

Worship@Home 26th January 2025 with Revd David Speirs

Opening Prayer:

Lord, our refuge and redeemer, in whose love and through whose redeeming word of forgiveness broken people are being made whole. We are being made whole, in and through the saving love and power of Christ Jesus, who laid down His life for us all.

Turn our eyes towards You this day, Lord, that attentively, with open ears and open hearts that we might hear from the Living Word, hear from the One who has called us to follow Him and to live in community with one another and in the partnership of the gospel, in the grace of God. **Amen.**

Prayer by Rev Stuart Davidson in Church of Scotland Weekly Worship (3rd Sunday after Epiphany Year C) accessed at: <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/worship/weekly-worship/monthly/2025-january/sunday-26-january-2025-third-sunday-after-epiphany-year-c>

StF 404 – God’s spirit is in my heart <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9VTQvYG-bl4>

God's spirit is in my heart; he has called me and set me apart.
This is what I have to do, what I have to do:

Refrain]

*He sent me to give the good news to the poor,
tell prisoners that they are prisoners no more,
tell blind people that they can see,
and set the down-trodden free,
and go tell everyone
the news that the kingdom of God has come;
and go tell everyone
the news that God's kingdom has come.*

Just as the Father sent me, so I'm sending you out to be
my witness throughout the world —the whole of the world:

[Refrain]

Don't carry a load in your pack; you don't need two shirts on your back;
God's workers can earn their own keep —can earn their own keep:

[Refrain]

Don't worry what you have to say; don't worry, because on that day
God's spirit will speak in your heart — will speak in your heart:

[Refrain]

Alan T. Dale (1902–1979), Hubert Richards (b. 1921)
Words and Music: © 1969 Vanguard Music Corp
© 1982 Kevin Mayhew Ltd. CCLI Song Number: 4692612

Please read: Luke 4:14-21 <https://bible.oremus.org/?ql=221868319>

Time to Reflect

In the passage that we have today, Jesus has commenced his ministry in Galilee after returning from his time of testing in the wilderness. During those 40 days Jesus' character, and how he will perform his ministry in relation to the temptations of unbridled earthly power, authority, wealth, and risk has all been tested (4:1–12). Filled with divine power and performing miracles Jesus' reputation begins to quickly spread throughout the province as he now returns to his home town in Galilee to visit the Synagogue.

In the synagogue, Jesus reads from the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. The passage He chooses is from Isaiah 61, which speaks of the anointed one coming to bring good news to the poor, freedom for the prisoners, sight for the blind, and release for the oppressed. Jesus declares that this prophecy is fulfilled in their hearing. He is the one sent to bring the Kingdom of God to earth, to heal, to restore, and to liberate.

The reading is an important reminder to us that following Jesus does not conclude with our own initial commitment to Christ. Instead, it continues in the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit, as we continuously learn and grow in grace and holiness, and as we engage in the transformative work of God in the world. Just as Jesus' ministry began with the empowerment of the Spirit, so too must our life-long journey as disciples. Without the help of the Holy Spirit, we cannot live out the mission Jesus has called us to. It is the Spirit who equips, guides, and sustains us, leading us out of our comfort zones and our own self-centred concerns into Kingdom values and Kingdom concerns.

As Jesus reads from the scroll of the prophet Isaiah, he proclaims fulfilment of the prophecy in their hearing; that the Kingdom of God had come in Jesus for the poor, the blind, the captive and the oppressed.

The message Jesus delivers reveals the mission of the Messiah and the priorities of God's Kingdom. As disciples of Christ, we are invited to align our lives with His mission, seeking justice, mercy and compassion; to proclaim good news to the poor and marginalised; to work for freedom and justice for those oppressed; bring healing and hope to those who are suffering; and to reflect the light of Christ in a dark world. As disciples, we are invited to join in God's Kingdom work by being active participants in its unfolding in real time. By living according to the values of the Kingdom—justice, mercy, humility—we help to make God's Kingdom visible to those who are around us.

It is important to recognise that Christian discipleship is about living in the already-but-not-yet Kingdom of God. Jesus has inaugurated the Kingdom, but its complete fullness will not be realised until His return. As disciples, we live in the tension of this reality, as we work for the Kingdom, as members of it, we also long for its full establishment on Earth.

At a time of uncertainty and instability in world affairs, to know that we can rely on God's sovereignty and the promise of the Kingdom being revealed in Christ is not only a great comfort but a reminder; a reminder that we are called to live differently in the light of God's Kingdom and to follow Jesus with the help of the Holy Spirit. Christ calls us to work for his Kingdom of justice, mercy, peace, and love. He also warns us to avoid the temptations that would lead us into selfishness and the oppression of others. So may God fill us with his Holy Spirit, to share in his ongoing work of healing and redemption in a broken world, and may our lives reflect Christ's love and grace, as we journey with our Lord Jesus.

Prayer of Intercession

You are invited to pray silently for:

The needs of the world...

The Church and its calling...

Loved ones going through difficult times...

For peace, justice, and reconciliation...

Gracious God, we pray that through your Holy Spirit, you might bring healing and restoration into our lives and the lives of others.

Fill us with your love and grace and your resurrection power. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven...

StF 239 – Sent by the Lord am I <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2uN-oeDI7Ag>

Sent by the Lord am I; my hands are ready now
to make the earth the place
in which the kingdom comes. Sent by the Lord am I;
my hands are ready now
to make the earth the place in which the kingdom comes.

The angels cannot change a world of hurt and pain
into a world of love,
of justice and of peace. The task is mine to do,
to set it really free.
Oh, help me to obey; help me to do your will.

By José Aguiar. Jorge Maldonado. Words & Music © 1991 Abingdon Press. CCLI Song Number: 1164690

Final Prayer

Loving God, through your Son you have called us to repent of our sin, to believe the good news, and to celebrate the coming of your kingdom. Grant that we may hear the call to discipleship and gladly proclaim the gospel to a waiting world, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Collect for the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time in the Methodist Worship Book © 1999 Methodist Publishing House. p. 530.