



## Worship@Home 13<sup>th</sup> September 2026

Led by Revd David Speirs

### Opening Prayer:

Holy God, we come to worship you in the stillness of our homes. Draw near to us by your Holy Spirit, quieten the distractions of our minds, and open our hearts to your word. Help us to receive your mercy with gratitude, to know the freedom of your forgiveness, and to be renewed in the love of Jesus Christ. Shape our thoughts, our words and our actions, that our worship may honour you and our lives may reflect your grace. Amen.

### StF 345 –And can it be

[https://youtu.be/Tu2uA6U4Fvg?si=oJ\\_KOZBvzd1W0Ja](https://youtu.be/Tu2uA6U4Fvg?si=oJ_KOZBvzd1W0Ja)

And can it be that I should gain  
an interest in the Saviour's blood?  
Died he for me, who caused his pain?  
For me, who him to death pursued?  
Amazing love! How can it be  
that thou, my God, shouldst die for me?

'Tis mystery all: the Immortal dies!  
Who can explore his strange design?  
In vain the first-born seraph tries  
to sound the depths of love divine.  
'Tis mercy all! Let earth adore,  
let angel minds enquire no more.

He left his Father's throne above —  
so free, so infinite his grace —  
emptied himself of all but love,  
and bled for Adam's helpless race.  
'Tis mercy all, immense and free;  
for, O my God, it found out me!

Long my imprisoned spirit lay  
fast bound in sin and nature's night;  
thine eye diffused a quickening ray —  
I woke, the dungeon flamed with light,  
my chains fell off, my heart was free,  
I rose, went forth, and followed thee.

No condemnation now I dread;  
Jesus, and all in him, is mine!  
Alive in him, my living Head,  
and clothed in righteousness divine,  
bold I approach the eternal throne,  
and claim the crown, through Christ, my own.

Charles Wesley (1707–1788)

### Please read:

**Matthew 18:21-25**

<https://bible.oremus.org/?ql=271326867>

### Time to Reflect

Peter asks Jesus, 'Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive?' (Matthew 18:21). His suggestion of seven times sounds generous, but Jesus replies, 'Not seven times, but I tell you, seventy-seven times' (Matthew 18:22). Jesus is not offering a larger total; he is telling Peter to stop counting. He is informing Peter that forgiveness is not a scorecard on which another person eventually uses up their allowance. God's mercy and forgiveness has no limit and neither should ours

Jesus' teaching here challenges us profoundly because we are very good at keeping accounts of the wrongs committed against us. We remember the careless words, broken promises and repeated disappointments. Some hurts pass quickly; others leave deep wounds. Jesus does not ask us to pretend that harm does not matter or that wrongs should be ignored. Forgiveness is not approval of wrongdoing, nor does it require someone to remain in a situation of danger. Truth, justice, repentance and healthy boundaries are all necessary and important. Forgiveness is also not the same as forgetting. We may remember a wound and still choose not to let it control our response or future. We can acknowledge what happened without allowing bitterness or revenge to consume our lives.

Jesus illustrates his teaching on forgiveness with a king who settles accounts. A servant owes ten thousand talents: an impossible debt. He pleads, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything' (Matthew 18:26), but he is wholly dependent upon the mercy of the king. We too live by grace, revealed most fully in Jesus Christ. On the cross, Jesus bears human sin and opens the way to reconciliation with God. His prayer, 'Father, forgive them' (Luke 23:34), shows mercy offered even amid rejection and violence. Yet the cross is not the end: God raises Jesus from the dead, declaring that sin, guilt and death do not have the final word. The risen Christ brings forgiveness, peace and newness of life. We are received, forgiven and invited to live

differently through the help of the Holy Spirit. Through Christ's death and resurrection, our failures need not be the final chapter. God's forgiveness releases us from condemnation, and Christ's risen life calls us to offer others the possibility of repentance, healing and a new beginning.

Remembering God's forgiveness and mercy towards us should change the way we see those who have hurt us. It does not erase pain, and forgiveness may be a long process rather than a single decision. Yet God can loosen resentment, free us from the desire for retaliation, and help us refuse to let harm have the final word. It can break the cycle and allow a new beginning. This might start with a prayer for willingness, a truthful and honest conversation, an apology, a safe boundary, or the decision to entrust judgement to God.

When the person who has wronged us remains part of our family, workplace or community, forgiveness may need to be practised repeatedly. Each time anger resurfaces, we can place it before God and ask for courage to refuse the cycle of hurt and retaliation. This teaching also shapes the Church. A forgiving community is not one where nothing matters, but one where grace matters more than scorekeeping. Because people will disagree and disappoint one another and yet we recognise that God can transform situations and people.

Ask yourself: Where am I keeping a tally? What hurt do I need to name honestly before God? What small step towards forgiveness might be possible today? Perhaps you need first to receive mercy for yourself. Perhaps you need to forgive someone else. Or perhaps you simply need to ask God to begin changing your heart. Forgiveness begins not with us trying harder under our own power, but with remembering that we are forgiven people offered God's grace and forgiveness. As grace is given to us, the Holy Spirit teaches us, slowly, truthfully and repeatedly, to offer grace to others. By God's grace, putting down the scorecard can make space for healing, freedom, peace and a new beginning. So let us rely on God and ask for his help as we seek to follow in the way of Christ.

## **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...  
Peace, justice and reconciliation...  
In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

## **The Lord's Prayer**

Our Father, who art in heaven...

## **StF 615 – Let love be real**

[https://youtu.be/tZUo4gGaq2c?si=yphD\\_2C5MpQQhuip](https://youtu.be/tZUo4gGaq2c?si=yphD_2C5MpQQhuip)

Let love be real, in giving and receiving,  
without the need to manage and to own;  
a haven free from posing and pretending,  
where every weakness may be safely known.  
Give me your hand, along the desert pathway,  
give me your love wherever we may go.

*[Refrain] As God loves us, so let us love each other: with no demands, just open hands and space to grow.*

Let love be real, not grasping or confining,  
that strange embrace that holds yet sets us free;  
that helps us face the risk of truly living,  
and makes us brave to be what we might be.  
Give me your strength when all my words are  
weakness; give me your love in spite of all you  
know. *[Refrain]*

Let love be real, with no manipulation,  
no secret wish to harness or control;  
let us accept each other's incompleteness,  
and share the joy of learning to be whole.  
Give me your hope through dreams and  
disappointments; give me your trust when all my  
failings show. *[Refrain]*

Michael Forster (b. 1946). © 1995 Kevin Mayhew Ltd. CCLI Song  
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## **Final Prayer**

Merciful God, thank you for meeting us in  
worship and for the boundless grace you show  
us in Jesus. Help us to forgive, give us  
patience, courage to seek peace and  
compassion. By your Holy Spirit, guide us to  
love generously, serve faithfully and walk  
humbly with you, until your kingdom of justice,  
mercy and reconciliation is made known to all  
people in all places. Amen.