**Worship sheet for Sunday 21st March 2021**

**(Fifth Sunday in Lent – Passion Sunday)**

**Compiled by Pauline Zahner of Hilton Methodist Church**

**Jesus said I am the Way, Truth and Life**

**Call to worship**: Are we nearly there yet ? Jesus says: “I am the way”

I’m not sure what to believe. Jesus says : “ I am the truth”.

My life is just ticking over. Jesus says : “I am the life”.

**Hymn** : “To God Be The Glory” : Hymns and Psalms 463/Singing the Faith 94: <https://youtu.be/6xPAF0YlY5A>

**Prayers (adapted from Roots)**

Gracious God, your strength sustains me. Your power delivers me.
Your mercy brings forgiveness to me. I come to you in adoration,
praising you that my whole life is in your hands – held, sustained, protected.
Glory be to you, merciful Lord, glory, honour, majesty and worship,
in the name of your Son, my Redeemer. Amen.

Jesus, you are the way... yet too often I have gone my own way.
My way is less costly, quicker, safer. It doesn't hold any hidden surprises.
It doesn't make any unreasonable demands, but I know my way is the wrong way.
Lord, forgive me.

Jesus, you are the truth... yet I prefer to cobble together my own truth,
a wise tale from here, a bit of homespun philosophy from there,

the example set by celebrity. My truth always offers me comfortable answers,
Lord, forgive me.

Jesus, you are the life... Fullness of life! Yet I'm quite happy with a half-life,
a life without risk, a calculated life – a life that holds something back for later,
a life that avoids the real depths of passion and love for fear of getting hurt,
a life turned inwards, lived with 'me' at the centre,
Lord, forgive me. (Time of quiet))

Jesus is the way. His way is the way of forgiveness, the way of peace, the way of reconciliation.
Jesus is truth. I can confidently believe that I am forgiven.
Jesus is life. I am called to live as those forgiven.
Alleluia! Thanks be to God! **Amen.**

**Think about and thank God for**

* **Someone who has made their Christian faith known through their acts of kindness and love**
* **Someone who has known that you are a Christian because of your acts of kindness and love**
* **Someone who has answered your questions about faith**
* **Someone who has helped you understand the stories of Jesus**

**Hymn : “All to Jesus”**  [**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7x2IpLSfqp8**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7x2IpLSfqp8)

**Or “**Take my life”: Hymns and Psalms 705/Singing the Faith **566:**

**Reading** : John 13 verse 30- John 14 verse 9

**Reflection**

After Judas has left, Jesus embarks upon an explanation of what is to happen to him and how the disciples should cope with what will arise. He urges them to do two things.

The first is to love one another as he has loved them.

Jesus has shown love through service to others in the washing of the disciples’ feet. In time, the disciples will be called to show their love for others and make huge sacrifices as we read in the Acts of the Apostles. Many since the time of the disciples have also shown great love for others. I’ll offer just two examples

Martin Luther King Junior put himself in danger on this day, 21st March in 1965 when he led the third protest march from Selma for days to Montgomery to claim equality of voting rights for all people alike regardless of the colour of their skin. These rights were granted in the act of August, 1965. Others have sacrificed their life to make the way clear for us to worship as we feel appropriate like Thomas Crammer, a leader of the English Reformation and Archbishop of Canterbury during the reign of Henry VIII. Cranmer was subsequently considered to be a traitor by Henry’s Roman Catholic daughter Mary, pressurised into recanting but when he was made to make a last public show of recanting he withdrew his recantation. On 21st March 1556, Cranmer was executed and made a martyr for declaring his faith.

The second is to believe God and Jesus.

Jesus reassures us that he is going ahead to prepare a place for us and that he will return to take us with him when the time is right.

Before and after this second piece of advice, a conversation ensues in which Peter, Thomas and Philip participate. Jesus answers a series of questions and requests. Peter is confident that he will lay down his life for Jesus, not realising that before he does that, he will first deny Jesus three times. Thomas asks about the way to which Jesus replies that he (Jesus) is the way, the truth and the life and explains that the way to God is through is son. Those who really know Jesus also know God. Finally, Philip who has spent so much time with Jesus, ironically, now asks to know the father. It’s only later that the disciples reach a much deeper understanding of all that they are told. If we have doubts and queries may we be assured that questions and requests play a key role in the development of faith.

**Prayers of intercession/for others**

We pray for those who show acts of kindness, love, compassion and mercy and pray especially at this time for those caring for the recently bereaved, the sick and the suffering and for those involved in vaccinating others, be they volunteers directing those arriving to be vaccinated or the professional staff vaccinating.

We offer prayers for those working in poorer areas be they abroad or at home, for those trying to help in areas where harvests have failed, land has been flooded or fire has ravaged. Lord, may they know your strength. May we play our part in helping in any way we can, be it by donating money, urging vaccine to be made available or through our prayers.

We pray for those working for peace in areas of dispute, conflict, war or violence such as in Yemen, Syria and Afghanistan. Lord, be a rock and a stronghold for them, we pray. Lord, hear our pray, Amen

**Hymn : “And can it be”:** Hymns and Psalms 463/Singing the Faith **345:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tu2uA6U4Fxg>

**Sending out prayer** : May God bless me, guide me and direct me. May he give me strength and the assurance of his love and fill my life with his presence – today and always. **Amen.**