**Worship sheet for Sunday 4th February 2021**

**Compiled by Rev Nick Witham**

**Moving, Praying, Speaking**

**Call to Worship**

The Lord heals the broken-hearted,

 and binds up their wounds.

The Lord determines the number of the stars;

 he gives to all of them their names.

Great is our Lord, and abundant in power.

(Psalm 147 vv3-5)

*The first of 3 cracking hymns this week – so open the windows and sing to God’s glory as loud as you want!!*

**Hymn:** StF 94/H&P 463 - To God Be The Glory <https://youtu.be/6xPAF0YlY5A>

**Prayer of adoration**

Everlasting God, creator of heaven and earth, your love causes out hearts to soar. You know the number of stars in the universe- just as you know the number of hairs on our head.

Mighty God: **We love you**.

You call each star by name- just as you call us each by name.

Mighty God: **We love you**.

You supply the earth with rain and to make the grass grow; and provide food for the animals and birds- just as you provide all we need to sustain us.

Mighty God: **We love you**.

You care about the details, seeing tiny part of the bigger picture- just as you care about the tiniest detail in our lives; for you know the person you created each of us to be.

Mighty God: **We love you**.

**Amen.**

**A prayer of confession**

People. People. Everywhere! Day in. Day out.

Seeking you Lord. Seeking you out. Following you.

Hungry for your presence. Wanting your attention.

Yet no once do you complain.

We’re sorry, Lord, that the weight of life’s demands causes us to stumble, to lose our temper and at times t buckle under the pressure. Help us to be more like you, Lord.

We’re sorry for not getting our priorities right. Help us to know, as you did, the importance of spending time with and drawing refreshment from the Father.

We’re sorry for allowing other people and things to take over and squeeze out time with you. Help us to draw daily on your refreshing strength in order to cope with whatever our day holds.

**Lord hear our prayer. Amen.**

**Assurance of Forgiveness**

The Son of God loves us. And because of his love, healing us and setting us free from sin’s guilt and power, we are forgiven. **Amen**

**Readings:** Isaiah 40:21-31, Psalm 147:1-11,20, 1 Cor 9:16-23, Mark 1:29-39

**Hymn:** StF 564/H&P 745 - O thou who camest <https://youtu.be/qZSvW-6XXnw>

**Reflection: How is the church moving, praying and speaking?**

I remember the time that I moved for the first time away from the church that I had grown up in, been confirmed in, recognised as a local preacher in, married in, had my children christened in. In fact before moving, I used to walk past it often and think there is only one more service in the church left for me (my funeral service!!). I know what it is like to be emotionally attached…. but as a church we are called to be on the move.

Jesus in touching Simon’s mother-in-law, ill with fever, breaks traditional and ritual boundaries. Are we as a church prepared to move beyond our boundaries to reach out to those who don’t know about faith in Christ? Jesus is out there meeting the needs of the people that he is with.

But then he slopes off and spends some time alone – the disciples must have been annoyed – they exclaim, “everyone is looking for you!” But Jesus needs to spend time with the Father – and it appears that he gets a fresh vision for where he should go next as he decides that they need to move on. There is a deep need for us as a church to spend time in prayer and stillness in the business and demands of life so that we too can be refreshed and receive that vision for where we need to be.

Then Jesus goes off to speak in the synagogues – it is important too that we speak of God’s love while demonstrating his love. We witness in word and deed, speaking as well as doing – this is how people see and hear of faith and salvation.

As a church at this time, we need to be moving, praying and speaking into a society that has been reminded of the fragility of life often creating a greater openness and searching. This is a great opportunity for us to witness in worship and mission – so be encouraged!

**Further Reflection:** Some thoughts on today's scripture (from [www.sacredspace.ie](http://www.sacredspace.ie))

* The first recorded hours of Jesus’ ministry are a whirlwind of activity. We are meant to catch on to the fact that when Jesus enters human lives, things change fast and for the better for those who are open. A new creation is here! Everyone is meant to get in on it.
* But what do I need from Jesus? Am I just a spectator in the scene, or am I fighting to get close to him? His presence brings wholeness – do I need that? People become more alive – do I need that? Simon’s mother-in-law gets the energy to serve – do I need that? Let it not be true that ‘everyone is searching for him’ - except me.

**Prayers for Others**

Loving God, we pray for the community and country of which we are a part. For those who are exhausted with caring for others and long for a break. For those who have had enough of restrictions, of not being able to meet with friends and family, and feel they cannot stand it any longer, and for those who are angry and frightened, who feel their only hope is just to try and hang on until things get better.

Loving God, we pray for the leaders of the world, as they try and bring the pandemic under control.

Give them the wisdom and courage to respect every human life and seek freedom, justice and peace for all people.

Loving God we pray for the church, unite us by your Spirit, and enable us to witness to the hope we have in you.

Loving God, come to us now, as you have come to your people in every age. We thank you for all who have reflected the light of Christ. Help us to follow their example and bring us with them to live for ever in your kingdom. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

**The Lord’s Prayer**

Our Father ……

**Hymn:** StF 465/H&P 437 - Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah <https://youtu.be/Ofp6rdAgRrY>

**Closing Prayer**

*1 Cor 16:13-14: Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong. Do everything in love.*

May we be on our guard, moving praying and speaking of Christ, doing everything in love. **Amen**