

Worship at Home for October 1st, 2023, with Local Preacher Jenny Brooks

Doing the Right Thing?



Call to Worship

Jesus tells us that the greatest commandment is to love the Lord, your God, with all your heart and soul and mind.

So let us do that.

Let us bring God our hearts – all our emotional ups and downs.

Let us invite God into our souls – the very depths of who we are.

Let us honour God with our minds – in all our thinking and questions.

StF 28 – Jesus calls us

Jesus calls us here to meet him. As, through word and song and prayer,
We affirm God's promised presence, where his people live and care.
Praise the God who keeps his promise; Praise the Son who calls us
friends; Praise the Spirit who, among us, to our hopes and fears attends.

Jesus calls us to confess him, word of life and Lord of all,
Sharer of our flesh and frailness, saving all who fail or fall.
Tell his holy human story; Tell his tales that all may hear;
Tell the world that Christ in glory, came to earth to meet us here.

Jesus calls us to each other, Vastly different though we are,
Creed and colour, class and gender; Neither limit nor debar.
Join the hand of friend and stranger; Join the hands of age and youth;
Join the faithful and the doubter, In their common search for truth.

Readings

Ezekiel chapter 18 verse 1-4 and 25-32

Matthew chapter 21 verses 23-32

Prayer of confession

Faithful God, when we are too proud or too stubborn to change our minds and our ways: **please forgive us.**

When we make good choices but then change our minds when things get tough: **please forgive us.**

When we judge others when they change their minds and underestimate the courage it takes: **please forgive us.**

When we believe it is too late to change and miss the opportunities we could embrace: **please forgive us.**

So that we may change for the better and for the right reasons, in Jesus' name.

Amen.

StF 333 – Majesty, worship his majesty.

Majesty, worship his majesty; Unto Jesus be glory, honour and praise. Majesty, kingdom authority, flows from his throne unto his own, his anthem raise.

So, exalt, lift up on high the name of Jesus, Magnify, come glorify Christ Jesus the King, Majesty, worship his majesty, Jesus who died, now glorified, King of all Kings.

Repeat

Reflection

Matthew tells this encounter between the Temple leaders and Jesus in such a way that we can feel the discomfort of the leaders in trying to ask Jesus where his authority comes from and to answer his question about the authority of John the Baptist.

We probably all know that feeling of having a question we want answered but knowing that in order to get the answer we want, we have to approach the topic indirectly.

Jesus is not the Messiah that everyone else is looking for - they want a strong military leader who can help them escape from the oppression of the Romans, rather than this preacher from the countryside who seemingly has no resources or power. But something about Jesus makes them wonder... Does he have authority? That is their great concern. If Jesus has power, where does that leave their privilege? Rather than answering the Temple leaders' question about authority, Jesus asks them where they think John the Baptist got his authority. This puts them in a dilemma, they know that John was popular with the people and they don't want to upset the crowd, so they say they don't know. Jesus then tells a story about sons who say one thing and do something different. One son tells his father he will help in the vineyard but doesn't actually do anything. The other son says he won't help but changes his mind and does go. We think that Jesus is referring to the chief priests of the Temple, who were imposing harsh rules on the ordinary people, rather than helping everyone to worship God Jesus is letting people know that they can change their mind and do the right thing, even if they began by saying "no". Changing our mind about important aspects of life can be difficult, but Jesus will be walking alongside us. Discerning when it's right to change our mind can be tricky. Asking for help is often important- both from God and from the people around you.

Prayers of intercession

Gracious God we bring before you all those we know who are in particular need of yours and our love, care and attention.

Silently reflect.

We bring before you the political and military problems we have created.

Silently reflect.

We acknowledge our part in the climate crisis and ask your help in making change happen.

Silently reflect.

Amen

StF 354 – Jesus is the name we honour.

Jesus is the name we honour; Jesus is the name we praise.
Majestic name above all other names, the highest heaven and earth
proclaim that Jesus is our Lord.

*Chorus: we will glorify, we will lift him high, we will give him honour and
praise. We will glorify, we will lift him high, we will give him honour and
praise.*

Jesus is the name we worship; Jesus is the name we trust.
He is the King above all other kings, let all creation stand and sing
that Jesus is our God.

Chorus:

Jesus is the Father's splendour; Jesus is the Father's joy.
He will return to reign in majesty, and every eye at last shall see
that Jesus is our God.

Chorus:

Closing Prayer

God of all truth, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
you are the source of all positive change;
you are the bringer of all lasting healing;
you are the inspirer of all life-giving choices;
you are the dismantler of all stubbornness;
you are the provider of all opportunities.

So, we worship and adore you
with our hearts, our minds and our lives.

Amen.

