

Worship at Home service Sunday 28th January 2024 with Revd Ian Forsyth

A call to worship:

As individuals, we have heard God's call to be here today, to listen for God speaking to us through Scripture, through teaching, music, and all we experience together, and through each other.

As a community, we have gathered to help one another in discerning the word of God.

Amen

A gathering prayer

God, thank you that we do not have to seek you on our own. As the people who gathered in crowds and synagogues recognised together the authority of Jesus, so may we work together as a community to recognise your voice in our worship and our lives. **Amen.**

StF 348 He is Lord.

He is Lord, He is Lord!

He is risen from the dead, and he is Lord;
Ev'ry knee shall bow, ev'ry tongue confess
That Jesus Christ is Lord.

He is King, he is King;
he will draw all nations to him, he is King;
and the time shall be when the world will sing
that Jesus Christ is King.

He is love, he is love;
he has shown us by his life that he is love;
all his people sing with one voice of joy
that Jesus Christ is love.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vaBeil_9b6l

Bible readings

Deuteronomy 18.15 - 20; Mark 1.21 – 28

A prayer of confession

Response after each phrase: Forgive us and shake us up.

O God, when compassion should begin with us, but doesn't:

When justice should begin with us, but doesn't:

When unity should begin with us, but doesn't:

When understanding should begin with us, but doesn't:

When hospitality should begin with us, but doesn't:

When hope should begin with us, but doesn't:
In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

Assurance of forgiveness

All powerful God, giver of life, as you affirmed your Son at his baptism, so you affirm us as your children, forgiving us that which has marred our past and offering us a new beginning. So, with confidence and trust, we set out afresh on our journey of faith to your glory. **Amen.**

A prayer of praise and thanksgiving

All powerful God, you shake us out of complacency, you remind us of the meaning of service, you restore our relationship with you and others, you empower us with your spirit and bless us with your grace, you speak your words of reassurance over us. Thank you for each new day, each new beginning, and each touch of your grace in our lives. **Amen.**

Prayer: Sarah Crosby, Methodist Preacher (1729–1804)

Most of us don't like change, Lord Jesus! We are comfortable in the rut we have carved out for ourselves, the way we see things, the way we act, the familiar pattern of the everyday. And then you step into our lives, Lord, you disrupt our thoughts, you challenge us to look at the world, those around us, differently, you invade our plans, you make us question our values! But it's not your fault, Lord, for I invited you in.

I was challenged by the way you lived, overwhelmed by the way you loved, moved by the sacrifice you were prepared to make for the world – for me! And so there was no alternative, Lord, and now you are changing me – I'm sure it's for the better, but it's not easy, as you know! **Amen**

Too long have I worried about so many things
yet my Lord few are needed.
May I today live more simply – like the bread.
May I live more clearly – like the water.
May I live today, be more selfless – like Christ.

The Lord's Prayer

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.**

Time to reflect:

Have you ever been asked who or what has influenced you in a positive way? I recall being influenced by a good friend Harold Wakeford, who introduced me to close up nature photography and this helped shape my photography today. Sometimes people can impact us in a negative way as their message or actions trouble or concern us.

In this passage we read that Jesus goes to a place called Capernaum where he enters the synagogue and the people were amazed and astounded at his authority of teaching, which was not like the teachers of the law at the time. We do not know what he said but we know it made an impact. For me Jesus is the greatest influencer for good I have ever known. Jesus very often spoke to gathered crowds however we read in the Bible that He takes time to retreat and regain his strength and pray in the quiet places.

I am reminded of the verses in Proverbs 3 v 5-6, that offers us an invitation to follow Jesus today. It says 'Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take'.

There was a man in the synagogue who had an unclean spirit, and he shouts out and creates a disturbance, but Jesus says, 'Be

silent, and come out of him!'. The onlookers were amazed that Jesus spoke with authority.

Today in our world we have people who may disturb us and distract us from following Jesus. New influencers in media draw a following but at times this fame it has impacted their decisions and affected their wellbeing and relationships.

I recall asking a methodist minister a serious question, expecting him to give me the answer and he said, Ian, you must work it out for yourself. Sometimes we need to listen to the voice of God as in Micah 6 v 8
'O people, the Lord has told you what is good, and this is what he requires of you:
to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God'.

I sometimes recite the prayer of serenity
Attributed to Reinhold Niebuhr, Lutheran theologian (1892–1971),

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.

StF 333 Majesty worship his majesty.

Majesty, worship His Majesty;
Unto Jesus be all glory, honour and praise!
Majesty, Kingdom Authority,
Flow 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 both verses

A sending out prayer:

Lord, like your first disciples you send us out as sheep among wolves. Teach us to be wise as serpents as well as innocent as doves. Remind us that your peace comes with us, and your hand is there to guide and encourage. **Amen.**