**Worship sheet for Sunday 11th July 2021**

**Compiled by Pauline Zähner of Hilton Methodist Church, St Neots**

**Call to worship**: Let us open the gates to let the King of glory in

**Hymn** : King of Glory, King of Peace : Singing the Faith 56 : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ikj7CiC7v0U>

**Prayers of praise and confession**

King of Glory, King of peace, we praise you with our heart and soul and mind, for your greatness and your power, your immense love and your forgiveness, for your mercy and your generosity. How beautiful and uplifting is your world and everything in it. How we marvel at your creation and your works.

Forgive us Lord, when we have failed to look after your world as we should have, when we have been greedy and over-exploited the resources of your world, when we have omitted to take care of what is precious. Forgive us and help us to know that you forgive those who recognise and repent their mistakes, errors and wrong-doing. Amen

***The Lord’s Prayer***

As our Saviour taught his disciples we pray:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

**Hymn**: He is Lord - Hymns and Psalms 256/Singing the Faith **348**

**Reading** : Psalm 24

**Prayers of thanksgiving**

We thank you, Lord, for the wonders of your creation: for landscapes and seascapes, for tall mountains and deep seas, for animals, fish and birds, plants and trees. We thank you for the myriad of colours and patterns we see in Nature, for the many sounds we hear daily if we listen and the smell of fresh flowers. Lord, what a wonderful world you have given us. Amen

**Reflection**

**“The earth is the Lord’s and everything in it, the world and all who live in it”.**

Whether it is the mountains rising up ahead of you, swamping in size the cars on the roads, the power of the sea on a stormy day, the peace and quiet of a well ordered park or garden, the power of the sun on a hot day, the abundance of the rain on a wet day, or the twinkling of the snow on a winter day how we enjoy the richness of and wonder at the might of God’s creation.

Our psalm reminds us that the earth belongs to God (not to us) as does everything in creation. May we not forget that but even if we don’t own or control creation we are not without a part to play. Elsewhere in the Bible (such as in Genesis 2 verse 15 or in the parable of the talents in Matthew 25 verses 14-30) we are invited to be stewards of creation, to care for the world and be respectful of it. Ahead of us is COP26 which will offer the citizens of the world a real opportunity to address climate issues and find new and better ways of eco-friendly living and improved approaches to stewardship at national levels. With targets, frameworks and legislation, governments can encourage and enable their citizens to be better stewards but, for progress to be made, we must all be ready to respond to calls for change and play our part. Responsibility for good stewardship rests not only with governments but also with each one of us.

**“Who may ascend the hill of the Lord ?**

Good walkers and climbers of mountains are well kitted out with climbing boots, weatherproofs, a map, maybe a compass and rucksacks, no doubt with items of food and drink in them. They journey well prepared and seeking a safe ascent and descend after it. The psalm is not asking us about a literal ascent but about how to come to God’s presence. As in the case of climbing, we need to be prepare for our spiritual journey in which we seek God and develop a right relationship with him. We need to be pure, we are told, in our actions, our attitudes and intentions. We need to have “clean hands and a pure heart” but it is no use washing our hands if we wash them in the way of Pontius Pilate so that our actions do not remain clean but marred and besmirched. It’s no use saying one thing and doing another, of being distracted by the agendas of special interest groups which can be subtle and so that even though we know something is wrong, we are persuaded by peer groups, siblings or social media to do the wrong thing. It’s so easy, too, to make the mistake of promising with deceitful intention. Those who seek God and want to “lift up their soul” or trust God should be, like Jesus, people of integrity and purity.

**“Lift up your heads , o you Gates that the King of glory may come in”**

Significant buildings and National Parks have gates and this invites us to see these places as important. The gates at the National Parks are always open, welcoming people in whereas the gates of some other buildings have now been firmly closed during the pandemic. The gates in the Psalm are probably the gates of Jerusalem which pilgrims reached before entering the city. We know them, too, as on Palm Sunday, it was Jesus, hailed and worshipped by the crowd who reached these gates in triumph riding on a donkey.

The gates in our psalm are to be opened so that God ,who is pleased to come in, can enter. In John’s gospel, we read that Jesus promised to be the gate. We are kept safe by Jesus sleeping as our Good Shepherd across the entrance to the sheep-pen but we are also reassured that Jesus is the gate to Salvation.

Who is the King of Glory who is entering through the gates ? The answer is contained in the psalm and repeated for emphasis, he is the Lord, strong and mighty.

**Prayers of intercession**

This week, we pray for those urging others to take care of God’s creation: the ecologists, the scientists, the politicians that they may discern with wisdom, act with integrity and lead by example. We remember all those who are trying in their daily lives to be good stewards of God’s world by recycling and re-using and by avoiding over-use of materials. We pray for patience and encouragement for all attempting to live eco-friendly lives as they battle day by day.

We hold up to you in prayer all who are seeking you, that they might have clean hands and a pure heart. We ask that they might resist the temptation to be distracted from your ways by others or by activities, that they remain true to you, that they work with honesty, integrity and purity. We pray a special prayer for those who are do the opposite and deceive others or act in a disrespectful or dishonourable way. We ask that they may be helped by friends near them to find fair ways to treat others.

All of this we ask in your name, Amen

**Hymn** : Be thou my vision : Hymns and Psalms 378 & Singing the Faith 545 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e29wmfues9o>

**Sending out prayer**

King of Glory, Lord who is strong and mighty, send us out to do your work, with clean hands and pure hearts, with honesty and integrity so that we might reflect your love and glory into the lives of all whom we meet “in presence” or on zoom this week. Amen