

Worship at Home service Sunday 9th June 2024 with Revd Ian Forsyth

A call to worship:

From a world of choices we choose to spend time with God; let us offer him what we have and who we are. The consequence of our choice is that God meets us and speaks to us; let us not fail to listen. **Amen.**

A gathering prayer

God of each day and each moment, you call us to make choices: choices about how we will live, how we will use our time and resources, who we will look out for, and what we will commit to. As we come before you now, bless us with wise discernment and loving compassion, that we may serve after the example of Jesus. **Amen.**

The greatest day in History. (Happy Day)

The greatest day in history
Death is beaten, you have rescued me
Sing it out Jesus is alive
The empty cross, the empty grave
Life eternal You have won the day
Shout it out, Jesus is alive
He's alive

Oh happy day, happy day
You washed my sin away
Oh happy day, happy day
I'll never be the same
Forever I am changed

When I stand, in that place
Free at last, meeting face to face
I am Yours Jesus You are mine
Endless joy, perfect peace
Earthly pain finally will cease
Celebrate, Jesus is alive
He's alive

Oh what a glorious day
What a glorious way
That You have saved me
Oh what a glorious day
What a glorious name

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RoPAYosw4AU>

Bible readings

Psalm 138; 2 Corinthians 4. V 13 – 5 v 1.

Reflection:

2 Corinthians 4 v 20 – Ch 5 v 1- Choices and Consequences

When I was very young and started out in ministry someone in my first church shared two pieces of advice that have stuck with me over the years. Firstly, always have an answer ready when someone asks you about your faith journey, and secondly remember you are a sum of all life's decisions.

As I reflect on my life today, I can agree that I am a sum of all life's decisions, and I am reminded of this as I listen to people who have made both right and wrong decisions in their lives. For some people this has resulted in a lovely situation, yet another decision has sent them into a downward spiral. I too have made some helpful and positive decisions, but sometimes I have made some not so good decisions, that have had considerable consequences for me.

Paul writes to the Corinthians and in 2 Corinthians 4:18 it says, 'So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal'. In a few weeks it will be the Paris Olympics 2024, and back in July 1924 Eric Liddell made a choice not to run a race on a Sunday, as it was the Lord's Day. He made a choice to not run, and he was offered another race to run during the week and won that race. He was the son of missionaries and he believed that he should put God first.

Here at Northampton Methodist Church, we are making choices that will have consequences in the years to come. We are laying the foundations for the next generation, to encourage them to take up the challenges the Methodist Church faces in the future.

The section entitled Evangelism in 'The Methodist Way of Life', it says we will speak of the love of God and will live in a way that draws others to Jesus. It is important that we share our faith journey with others. A question you may like to think about is, how is this being worked out in your life today?

The other day I was getting my hair cut and the barber and I got talking about God. We were discussing gambling, and I shared that I did not like gambling, as you win something out of someone's loss.

His assistant also joined in the conversation, and this led on to a discussion about whether God is real. There are some who would put forward two scenarios, the first is that you believe in a God and at the end of your life find out there was no God, and secondly you do not believe there is a God, and then at the end of your life find out there is a God. My hairdresser's answer was I believe there is a God but as I am bad, so he would not let me in. My reply was, I believe there is a God, and he loves all, and there is a way we can accept God's love and follow him.

As we think about our lives, we recognise in our conversations with people, that we share what we are comfortable to share, while there are other things we don't share. In one of our worshipping communities, we have a prayer breakfast and part of the liturgy we use when we pray together says 'for those we will meet today and, in the week, ahead ... For the places You will take us this week ... God can use us in our everyday lives.

In conclusion I am blessed and continue to be amazed at the opportunities we have at Northampton Methodist Church, to meet people and share our faith stories, and invite people to reflect on choices they have made. Let's keep our eyes on Jesus, the author of our faith, sometimes we make wrong decisions and yet somehow God can use our mistakes for His glory.

Prayers of intercession

Lord Jesus, we pray for your world, where age-old conflicts continue to fuel wars in Ukraine, the Middle East and elsewhere, and where conflict between individuals and groups with different ways and ideas has never been greater. We pray for openness of heart, mind and spirit, in order to find solutions to enable peace and harmony; meanwhile, may the hungry be fed, the sick receive the care they need, and the grieving be comforted. May the humanity shown in acts of bravery, self-sacrifice and kindness in these troubled times and places continue to surprise us, O Lord. **Open our hearts and minds, O Lord – lead us forward.**

Lord Jesus, we pray for our own community, especially for any new neighbours who have come among us this week. May we welcome them with open hearts, minds and doors and encourage the contributions they bring. **Open our hearts and minds, O Lord – lead us forward.**

These are the days of Elijah.

These are the days of Elijah
Declaring the Word of the Lord
And these are the days of Your servant
Moses
Righteousness being restored
And though these are days of great trials
Of famine and darkness and sword
Still we are the voice in the desert crying
Prepare ye the way of the Lord!

Behold He comes, riding on the clouds
Shining like the sun, at the trumpet call
Lift your voice, it's the year of Jubilee
And out of Zion's hill salvation comes.

And these are the days of Ezekiel
The dry bones becoming as flesh
And these are the days of Your servant
David
Rebuilding a temple of praise.
And these are the days of the harvest
The fields are as white in the world.
And we are the laborers in Your vineyard
Declaring the Word of the Lord.

Behold He comes, riding on the clouds
Shining like the sun, at the trumpet call
Lift your voice, it's the year of Jubilee
And out of Zion's hill salvation comes.

There's no god like Jehovah
There's no god like Jehovah
There's not god like Jehovah
There's no god like Jehovah

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ca9LnzJnpjQ>

A sending out prayer:

May God give us eyes of faith to see God's way in the face of the many choices we face. May God be in our choices and our plans. May God bless us and all those we seek to serve. **Amen.**

