Worship at Home Sunday 22nd February 2026 with Revd Ian Forsyth

Call to worship:

Rejoice in the Lord, for he calls us to be honest with him, offering his forgiveness, to teach us the way to go as we make our choices. Let us walk with him, in faith. **Amen.**

O for a closer walk with God by Stuart Townend

O for a closer walk with God,
A calm and heavenly frame,
A light to shine upon the road
That leads me to the Lamb.

Where is the blessedness I knew
When I first saw the Lord?
Where is that soul-refreshing view
Of Jesus and His word?

O Fire of God, come burn in me
Renew a holy passion
Till Christ my deepest longing be
My never-failing fountain
My never-failing fountain

What peaceful hours I once enjoyed,
How sweet the memory still!
But they have left an aching void
The world can never fill!

The dearest idol I have known,
Whate'er that idol be,
Help me tear if from Thy throne,
And worship only Thee.

So shall my walk be close with God,
Calm and serene my frame;
So purer light shall mark the road
That leads me to the Lamb.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9y1Nb9iT3NM

Bible readings

Psalm 32 Matthew 19 v1-10

Reflection:

The story of Zacchaeus in Matthew 19 v1-10 is a very familiar story in the Bible, one that is often taught to children. Zacchaeus was a rich tax collector in Jericho,
who was despised by many Jews for his association with Roman oppression, Jewish betrayal, and his personal greed.
Yet Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus from a distance without being seen, as Jesus was passing through Jericho.

Zacchaeus Position v 2-3

Zacchaeus had heard about Jesus and wanted to see who He was. He was an enemy of the Jews, hated because he collected taxes, often inflating the amount of tax people paid. His position made him wealthy but, also deeply detested by his fellow Jews as a collaborator with the Roman oppressors who often cheated people for personal gain. His job made him a sinful and dishonest man in the eyes of many Jews.

Zacchaeus Place v 4-7

He was man who wanted to see Jesus but was not keen to be seen. As he was physically short, this added to his difficulty seeing Jesus in the crowd and he climbed up a sycamore tree to see Jesus hoping not to be seen. When Jesus saw Zacchaeus, He announced that he was going to stay at Zacchaeus house. Zacchaeus immediately came down and welcomed Jesus. The crowd were not so welcoming, muttering about his dishonesty.

Zacchaeus Possessions v8

He stood up and said to the Lord ‘Look Lord! Zacchaeus cleaned up his house and his life. There was a promise of restitution as Zacchaeus declared he would give half his possessions to the poor and repay anyone he cheated, four times the amount. Tom Wright says, ‘Jesus saw through the layers of graft and greed’ Jesus responded to him ‘Today salvation has come to this house.’

In Conclusion

Zacchaeus heard the words of Jesus ‘the son of man came to seek and save what was lost’, he changed his position, his place coming down to meet Jesus and he shared his possessions.

We can ask ourselves what is in my life today?

Our Position in Christ, Philippians 2 v 6 - 8 says ‘
In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather,
he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death even death on a cross!

In Galatians 2 v 20 it reveals
Our Place in Christ, ‘I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Jesus’ response was to affirm that salvation had come to Zacchaeus's home, highlighting His mission to find and save the lost. It demonstrates inclusion, showing Jesus's willingness to associate with "sinners" and outcasts. It also illustrates repentance, showing genuine change of heart leading to restitution as well as redemption which authenticates no one is too far gone for God's transformative love.

Prayers:

Taken from the Methodist Prayer handbook 2025 / 2026 “Our story our song”.

Creator God, we adore you. All creation reflects your glory. You have made every person in our image. You welcome those who are vulnerable with open arms of compassionate acceptance. Redeemer God, we adore you.

All creation is bound together in you. Where the weak and broken lie bruised and discarded, you challenge the complacent, revealing the truth behind our lies and invite the wounded to your feast of life. Sustainer God, we adore you. All creation is inspired by you.

You breathe life into places of deathly fear; you increase our understanding of things hard to comprehend and draw us into your dance of loving joy.
God three in one, all creation sings of your great deeds. And we lift our voices in gratitude and praise. **Amen.**

Andy Fyall, chair, Nottingham and Derby District.

What a friend we have in Jesus
StF 531

What a friend we have in Jesus,
all our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry
everything to God in prayer!
O what peace we often forfeit,
O what needless pain we bear,
all because we do not carry
everything to God in prayer!

Have we trials and temptations?
Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged;
take it to the Lord in prayer!
Can we find a friend so faithful
who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every weakness;
take it to the Lord in prayer!

Are we weak and heavy laden,
cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Saviour, still our refuge--
take it to the Lord in prayer!
Do your friends despise, forsake you?
Take it to the Lord in prayer;
In his arms he'll take and shield you;
you will find a solace there.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YTpUQO0aryw

A sending out prayer:

May the peace of the Lord Christ go with you, wherever He may send you.
May He guide you through the wilderness, protect you through the storm.
May He bring you home rejoicing at the wonders He has shown you. May He bring you home rejoicing once again into our doors. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen