the calf and announced, “Tomorrow there will be a festival to the Lord.” ⁶ So the next day the people rose early and sacrificed burnt offerings and presented fellowship offerings. Afterward they sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in revelry.

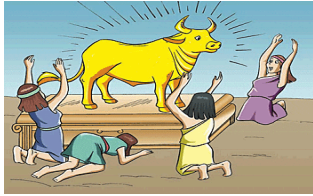
⁷ Then the Lord said to Moses, “Go down, because your people, whom you brought up out of Egypt, have become corrupt. ⁸ They have been quick to turn away from what I commanded them and have made themselves an idol cast in the shape of a calf. They have bowed down to it and sacrificed to it and have said, ‘These are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt.’

⁹ “I have seen these people,” the Lord said to Moses, “and they are a stiff-necked people. ¹⁰ Now leave me alone so that my anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them. Then I will make you into a great nation.”

¹¹ But Moses sought the favour of the Lord his God. “Lord,” he said, “why should your anger burn against your people, whom you brought out of Egypt with great power and a mighty hand? ¹² Why should the Egyptians say, ‘It was with evil intent that he brought them out, to kill them in the mountains and to wipe them off the face of the earth’? Turn from your fierce anger; relent and do not bring disaster on your people.

¹³ Remember your servants Abraham, Isaac and Israel, to whom you swore by your own self: ‘I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and I will give your descendants all this land I promised them, and it will be their inheritance forever.’” ¹⁴ Then the Lord relented and did not bring on his people the disaster he had threatened.

Reflection: *What kind of God?*



I've reached that stage in life when I have difficulty remembering what I did yesterday but can vividly recall when prompted something that happened 70 years ago! The memory usually includes some words spoken by my mother. On reading our Bible passage for today, her words, "I can't leave you alone for five minutes!" came to mind. She'd been next door visiting our neighbour, Mrs Cammish, who wasn't well and had left me with the instructions not to make a mess! During her brief absence I had managed to clutter the entire living room floor with every toy I possessed thus prompting the scolding! I could see Moses using the same words when he came down from Mount Sinai having received the ten commandments from God.

I admit, the situations are totally different, but there is a similarity in that given the opportunity, we like to fill the time focussing on the things that we want with little regard to the ones that really matter.

The people were aware that Moses had gone up Mount Sinai for an encounter with God. They were aware that something significant was taking place given the events recorded in Exodus 19. Chapter 20 tells us that they were made aware of the 10 commandments God had given to Moses, so this special relationship God was offering to his people would become clear to them if they had the patience to wait.

Clearly patience was in short supply and as the days passed and Moses had not returned to them, they began to think he had come to harm in the enveloping smoke maybe. Whatever the reason, they had given up on him and needed to move forward. They turn to Aaron, Moses' elder

brother, who has been less prominent in his leadership so far. Seizing his opportunity to substitute for the missing Moses and the invisible God, Aaron casts their Egyptian gold into the image of a calf, recalling the cult of Apis the Egyptian bull deity that they absurdly acclaim as having brought them out of Egypt!

The irony of this situation is breath taking. One of the last things they have been told by Moses was not to make any images of their god or worship them, yet virtually the first thing they do is to make and worship this golden calf! So much for the kind of God Moses was introducing them to, they had other ideas. Yet another example of Man creating God in his own image. Little wonder God was angry! He was intent on destroying the people there and then, but the sensitive intervention of Moses persuaded him to change his mind, and as we know, the story continues.

We could be forgiven for thinking this is something that happened centuries ago. We have had the benefit of Christ's ministry to give us a clear understanding of the kind of God we worship so there's not much chance we might be tempted to focus on the kind of God we want.

In the 5th century St Augustine said, 'Thou has made us for thyself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it finds its rest in thee.' We need to be careful not to fill this 'God-shaped space' with something else. Where do we even start? Could it be money, security, pride in a skill or in our children, or a special collection?

Let's think about money or wealth, since it crops up in both the Old and New Testaments. We have the story of a rich fool (Luke 12:13-21), for example, busy building barns, to the exclusion of what might please God and help him store real, lasting treasure. Or the story of the rich man, with Lazarus, begging outside his gate (Luke 16:19-31). Then we have two people who met Jesus: a ruler (Luke 18:18-27) who walks away sadly because wealth prevents him from following a better life, and Zacchaeus

(Luke 19:1-10) who realises he has to restore part of his wealth to others, to follow a different path. We also have direct warnings from Jesus about the dangers of setting too much store by wealth.

Money is a useful and necessary tool, and finding out and accepting how much we really need is perhaps one of the trickiest balances people have to grapple with. Amassing it for its own sake turns it from a tool into an idol. Moses coming down from the mountain to be confronted by the golden calf is a vivid and extreme example of misguided priorities and satisfying human longings for tangible representations of God.

