

Worship at Home - Sunday 26 June

This short act of worship has been prepared for you to use at home. We invite you to spend a few moments with God, knowing that other people across the Methodist Connexion are sharing this act of worship with you.

Opening Prayer

I cry to God in distress,
I cry to God and he hears me.
God, your ways are holy!
What God is as great as our God?
You are the God who does marvellous deeds,
Brought nations to acknowledge your power,
With your own arm redeeming your people,
The children of Jacob and Joseph.

Psalm 77: 1, 13-15

StF 473 Moses I know you're the man
Sing/ Read /pray /proclaim the words or listen to it
here:

<https://youtu.be/yr7YZ203UVI>

Estelle White (b. 1925)

A Prayer

God of Creation, you have always been on the move. You are faithful and sure, yet also constantly transforming, re-creating, bringing fresh order out of chaos.

Humankind is looking, constantly, for an order which can be controlled but finding, constantly, that we are powerless in a world which is so much bigger than we are.

Thank you for the example of Jesus, who understood small world and vast universe. He showed us how to be true to ourselves and to you, even when it costs us. He taught us to love all that you have brought into being; even the mysteries of life.

Forgive and heal us of the arrogance which wants to be in charge. Grant us the assurance in our hearts that we are not only forgiven, but healed and transformed by your loving mercy and grace. Amen.

Today's Reading from: Galatians 5:1,13-25

Today's Gospel Reading: Luke 09:51-62

Time to Reflect

Living with settled churches, we easily forget how Jesus' ministry was that of a wandering rabbi.

The Samaritan town rejected this rabbi and his followers who were heading for Jerusalem since they must therefore support the Judaism which looked down on Samaritans for practices which were not entirely authorised; the Samaritans had mingled with people of other faiths, other standards, other ways.

James and John emphasise this rivalry and lack of respect between people of the same nation but opposite sects, which upsets Jesus. Soon he would send them out in twos to discover for themselves that most people are just people, and there's no need to attack one another.

He seems to feel alien in a world which has such different priorities to himself. Everyone seems to expect so much, but will anyone give to him of their time or will there always be other things which come first for them? He seems to reflect on this, and to decide to send out the disciples in less threatening numbers to get alongside the local population as far as that's possible; and to just let people be where they're not welcome; let go of any bad feelings by shaking off the dust.

Sometimes when we think of the gifts of the Holy Spirit we expect people to be angels at all times, but we, too, are human, and have to work things through, often by personal experience. The letter to the Galatians warns people against enslaving themselves to emotions which aggravate situations: let go, and move on. That doesn't mean we should then enslave ourselves to others' expectations of our behaviour. Sometimes we too will get annoyed. When we live freely, paying attention to God's love and respecting the freedoms of others, we will find the fruits of the Spirit naturally emerge despite our initial reaction. It's not about following rules. It's about our attitude and direction of travel.

What attitudes do we demonstrate towards people who are different to ourselves - who have different values, different ways? How might we respond to the hospitality of a Christian with whom we strongly disagree? Could we

show hospitality to those who make us feel uncomfortable?

What does it mean to be 'free'? Does it mean giving in to every desire, or could it mean being open to discover God's love in new situations? Always ready to travel with him in our thinking as much as the disciples travelled the roads with him?

What does freedom mean to you - and how does that freedom impact on the freedoms of others?

Take a time to sit quietly

A time of prayer

Loving God, Thank you that Jesus was truly human, as we are, and not just human in form. That he had all the emotions we have, and wrestled with them as we do.

Sometimes, in our distress, our priorities do get confused, and we miss the needs of. Thank you for those who make the time to notice others, and to be there for them.

We pray for the nations where there is division between different groups who despise one another, often because of their shared history. We hold in mind those who are suffering because of war and violence.

We pray for those whose experience of violence is hidden from view, unacknowledged, or imprisoned by fear. We pray for people who make themselves available to help those who hurt in private; and for those brave enough to speak out.

We pray for those who are enslaved by others, or by their society, or by their own habits, values, or expectations. We thank you for those who help to set them - and us - free.

We hold before you all who are unwell, and all who are grieving.

And we bring you such prayers as you inspire in our hearts with groans too deep for words. ...

Thank you, Lord, that you hear our prayers. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer
Our Father

Hymn: Listen to

Waymaker

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iJCV_2H9xD0

A prayer of blessing

May the road rise up to meet you,
May the wind be always at your back,
May the sun shine warm upon your face,
The rains fall soft upon your fields,
And until we meet again
May God hold you in the hollow of his hand.

Irish Traditional

Original Materials by Verity Phillips
All Hymns reproduced under CCLi 1144191.
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 administered by Ministries: Vocations and Worship in the Connexional Team. We aim to continue to provide these resources until the end of August 2022.

Galatians 5:1,13-25

For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.

For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another. For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' If, however, you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another.

Live by the Spirit, I say, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not subject to the law. Now the works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these. I am warning you, as I warned you before: those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit.

Luke 09:51-62

When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem. And he sent messengers ahead of him. On their way they entered a village of the Samaritans to make ready for him; but they did not receive him, because his face was set towards Jerusalem. When his disciples James and John saw it, they said, 'Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?' But he turned and rebuked them. Then they went on to another village.

As they were going along the road, someone said to him, 'I will follow you wherever you go.' And Jesus said to him, 'Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.' To another he said, 'Follow me.' But he said, 'Lord, first let me go and bury my father.' But Jesus said to him, 'Let the dead bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God.' Another said, 'I will follow you, Lord; but let me first say farewell to those at my home.' Jesus said to him, 'No one who puts a hand to the plough and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.'