

Sunday 24 January 2021

This short act of worship has been prepared for you to use whilst we are unable to use Methodist Church premises. If you are well enough why not spend a few moments with God, knowing that other people are sharing this act of worship with you.

Opening Prayer

As we prepare for worship this morning – let us sing or say-

Hymn: Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

<https://youtu.be/UnX1hRZi0-w>

Turn your eyes upon Jesus,
look full in his wonderful face
and the things of earth will grow strangely dim
In the light of his glory and grace.
Helen Howarth Lemmel (1863-1961)

**Hymn: Dear Lord and Father of Mankind
(Stf 495)**

<https://youtu.be/WqOnjmr9Ah0>

Sing/ Read /pray /proclaim the words or listen to it here

Dear Lord and Father of mankind
forgive our foolish ways;
re clothe us in our rightful mind;
in purer lives thy service find,
in deeper reverence, praise.

In simple trust like theirs who heard
beside the Syrian sea

the gracious calling of the Lord,
let us, like them, without a word
rise up and follow thee.

O sabbath rest by Galilee!
O calm of hills above,
where Jesus knelt to share with thee
the silence of eternity,
interpreted by love!

With that deep hush subduing all
our words and works that drown
the tender whisper of thy call,
as noiseless let thy blessing fall
as fell thy manna down.

Drop thy still dews of quietness,
till all our strivings cease;
take from our souls the strain and stress,
and let our ordered lives confess
the beauty of thy peace.

Breathe through the heats of our desire
thy coolness and thy balm;
let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
speak through the earthquake, wind, and fire,
O still small voice of calm!

John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-1892)

Let us pray together

Lord God, despite the restrictions placed upon us and the circumstances in which we are living in these days, we are thankful that we can turn our eyes upon you to praise and worship you the living God, drawing comfort in the knowledge of your gracious and compassionate nature.

We are conscious Lord of those who have not been able to meet with others, concerned perhaps not to be in other people's company because of health reasons. We think of them now, think of them sitting where they normally

would be on a Sunday in church.We ask you Lord, to bless them, just where they are now, uniting us together through the love of Christ. Amen.

Prayer of confession

Gracious God, you offer us new life in Christ, yet so often we try to live in our own way and in our own strength. We stray from the paths you want us to follow. Forgive us for our half-hearted efforts, our self-centredness, our selfish prayers. Challenge our minds and hearts and lead us towards your truth.

Hear good news. For all who put their trust in Christ. Jesus says: 'Your sins are forgiven.' Amen. Thanks be to God

Today's Reading from the Old Testament Jonah 3:1-5,10

Today's Gospel Reading: Mark 1:14-20

Time to Reflect

Just as Jesus called Peter and Andrew, James and John, so he calls us to follow him. Just as they had to make a decision to do so, so do we. He calls us because he wishes to make us more useful to him, to make our lives more fruitful in the changing world around us. It's a challenge because to follow him, means letting him take the lead. If he says do it, we do it. If he says don't do it, we don't do it.

Following Jesus means accepting him as the way, as far as our lives are concerned, taking him as the truth. God's truth to us. It means accepting that he is the life, our life, and without him there is no life as God intended it to be.

So, if that is the case, the question is.....How are we doing - answering his call and following him?

You see, following Jesus is a transforming work, a continuing work because the day we came to the Lord was only a beginning of a conversion process that started and goes on and on. It really means 'our becoming something we were not'.

So, are we further forward now than when we made that commitment to be a follower?

We can answer that question for ourselves because we know, if over the years, we have been able to do things that before we just couldn't do. Like, talk to other people about our Christian experience, discuss God's word with one another, share our doubts as well as our joyful discoveries; being aware of the knowledge of God's help at our side at difficult times.

Can we say now that, looking back, we have known his presence and direction in our lives? Do we continue to do so? And what about the future? Those disciples Jesus called had no idea where his call would take them. They just went with him and continued to follow him which is what he expects of us too.

Take a time to sit quietly

A time of prayer

Lord God, throughout history you have called people to respond to your challenge to follow you, undaunted by the task to which they were called believing that you would guide and lead them, inspire and enable them to fulfil the work to which they were called. We give thanks for those whose faithful discipleship and friendship encouraged and guided us. Help us to learn from their example and to respond faithfully and willingly whenever you call. Help us to have faith to follow wherever you lead.

We ask these prayers in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and share together in the Lord's Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven
Hallowed be thy name
Thy kingdom come.....
Thy will be done
On earth as it is in heaven
Give us this day our daily bread
And forgive us our trespasses
As we forgive those who trespass against us
And lead us not into temptation
But deliver us from evil
For thine is the kingdom
The power and the glory
For ever and ever

Amen

***Hymn: Spirit of God unseen as the wind,
(Stf 394)***

<https://youtu.be/uGiCOx1obNg>

Spirit of God, unseen as the wind,
gentle as is the dove,
teach us the truth and help us believe,
show us the Saviour's love.

You spoke to us long, long ago,
gave us the written word;
we read it still, needing its truth,
through it God's voice is heard.

Without your help we fail our Lord,
we cannot live his way;
we need your power, we need your strength,
following Christ each day.

Margaret V. Old (1932-2001)

A prayer of blessing

May the Lord bless us and keep us in his love as we answer his call to follow
and serve him in the world today. Amen

Original Materials by Keith Edlington

All

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Local Churches please insert CCCLi No here

We are grateful to all the Ministers and Local Preachers from around the
Connexion who have contributed to Worship at Home. This resource
is administrated by Ministries: Vocations and Worship in the Connexional
Team. We aim to continue to provide these resources until the end of August
2021.

Jonah 3:1-5, 10

The word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time, saying "Get up, go to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim to it the message that I tell you." So, Jonah set out and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly large city, a three days' walk across. Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's walk. And he cried out, "Forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!"

And the people of Nineveh believed God: they proclaimed a fast, and everyone, great and small, put on sackcloth. When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it.

Mark 1:14-20

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe the good news." As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea-for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, "Follow me and I will make you fish for people." And immediately they left their nets and followed him. As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him.