

Worship at Home for October 6th, 2024, with Jenny Brooks



Call to Worship

How lovely is your dwelling place, Lord Almighty. Blessed are those whose strength is in you. (Psalm 84)

Hymn StF 333

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 the 1st verse.

So, exalt, lift up on high the name of Jesus, magnify, come glorify Christ Jesus the King. Jesus who died, now glorified, King of all Kings.

Prayers

Sweep us up, O Lord, into the wonder of living faithful lives, delighting in you and in the people who cross our path. Astonish us afresh with the beauty of your presence and action in our world. Reframe our limited vision with the expansiveness of your gracious ways and send us as messengers of sheer joy to a troubled and hurting world, Amen.

Holy God,
we praise you for your mighty acts of power and mercy. You spoke the Word and the world came into being. You breathed and we became living souls.

We thank you for your wonderful gifts of grace and truth. You have revealed yourself to us in your Word and in your works. You have promised us eternal life in your presence.

We adore you, O God, with all our heart, soul, mind and strength.

Merciful God,

we confess that we have questioned your goodness, power, or justice when we face suffering or evil. We have doubted your promises, which are sure and true. We have neglected the praise that is due to your name. We have failed to trust in you or seek your will in all circumstances.

Forgive us, O God, for our sins, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Restore to us the joy of your salvation, help us to hold fast to our integrity, and to worship you in spirit and truth.

Loving God, your forgiveness heals hurts and restores relationships. Give us a spirit of compassion and kindness, that we may do likewise.

The Lord's Prayer

Reading Hebrews chapter 1 verses 1-11

Hymn StF 362

Meekness and Majesty, manhood and deity, in perfect harmony - the man who is God. Lord of eternity, dwells in humanity, kneels in humility and washes our feet.

Chorus

Oh, what a mystery, meekness and majesty; bow down and worship, for this is your God, this is your God, this is your God.

Fathers' pure radiance, perfect in innocence, yet learns obedience to death on a cross: suffering to give us life, conquering through sacrifice- and as they crucify, prays "Father forgive." **Chorus**

Wisdom unsearchable, God the invisible, love indestructible in frailty appears:

Lord of infinity, stooping so tenderly, lifts our humanity to the heights of his throne. **Chorus**

Reflection

The letter to the Hebrews is unusual in the New Testament, as we have no certainty about who wrote it or who it was written to. Reading my usual commentaries, there are many theories, but little certainty. William Barclay persuades me that a likely candidate is Barnabas, who was born in Cyprus, thus making him fluent in Greek, which is the original language of the letter. Barnabas had Jewish heritage and, therefore understood the ideas discussed in Hebrews. However, Barnabas is a name we hear in Paul's letters, so why is his name lost from this one? We don't know. Barclay then throws in a radical idea, from a German theologian that the writer(s) of Hebrews were Aquila and Priscilla and the reason the name is lost was because Priscilla was a woman and women were not allowed to teach, at that time.

Whilst the background to this letter is interesting, the content is most important. The writer begins with a summary of their message. Jesus is the Son of God, greater than the angels and the prophets and the most excellent example for us to follow. The writer uses their knowledge of the psalms and the prophets to praise Jesus and remind readers that scripture has prepared us to recognise the Son of God.

Much of the content of the letter to the Hebrews are statements that we would take for granted, but the writer is clearly concerned that the readers do not lose sight of the fundamental truth that Jesus is the Son of God and is the most important figure in our faith.

Sometimes it is helpful to remind ourselves of obvious truths. We can become so familiar with ideas and beliefs that they seem mundane, perhaps less important or valuable to us. Alternatively, we can become obsessed with one aspect of belief; the Hebrews writer was concerned about the people he was writing to and their focus on angels.

We are planning to use the Holy Habits material within the Northampton Circuit and I feel they are just like the letter to the Hebrews, reminding us of basic truths and practices, that are fundamental to Christian faith. Meeting together to share in a meal, or conversation, is a great way to develop understanding. Sharing both our faith and our journey, we can enhance and reinforce our understanding of the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Prayers

Bear with me, O Lord, as I try to live for you in all I do.

Help me to keep you in my heart and mind and to walk in faithfulness to you.

As I follow your way, Lord, in your mercy, help me to keep my feet on the ground, so that wherever I find myself I will bless you.

Gracious God, we bring to mind all those we know who need your healing power in their lives. We hold them in mind in silence.

Life-giving Spirit, we pray for our church and the church throughout the world, for all religious leaders and followers. Give them wisdom in their thinking; mercy in their action; and fairness in all that they do.

We pray for all congregations and communities of Christians. Give them a desire for unity; a passion for mission and a yearning to make more followers of Christ. **Amen**

Hymn StF354

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 God.

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