**Worship Material for Sunday 13th June 2021**

**Compiled by Rev James Bamber**

**A moment to pause**

As we worship in different places and at different times we are united…you are not alone. Others are praying with you and for you in this act of worship. God too is near. Take a moment to pause and reflect on these words from Psalm 92: 1 - 5

“It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to your name, O Most High; to declare your steadfast love in the morning, and your faithfulness by night, to the music of the lute and the harp, to the melody of the lyre. For you, O Lord, have made me glad by your work; at the works of your hands I sing for joy. How great are your works, O Lord! Your thoughts are very deep!” **Amen.**

**Hymn: Seek ye first the kingdom (Singing the Faith 254/Hymns and Psalms 138)**

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

[Seek ye first the kingdom of God (StF 254) (methodist.org.uk)](https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/worship/singing-the-faith-plus/hymns/seek-ye-first-the-kingdom-of-god-stf-254/)

**Opening Prayer** (adapted from The Connexional Service Sheet)

Lord, I come with thanksgiving and praises in my heart for your love and faithfulness. You are worthy of my heartfelt worship today.

Lord, thank you for sending your Son Jesus who inaugurated your kingdom on earth and for the continuing power of the Holy Spirit, which helps the kingdom to grow.

Forgive me Lord when I fail to see your will in my life and in others. Forgive me when I am overcome with anxiety, when I become impatient and when I lose heart in times of suffering and prevailing evil in our world. Help me to be confident in your faithfulness even when things seem bleak and to know that you are in control of all things. Today Lord, I choose to believe. **Amen.**

**Today’s Gospel Reading: Mark** 4:26-34

**Time to Reflect** *[Today’s reflection comes from Jane Bingham* via The Vine*.]*

I love this quote from Renee Swope the Christian writer and commentator from the USA. She says this: “The lens you look through will determine what you see.”

For me one of the joys of studying scripture is that strange duality of the assurance and familiarity it brings, mixed together with the ever changing possibility that God has something new to say if only we take a risk to look afresh, and today we look afresh at that famous parable of the mustard seed…

Let’s take a moment of silence and imagine ourselves as that mustard plant.

*[Silence]*

What kind of plant are we?

Are we one that nourishes and sustains others through the fruit we bear and the shelter we offer?

Are we the kind of plant that infiltrates other gardens and wild spaces making a rich carpet of green?

Are we the kind of plant that chokes and takes over?

Are we one that grows so huge it goes to seed and is only in fact fit to provide shelter for vultures?

*[Silence]*

After you leave this space you might want to sit with these questions for a moment longer. You might want to make a note and keep them in your pocket so when you are out and about on a walk, sitting in the garden or on the bus you can have a think with God about them. You might already have heard a new answer and now have a plan to make a change or reinforce and idea. Whatever you do try, with God’s help, to see it a bit differently and take time to work out what to do next.

**A possible response** (from ROOTS)



I wonder how small the seed was that grew this tree?

I wonder how long it took to grow?

Where would like to build your nest?

How do you offer shelter to others?

**Hymn: Lord you sometimes speak in wonders (Singing the Faith 158)**

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

<https://youtu.be/M59Khg3ob0s>

**Or May the mind of Christ my Saviour (Hymns and Psalms 739)**

**Prayers of intercession** (adapted from The Connexional Service Sheet)

Lord God, we pray for all who risk their lives for the sake of spreading your gospel in word and deed.

We pray for those who have been overcome with struggles of life, doubt and fear and for whom faith means nothing.

We pray for the persecuted Christians in our world, for whom following Christ may mean much suffering.

We pray for those who have been bereaved, those who are in physical, mental or emotional pain.

Faithful God,

Be with us as we seek to serve you so that we may reflect kingdom values rather than worldly values. We ask these prayers through the powerful name of Jesus, our Lord and Saviour. **Amen**

**The Lord’s Prayer**

Our Father ……

**Hymn: Hear the call of the kingdom (Singing the Faith 407)**

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

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WL-UdwB0Qvc>

**Or Lord of creation, to you be all praise (Hymns and Psalms 699)**

**A prayer of blessing** (based on material from ROOTS)

Go in peace to love ad serve God’s world. It is beautiful and you are part of it. It is our sacred commission to help God love it. As you journey may God’s blessing fill you and surround you, together with all creation, in every moment. **Amen.**

With thanks to Jane Bingham and Rev. Nutan S J Suray for their contributions.