

**Sunday 18 July 2021**

This short act of worship has been prepared for you to use whilst we are unable to use Methodist Church premises. We invite you to spend a few moments with God, knowing that other people are sharing this act of worship with you.

**Opening Prayer**

God of power, majesty, and wonder, we worship and adore you with our hearts, our souls and our minds. As we begin this time of worship, open our hearts to you, challenge us and transform us. In Jesus' name. Amen.

**Hymn: StF 248 I heard the voice of Jesus say**

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

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8mXMQqiLW9c>

I heard the voice of Jesus say:

'Come unto me and rest;  
lay down, O weary one, lay down  
your head upon my breast.'

I came to Jesus as I was,  
weary and worn and sad,  
I found in him a resting-place,  
and he has made me glad.

I heard the voice of Jesus say:

'Behold, I freely give  
the living water; thirsty one,  
stoop down and drink and live.'

I came to Jesus, and I drank  
of that life-giving stream;  
my thirst was quenched, my soul revived,  
and now I live in him.

I heard the voice of Jesus say:

'I am this dark world's Light;  
look unto me, your morn shall rise,  
and all your day be bright.'

I looked to Jesus, and I found  
in him my star, my sun;  
and in that light of life I'll walk,  
till travelling days are done.

*Horatius N. Bonar (1808-1889)*

Let us pray together

Adoration:

- Spend some time thinking about who God is to you and what it means to have a relationship with him. Spend some time praising God for his amazing love and his awesome faithfulness.
- Spend some time thinking about what God has done and is doing and all the promises he has kept. Thank him and praise him for all his wonderful and glorious works.

Confession:

If we confess to God those things we have said, thought or done that have hurt others and in turn hurt him and do so in sincerity and truth, he forgives our sins. Spend some time saying sorry, genuinely, to God.

*Silence is maintained for as long as is appropriate.*

The words of grace are ours to receive and believe: our sins are forgiven. Amen. Thanks be to God.

Thanksgiving:

- Think about your relationship with God. We all go through times where we feel that God is distant, but God is always there and is always faithful. Spend some time thanking him for his faithfulness and his love.

- Think about your life at the moment. What are you thankful for? Even if it is hard at the moment, try and think of one thing to thank God for – whether it is the beauty of the weather that we have enjoyed lately (if hot weather is something you enjoy!) or the beauty of the sunrise or sunset, or that one person in your life who has always been faithful.
- Spend some time thanking God for everything and anything.

### Today's Gospel Reading:

Mark 6:30-34, 53-56

<sup>30</sup>The apostles gathered around Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught. <sup>31</sup>He said to them, 'Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while.' For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. <sup>32</sup>And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves. <sup>33</sup>Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they hurried there on foot from all the towns and arrived ahead of them. <sup>34</sup>As he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things.

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### Time to Reflect

There is a sense of accountability with the disciples to Jesus and to each other. Perhaps, accountability isn't the best word, though? Maybe 'fellowship' might be a better word. In what ways have we encouraged each other during the pandemic and in what ways are we going to encourage others as we move out of it?

1. Jesus told the disciples to rest. Rest, as we know, is important and taking a break away from all things church and all things 'life' is as important too. How can we improve our resting? Sometimes, some of us, feel guilty if we have a long rest!
2. What does it mean to you that Jesus is a shepherd? What other biblical references can you think of that use the image of God or Jesus as a shepherd?

Take a time to sit quietly

### A time of prayer

We come to the part of our worship now as we pray for others and ourselves. As we do so, I invite you to think about each specific focus in turn and end with "The Lord hears our prayer". "Thanks be to God".

We pray for God's world.

As we pray for God's world, we are mindful that we have not been wise, loving stewards of it. We have been greedy and selfish, rather than focusing on the beauty and wonder, and encouraging flourishing.

We pray for world rulers, that they would rule with truth and justice, mercy and grace and that they would remember that all authority in heaven and on earth belongs to Jesus Christ.

Take a moment in silent prayer to pray for God's world and world rulers.

*"The Lord hears our prayer". "Thanks be to God".*

We pray for God's church.

We pray for the church worldwide, that we would unite in the common goal to worship and serve God together in a spirit of unity and holiness.

We pray for the church where we are and in a moment of quiet, we offer up to God our prayers for our church.

*"The Lord hears our prayer". "Thanks be to God".*

We take time now to pray for those who are known to us. We pray for those who are known to us that are going through times of trial that they would know God's peace and comfort. We pray for those going through times of joy, that they would know Your love and not take this time for granted.

We pray also for ourselves, and I invite you to spend some time in prayer to God for yourself.  
*"The Lord hears our prayer". "Thanks be to God".*

### **The Lord's Prayer**

*Our Father .....*

**Hymn:** Listen to The Lord is my Shepherd by Stuart Townend. (StF 481)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pN4tPkX0MG>

or sing a verse of a hymn that comes to mind

The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want;  
he makes me lie in pastures green,  
he leads me by the still, still waters,  
his goodness restores my soul.  
And I will trust in you alone,  
and I will trust in you alone,  
for your endless mercy follows me,  
your goodness will lead me home.

He guides my ways in righteousness,  
and he anoints my head with oil;  
and my cup -- it overflows with joy,  
I feast on his pure delights.

And though I walk the darkest path --  
I will not fear the evil one,  
for you are with me, and your rod and staff  
are the comfort I need to know.

*Stuart Townend (b. 1963)*

### **A prayer of blessing**

God of faithfulness, always journeying with us, as we journey through this week and all that lies ahead, help us to remember you are always with us.

Grant us faithfulness to you and to Jesus, our Lord and Saviour.

Grant us strength to witness and proclaim your kingdom of love and grace.

And the blessing of God,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
be among you and those whom you cherish in your heart, now and always.  
Amen.

Original Materials by Matthew Ramsden

Local Preacher in Bolton Methodist Circuit (6/1)

All

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Local Churches please insert CCLI 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.