



Prayer of Gathering

From a world of choices,
We choose to spend time with God.
Let us offer them what we have,
And who we are,
With faith in the universal God.

Hymn 706 Singing the Faith

From Heaven you came, Helpless babe,
entered our world, your Glory veiled, not to be
served, but to serve, and give your life that we
might live.

Chorus This is our God, the Servant King, he
calls us now to follow him, to bring our lives as
a daily offering, of worship to the Servant
King.

There in the garden of tears, my heavy load
he chose to bear; his heart with sorrow was
torn, "Yet not my will but yours" he said.

Chorus

Come see his hands and his feet, the scars
that speak of sacrifice, hands that flung stars
into space to cruel nails surrendered

Chorus

So let us learn how to serve and in our lives
enthroned him, each other's needs to prefer, for
it is Christ we're serving.

Chorus

Prayer of Confession

O God, where we have brought an agenda or
expectation that is faithless or cynical, forgive
us.

Where we have considered ourselves better
than we are, or more deserving than others,
forgive us. Where we have forgotten the call to
faithfulness and dismissed your importance in
our lives, forgive us. Where we have
demanded special treatment and
disregarded that which truly matters, forgive
us. Give us a renewed faith today, O God;
remind us of your calling on our lives and
restore us to community.

In Jesus' name and by your Spirit's power.
Amen

Assurance of Forgiveness

Blessed be you, Lord God, for your
forgiveness. This is the God who calls us:
a generous and forgiving God. This is the God
who redeems us: the One who made us and
treasures us. This the God who restores us:
a leader worthy of our trust. We take a deep
breath of God's grace and know that we can
begin again.

Let us go forward in renewed faith.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Readings

2 Timothy Chapter 1 verses 1-14

Luke Chapter 17 verses 5-10

Reflection

In Paul's 2nd letter to Timothy, it sounds as if
Paul is concerned that Timothy is losing his
enthusiasm for the gospel. Part of Paul's
encouragement is to remind Timothy of the
faith that came in the context of Timothy's
mother and grandmother being part of the
early church in Lystra. For many of us this will
chime with our lived experience – another
person, or people, brought their enthusiasm
for the gospel to us and then supported us in
our faith journey. This may or may not be
about genetic family, but certainly feels like a
familial group.

The verses we are given in the lectionary for
the gospel reading today, are more complex
than Paul's message to Timothy.

The disciples ask Jesus about faith and he tells them a story about a slave. Today slavery is such a painful idea that we can struggle to understand the meaning Jesus might have been trying to convey to his contemporaries.

Slavery was woven into the fabric of the society Jesus lived in and was, therefore, unremarkable to his listeners and the writer of the gospel. Commentaries think that Jesus was emphasising the normality of someone doing the task they were expected to complete. Not a great deal of faith was involved in fulfilling tasks that were part of everyday life. Disciples do not need great faith to follow Jesus. By implication, neither do we. God's love is available to everyone and we can all find some small amount of faith to start, or continue, our journey with God.

The Roots material for this week asks us to focus on "belonging". Being part of a community called church, helps us to sustain and to grow our faith. Last Sunday the Methodists in Northampton came together to worship and affirm the beginning of Northampton Methodist Church. 10 worshipping communities agreeing to find ways to work together for the good of all. We walk together in faith.

Prayers of intercession

We remember today all those who are in despair. In particular, we think of those who believe that their suffering will never end, those who see no way out of a desperate situation; and those who have given up hope. In comparison, the things for which we hope seem so trivial. We seek more faith in order to achieve our vain desires, but please help us to grow faith of a different kind –faith that overflows into service for the good of others, that asks for the sake of others and not ourselves. And to those in despair, grant faith to sustain them in their time of need, we pray.
Amen.

Hymn: Singing the Faith 706

Longing for light, we wait in darkness, Longing for truth, we turn to you. Make us your own, your holy people, light for the world to see.

Chorus: Christ be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the darkness. Christ be our light! Shine in your church gathered today.

Longing for peace, our world is troubled. Longing for hope, many despair. Your word alone has power to save us. Make us your living voice.

Chorus

Longing for shelter, many are homeless. Longing for warmth, many are cold. Make us your building, sheltering others, walls made of living stone.

Chorus

Many the gifts, many the people, many the hearts that yearn to belong. Let us be servants to one another, making your kingdom come.

Chorus

Prayer of sending Out

Help us, Lord, to make the most of whatever you have given us.
Thank you that our faith has grown during our life's journey,
and we can look back on all the ways you have helped us.
Show us how our faith can continue to grow, and help us to do whatever is necessary for that to happen,
in Jesus' name.

Amen