



AT HOME SERVICE

Sunday 12th May 2024

compiled by Rev. Chris Jackson

Preparation

Spend a couple of minutes in silence.

Try to calm your inner self and put aside the things of the day.

Focus on Jesus, perhaps repeating this ancient prayer:

“Lord have mercy on me, Christ have mercy on me, Lord have mercy on me”.

Call to Worship

Come to God and be ready to listen.

Come to God and be willing to hear.

Bring your gifts and talents.

Bring your hearts and minds.

Come and find a way to serve today.

HYMN - Jesus Call us Here to Meet Him STF 28

1] Jesus calls us here to meet him
as through word and song and prayer
we affirm God's promised presence
where his people live and care.
Praise the God who keeps his promise;
praise the Son who calls us friends;
praise the Spirit who, among us,
to our hopes and fears attends.

2] Jesus calls us to confess him
Word of Life and Lord of All,
sharer of our flesh and frailness
saving all who fail or fall.
Tell his holy human story;
tell his tales that all may hear;
tell the world that Christ in glory
came to earth to meet us here.

3] Jesus calls us to each other:
vastly different though we are
creed and colour, class and gender
neither limit nor debar
Join the hand of friend and stranger;
join the hands of age and youth;
join the faithful and the doubter
in their common search for truth.

4] Jesus calls us to his table
rooted firm in time and space,
where the church in earth and heaven
finds a common meeting place.
Share the bread and wine, his body;
share the love of which we sing;
share the feast for saints and sinners
hosted by our Lord and King.

John Bell (b. 1949) & Graham Maule (b.1958)

PRAYER

Generous God,

we thank you for the good gifts we receive from you:
for skills and abilities, for opportunities to serve.

We ask for the gift of discernment
that we may know our own gifts
and recognise the potential in others.

Lord God, we come into your presence as individuals.
We do not always realise how special we are, especially to you.
You believe in us with your whole heart;
we believe in you with our whole heart.

There is so much more to each one of us than we ever believe.
Put us together and we are even more amazing!

May we come to understand our distinctiveness,
the things that make each one of us special.
All with our own talents, traits and quirks.

You believe in us with your whole heart;
we believe in you with our whole heart. AMEN

LET US JOIN IN THE LORD'S PRAYER TOGETHER

READING - Acts 1:15-17 & 21-26

In those days Peter stood up among the believers (together the crowd numbered about one hundred twenty persons) and said, "Friends, the scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit through David foretold concerning Judas, who became a guide for those who arrested Jesus— for he was numbered among us and was allotted his share in this ministry.

So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us—one of these must become a witness with us to his resurrection." So they proposed two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also known as Justus, and Matthias. Then they prayed and said, "Lord, you know everyone's heart. Show us which one of these two you have chosen to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place." And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias; and he was added to the eleven apostles.

Reflection

When I first went to school, I was one of the really short kids, in fact I've never really grown too much and am still one of the more vertically challenged people on the planet. As I got older, like many of us, I found myself standing in the playground as two heroic captains picked their football teams from the available players in front of them. I knew I was going to be one of the last picked. I looked around at the other children, all who were bigger than me, I watched, eyes on the ground, as the others were picked. But of course everybody was going to be picked eventually...and I was one of the last. You could see my captain viewing me with a disappointed look on his face...of course I was asked to stand out of the way and not get too involved.

However, what they did not realise, was that I was actually good at football and very fast, so I ignored my captain and got stuck in right away...and the captain was shocked and pleasantly surprised. Next time we lined up to be picked...I was actually one of the first to be picked.

In our story in Acts we witness the selection of Matthias as the successor to Judas as one of the twelve. The choice was God's decision. The believers prayed and sought the guidance of God. They recognised that God knows the heart of everyone and that God would choose correctly and fairly. As Christians we are chosen by God to do God's work. We are given the gifts, graces and resources in order to fulfil that calling. The Methodist church takes the idea of 'calling' to heart. The calling of the Methodist People is "to respond to the Gospel of God's love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship and mission".

We are a people of faith AND works, our response to the good news of Jesus is to be workers in the Kingdom of God. How do we do that? In so many ways with so many Spirit led gifts, from prayer, to teaching, to administration, to evangelism, to caring, to musicians and the list goes on and on...the gifts of God are endless and are given for the furthering of the Gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the world...and we are all picked and chosen, even the shortest ones! AMEN

Hymn - Father Hear the Prayer We Offer - STF 518

1] Father, hear the prayer we offer:
Not for ease that prayer shall be,
But for strength, that we may ever
Live our lives courageously.

2] Not for ever in green pastures
Do we ask our way to be:
But the steep and rugged pathways
May we tread rejoicingly.

3] Not for ever by still waters
Would we idly rest and stay;
But would smite the living fountains
From the rocks along our way.

4] Be our strength in hours of weakness,
In our wanderings be our Guide;
Through endeavour, failure, danger,
Father, be Thou at our side.

Maria (Whitcomb) Willis (1824-1908)

Prayers

In peace and for peace we pray for the world:

For the peace that is from above
And for our salvation
Let us pray to the Lord

For the peace of the world
And for the life and unity of the church
Let us pray to the Lord

That we may worship God
In Spirit and truth
Let us pray to the Lord

For the governments of all nations
That they may seek justice and peace for all people
Let us pray to the Lord

For our country and communities
In times of political change
Let us pray to the Lord

For the sick, the lonely and the bereaved
Let us remember those we know
Let us pray to the Lord

For ourselves
That we may truly serve God who called us
Out of darkness into God's marvellous light
Let us pray to the Lord AMEN

HYMN - Called By Christ to be Disciples STF 600

1] Called by Christ to be disciples
Every day in every place
We are not to hide as hermits
But to spread the way of grace
Citizens of heaven's kingdom
Though this world is where we live
As we serve a faithful master
Faithful service may we give

2] Richly varied are our pathways
Many callings we pursue
May we use our gifts and talents
Always, Lord, to honour you
So in government or commerce
College, hospice, farm or home
Whether volunteers or earning
May we see your kingdom come

3] Hard decisions may confront us
Urging us to compromise
Still obedience is our watchword
Make us strong and make us wise
Secular is turned to sacred
Made a precious offering
As our daily lives are fashioned
In submission to our King

Martin Leckebusch (b. 1962)

Blessing

The Lord give strength to God's people
The Lord bless his people with peace

We go into the world
To walk in God's light
To rejoice in God's love
And to reflect God's glory.