This is captured by the words of the psalmist: 'They exchanged the glory of God for the image of an ox that eats grass'! It might be obvious to us that a golden statue can't replace God, but what might we be putting our hope in and how might we be missing out on knowing more of this gracious and loving God? **Amen**

StF 250

1. Jesus calls us o'er the tumult
of our life's wild, restless sea;
day by day his sweet voice soundeth,
saying, "Christian, follow me!"
2. As of old the apostles heard it
by the Galilean lake,
turned from home and toil and kindred,
leaving all for Jesus' sake.
3. Jesus calls us from the worship
of the vain world's golden store,
from each idol that would keep us,
saying, "Christian, love me more!"
4. In our joys and in our sorrows,
days of toil and hours of ease,
still he calls, in cares and pleasures,
"Christian, love me more than these!"

5. Jesus calls us! By thy mercies,
Savior, may we hear thy call,
give our hearts to thine obedience,
serve and love thee best of all.

Cecil Frances Alexander (1818 - 1895)

Prayers of Intercession

Kind God,

you are our kind of God and we entrust to you those on our hearts.
Those we know and who we share our lives with. And those whose
stories we glimpse on our screens and in our papers.

We pray especially for our world, its leaders and all in power.

We pray for our government as they seek to implement policies that
support those they serve and as they seek to work with the leaders of
other nations amidst threats of violence, aggression and economic
turmoil.

**Lord, may they know your presence with them, and may our hearts
be as your heart that we might support them prayerfully and
practically.**

We pray for the people of France and Spain amidst protests and
disruption, for all seeking change, for all entrusted with keeping order
and for good conversations not violent confrontations.

We pray against brutal regimes who silence the voices of those who
challenge them. We remember especially the people of Iran, those in
prison and those awaiting execution, for their families and for all who live
in fear of arrest.

We pray too for the people of Afghanistan; for all places where there is
little or no democracy and where the suffering of so many goes unseen
and unreported.

**Lord, may they know your presence with them, and may our hearts
be as your heart that we might support them prayerfully and
practically.**

We pray for those who continue to be impacted by extreme weather
conditions. Those still trying to recover from devastating fires and floods.
Those still searching in the mud for friends and family. Those whose
homes will never be rebuilt and those whose lives will never be the same.

Those whose livelihoods are gone and for all the wildlife in areas of land scorched and destroyed...

Lord, may they know your presence with them, and may our hearts be as your heart that we might support them prayerfully and practically.

We pray for those who are worried about the rising costs of food and fuel especially as winter approaches. For all who lack basic resources, and for those who are never invited to feast at anyone's table. Those whose homelessness robs them of a sense of self worth, those whose situations rob them of opportunities, those whose displacement robs them of dignity and for all who feel forgotten and unloved.

Lord, may they know your presence with them, and may our hearts be as your heart that we might support them prayerfully and practically.

We pray for our churches and faith communities. That we would be places of welcome and beacons of light and healing in a world so darkened by despair and sadness. We pray for those who have lost their faith in a loving God in a world of so much suffering. We pray for one another that we would reflect Gospel hope, and lead others to Jesus' love and The Holy Spirit's comfort.

Lord, may they know your presence with them, and may our hearts be as your heart that we might support them prayerfully and practically.

And we pray for those who are ill. Those awaiting operations. Those debilitated by long-term conditions and those who know they are in their last days. We pray for those who journey with them, for all carers, doctors, nurses and health care assistants. We pray for those in our families and communities who are going through challenging times.

Lord, may they know your presence with them, and may our hearts be as your heart that we might support them prayerfully and practically.

Today and every day, we pray in Jesus' name,
Amen.

StF 507

1. O for a heart to praise my God,
a heart from sin set free,
a heart that always feels thy blood
so freely shed for me.
2. A heart resigned, submissive, meek,
my great Redeemer's throne,
where only Christ is heard to speak,
where Jesus reigns alone.
3. A humble, lowly, contrite, heart,
believing, true and clean,
which neither life nor death can part
from him that dwells within.
4. A heart in every thought renewed
and full of love divine,
perfect and right and pure and good,
a copy, Lord, of thine.
5. Thy nature, gracious Lord, impart;
come quickly from above;
write thy new name upon my heart,
thy new, best name of Love.

Charles Wesley (1707 - 1788)

Closing Prayer

Lord, help us to acknowledge you in everything we do.
May we honour you in what we do and what we say,
as people who put you first, middle and last,
everywhere and always.

Amen.

This service was prepared by Lister Baynes with acknowledgement to Roots for Churches for the material used..