

Worship at Home service Sunday 8th January 2023 with Revd Ian Forsyth

A gathering prayer:

Lord Jesus, thank you that you welcome us,
no matter how we feel.

Draw us together; draw us to you.

Help us to forget about ourselves for a while
and to focus on you.

Fill us deeply with a desire to worship you,
our living Lord.

Amen.

StF 153 – Break thou the bread of life to me

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NQpj4TSe-Ec>

Break Thou the Bread of Life, Dear Lord, to me, As Thou didst break the
loaves Beside the sea; Beyond the sacred page I seek Thee, Lord; My
spirit pants for Thee, O Living Word.

Thou art the Bread of Life, O Lord, to me, thy holy Word the truth That
saveth me; Give me to eat and live With Thee above; Teach me to love
Thy truth, For Thou art Love.

Oh, send Thy Spirit, Lord, now unto me, That He may touch my eyes, and
make me see; Show me the truth concealed Within Thy Word, and in Thy
Book revealed I see the Lord.

Bible readings

Matthew 2 v 1 – 12 NIV

Isaiah 60 v 1 – 6 NIV

Prayers of intercession:

God of heaven and earth,
we pray for those who have never been cherished or affirmed.

May they hear you calling their name.

For those for whom the time has never been right to follow their dreams.

May they hear you calling their name.

For those burdened with responsibilities, with debts, with illness.
May they hear you calling their name.

For those who have had all thoughts of heaven crushed by the cruelties of earth.
May they hear you calling their name.

For those waiting for confirmation that the time is right and that they have your blessing.
May they hear you calling their name.
Amen.

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:

Today we come to the final Sunday in our series 'There is room'. Today we are looking at 'There is room for Revelation'.

Somehow throughout the Bible, angels appear, and it is no surprise they show up in the advent season. In Christianity we recognise that revelation is important, if it were not for the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit, I would not have become a Christian in my mid-twenties. At the start of a new year, we can reflect on the time we spend reading the Bible. God reveals himself through dreams and conversations with others.

I do not know where you are in your Faith story, I have always said I would never write a book, but recently I found a few of my old diaries and I am giving myself a task of reading them through and looking back on what I have done over the years. As I discover and remember some of the things I have done, I will include them in the electronic diaries for my grandchildren to read when they are older.

For us in the church one of the biggest questions is, what about discipleship? The great commission says "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Every generation must relearn what we do in life. In the Methodist Church, we have the way of life that gives us prompts and guidance as we seek to live a life fulfilled.

As a reminder I will share a few of these prompts that can be found on the Methodist Church website.

The calling of the Methodist Church is to respond to the gospel of God's love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship and mission.

As far as we are able, with God's help:

We will pray daily. We will worship with others regularly. We will look and listen for God in Scripture, and the world.

At the start of this year, at the end of each day, I am going to be using two questions from the practice of 'The Examen' to write down a line in answer to, For what moment today am I most grateful for? And for what moment today am I least grateful? Helping me reflect on how God is at work in my life.

As I close today thinking about revelation and the Bible, God's word, I can remember driving past the church sign in the graveyard that said 'Is God's word a safety belt or is it your steering wheel?'

The idea of revelation and God's word are important when we remember the psalmist who says, 'Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path'.

Finally, may we make room for revelation this year and share what we have learnt in reading God's word. Small groups in churches reading, praying together, and having fellowship are vital to church growth, and a wonderful way of life. If you are interested in joining a Bible study group do get in contact with myself or the Northampton Methodist Church office.

StF 638 – Through all changing scenes of life

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ox1r0Ozlwoo>

Through all the changing scenes of life, in trouble and in joy, the praises of my God shall still my heart and tongue employ.

O magnify the Lord with me, with me exalt his name; when in distress, to him I called he to my rescue came.

The hosts of God encamp around the dwellings of the just; his saving help he gives to all who in his mercy trust.

O taste his goodness, prove his love; experience will decide how blessed they are, and only they, who in his truth confide.

Fear him, you saints, and you will then have nothing else to fear; his service shall be your delight, your needs shall be his care.

To Father, Son and Spirit, praise! To God whom we adore be worship, glory, power and love, both now and evermore!

A sending out prayer:

As Jesus came to the river
to do what God wanted,

the Spirit came upon him
to show that God loved him.

Send us out from here
as your beloved children,

filled with the right attitude
to share your love with all the world.

Amen.