



Western Fells Methodist Circuit

13 December 2020

This short act of worship has been prepared for you to use whilst you are unable to get to church. If you are viewing this over the internet there are links to the hymns on youtube.



We invite you to spend a few moments with God, knowing that other people are sharing this act of worship with you.

Opening Prayer

Loving Lord, as we worship we join with all those who are worshipping this day.

Whether alone at home, or online, whether in a building or in an open space amongst others.

Constrained by circumstances, we lack opportunity to meet each other in love.

Come amongst us generous, hospitable God, and welcome us into your loving presence

as we worship you.

AMEN

Hymn: Singing the Faith 369

Sing/ Read /pray /proclaim the words

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/worship/singing-the-faith-plus/posts/baptise-us-with-your-spirit-stf-369/>

Baptise us with your Spirit,
majestic, humble Christ,
to overcome temptation;
assailed, but not enticed.
Baptise us with your Spirit,
that in each other's eyes
we may discern your purpose,
and cast away disguise.

Baptise us with your Spirit
to careful, patient, thought,
and habit-forming virtues
aspired to, copied, taught,
till clothed with new creation,
self-critical, reformed,
we demonstrate the gospel,
to you alone conformed.

Baptise us with your Spirit
in unrestricted ways
that move us, mind and body,
to laugh and shout your praise.
Send us to clear the rubble
of each defensive wall,
inviting to your table
our neighbours, one and all.

Brian Wren (b. 1936)

Let us pray together

All seeing God,
You watch over every instant of our life,
showing us the glory of your creation
if we should but pause to look;
showing us the generosity of your Spirit
if we should but hold out our hands to receive; showing us
your work that needs to be done if we should only use our
eyes and ears.

Turn us away, loving Lord, from our insistent self
and lead us to see more clearly
what you give and what you ask of us this day
AMEN

Today's Gospel Reading: John 1; 6-8, 19-28

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being 4 in him was life,[a] and the life was the light of all people. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. 8 He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. 9 The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.[b]

10 He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. 11 He came to what was his own,[c] and his own people did not accept him. 12 But to all who received him, who believed in his

name, he gave power to become children of God, 13 who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

14 And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son,[d] full of grace and truth. 15 (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") 16 From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. 17 The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. 18 No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son,[e] who is close to the Father's heart,[f] who has made him known.

19 This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" 20 He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." [g] 21 And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." 22 Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" 23 He said,

Time to Reflect

John the witness, whose testimony to the Jewish leaders began with those negatives:

I am not the Messiah

I am not Elijah

I am not the Prophet....

It is tempting to think that the Jewish leaders were also being negative, looking to point out John's deficiencies, but what if they were really looking for the Messiah.

What if they were sad and disappointed that here they did

not have whom they were looking for?

They didn't know whom they were looking for – but they had to take some sort of answer back to those who had sent them, so they pressed John for more.

His reply still turns to the cryptic – I am not the one whom is to come, he is already amongst you, though you do not know him.

That the Messiah could be anyone was fully in the Jewish tradition.

The Messiah could be the person standing next to you.

The people who stand at the airport arrivals with a board with someone's name on do not know who they are to collect.

They rely on the right person to come over and introduce themselves, but they are expected.

They wait for the right person to reveal themselves so that they can move on.

Is this the way we should be looking for the Messiah?

Standing in a prominent place, holding a board with his name on, relying on him to come and find us so that we can move on.

Or should we be looking around at the crowd, in case the Messiah has walked straight past us and is expecting us to follow where he leads.

Jesus will leave enough clues in our everyday lives for us to recognize where he has been, where he wants us to go.

We need to make a conscious effort every day to see when Jesus is amongst us and to ask what he is calling us to do.

Take a time to sit quietly



During this season the Methodist Church is proclaiming “God is with us”. God is with us is more than a statement. It’s a reminder that God is always with us. We are encouraged to share our story (and other

people's stories) of walking with God in this extraordinary year. How might you share how God has been with you this week? Find out more here

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/christmas/>

A time of prayer

Answering God

we pray today for all those who have unanswered questions

we pray for refugees and displaced people,

for the homeless and those who ask

“when shall I have a home”.

We pray for those worried about loss of work,

shortage of money, collapse of plans, who ask

“what happens now”?

We pray for the lonely, the scared, and the vulnerable who

ask

“who can help me”

We pray for those on our own hearts at this time.....

Answering God, bring your love to these your people in need

and help them to see you in their life.

AMEN

The Lord’s Prayer

Our Father

Hymn: Listen to Singing the Faith 175

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CBKzCpkXJR4>

or sing a verse of a hymn that comes to mind

Light of the world,
you stepped down into darkness,
opened my eyes, let me see
beauty that made this heart adore you,
hope of a life spent with you.

So here I am to worship,
here I am to bow down,
here I am to say that you're my God,
and you're altogether lovely,
altogether worthy,
altogether wonderful to me.

King of all days
oh so highly exalted,
glorious in heaven above.
Humbly you came
to the earth you created,
all for love's sake became poor.

So here I am to worship,
here I am to bow down,
here I am to say that you're my God,
and you're altogether lovely,
altogether worthy,

And I'll never know how much it cost
to see my sin upon that cross.
And I'll never know how much it cost
to see my sin upon that cross.

So here I am to worship,
here I am to bow down,
here I am to say that you're my God,
and you're altogether lovely,
altogether worthy,

Tim Hughes

A prayer of blessing

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with us in this week
May the love of God steer us in our actions this week
and may the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be beside us this
week
AMEN

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