

## Seventh Sunday After Easter

**This is an alternative act of worship that has been prepared for you to use this Sunday or midweek. The worship newsletter also includes some additional prayers, meditations and details of live services for this coming Sunday.**

### Call to worship

Mighty God, we gather in humility to worship you. Caring God, we bring to you our concerns. Glorious God, we exalt your holy name. Unite us – make us one in you, that your love may strengthen and empower us. **Amen**

Song: Jesus is the name we honour  
(STF 354)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=POmIxtEr9Rk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=POmIxtEr9Rk)

Jesus is the name we honour;  
Jesus is the name we praise.  
Majestic Name above all other names,  
The highest heaven and earth proclaim  
That Jesus is our God.

*We will glorify,  
We will lift Him high,  
We will give Him honour and praise.  
We will glorify,  
We will lift Him high,  
We will give Him honour and praise.*

Jesus is the name we worship;  
Jesus is the name we trust.  
He is the King above all other kings,  
Let all creation stand and sing  
That Jesus is our God.

Jesus is the Father's splendour;  
Jesus is the Father's joy.  
He will return to reign in majesty,  
And every eye at last shall see  
That Jesus is our God.

**Philip Lawson-Johnstone**

### A prayer of adoration and thanksgiving.

Dear Lord, At this time we cannot gather together in our church buildings to worship you and praise your name, yet we can still reach out to you in prayer, as one people, one family, one Church. We take this time now to join together, reaching out to You, our God, saviour and friend. Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Jesus, You came into this world, revealing the glory of God to all who would have eyes to see. We have opened our eyes and we have chosen to see and believe. We turn our thankful hearts now towards heaven in praise and give thanks for your grace and love for us, your people.

Though there may be troubles whilst we journey through our lives, we know that because of your love for us, we do not journey alone. Lord, we reach out to you at this time and give thanks for never leaving us. We thank you for your Holy Spirit, for your word and for all that you teach us. We remember your command to love one another, as you first loved us, and pray that you will continue to fill our hearts with compassion, kindness, gentleness and forgiveness, showing love to all. We live in difficult times, and we pray that you will help us all to be patient and tolerant as we wait for this pandemic to be over.

Lord, we know that you will continue to be with us and guide us through our lives. We put our faith and trust in you for now and for

the future, living in the hope that was brought to us through the birth, death and resurrection of Jesus. A hope that helps us continue to see and believe. A hope that helps us to be strong and patient, trusting that you are always with us, here and now and in the future in heaven, with you as our King forever and ever. Amen

### **A prayer of confession.**

Psalm 8 verses 3-5

"When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is mankind that you are mindful of them? You have made them a little lower than the angels and crowned them with glory and honour...."

Lord God Almighty, creator of heaven and earth, who set the moon and stars in their place, created night and day, earth and sea and all living things, we humbly thank you for your love, your grace and all you have bestowed upon us.

You have shown us such mercy, giving up yourself as a sacrifice, suffering for our souls, so we may receive eternal life. Through your grace and love you have forgiven us. You have forgiven our sins, our mistakes, our wrongdoings. You have selflessly taken on the weight of all our sin. How can we ever repay you? What do you ask of us? All you ask is that we believe. That we look towards the heavens, open our eyes and put our faith and hope in you and your glory.

Lord, we thank you for loving us so much, and turn to you now in confession, laying all our burdens at the foot of the cross.....

Brothers and sisters, we can rejoice together in the knowledge that we are forgiven - Jesus has forgiven our sins and we are free!

Alleluia to the King! Amen

### **Reading: John 17:1-11 (NIV)**

**17** After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may

glorify you.<sup>2</sup> For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. <sup>3</sup> Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. <sup>4</sup> I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do. <sup>5</sup> And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began. <sup>6</sup> "I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. <sup>7</sup> Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. <sup>8</sup> For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me. <sup>9</sup> I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours. <sup>10</sup> All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them. <sup>11</sup> I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one.

Song: Father, hear the prayer we offer:

**(STF 518)**

**[www.youtube.com/watch?v=CFoactKMJHQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CFoactKMJHQ)**

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

Not for ever in green pastures  
Do we ask our way to be;  
But the steep and rugged pathway  
May we tread rejoicingly.

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

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

Love Maria Willis

**Reflection:**

Jesus said: 'Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you.' *Glorifying God* means valuing Him for who He really is. Therefore, "glorifying your Son, that your Son may glorify you" personally acknowledges God in His true character. Jesus knows his time on earth is up. That now is the time to hand over the reins to his disciples, to allow them to continue his work that he has prepared them for. But before doing so, Jesus lifts up a final, private prayer to God. Prayer not intended for the world, but as a petition to protect the disciples in their forthcoming work. Jesus prays for them to be kept faithful, so they may be as one with God, "as I am with you, Father." In this way the disciples may glorify God, living in eternal life; knowing that God is the one true God, with Jesus Christ whom he sent, now too living in eternal glory.

Jesus continues: For I gave them the words you gave me, and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me. They are ready to spread the love I showed to others, to tell of the work you sent me to do and which I believe I have fulfilled. 'All I have is yours, and all you have is mine.' By this Jesus proclaims that nothing can be hidden from God and that we receive all by giving all.

We are the modern disciples, following in the footsteps of those first twelve; stepping out into an uncertain future, despised and mistreated by people who didn't care to hear the word of God. People who were happy with the status quo, happy to accept teachings given them by Jewish law makers. Alike in our own world to those people happy to accept the first news story on social media that catches their eye, whether fact or fiction. We the modern disciples, like those first twelve, whom are cared and nurtured by the Holy Spirit, who breathes over us and showers us with God's protection day-by-day. We modern disciples who are tasked with carrying on Jesus'

work; spreading the good news of the Father in heaven, who loves all people no matter where they come from, or what they currently believe in. It is up to us to tell all we meet, sometimes in silence through our actions alone, of the wonders of God's Holy name. Praising God and in doing so Lord, bringing others closer to your glory.

As Jesus prayed, so must we:  
Lord God, we are blessed to live in your created world and thank you for being part of our lives. Show us your true form through your Son, Jesus Christ, with the support of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

**Prayer Response:**

Lord, through the Holy Spirit help us to know you; to know God the Father, the only true God. This is our route to eternal life. Lead us then Lord to you and the Father through your Word. As you pray for us may we pray for those you have sent to us — those whom we will journey with. And, now Lord, protect us by the power of your name and keep us safe this day and in the days to come. 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.

**Song: The Servant King**

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=zCAdWs-ZyEk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zCAdWs-ZyEk)

From heaven you came, helpless babe,  
Entered our world, your glory veiled;  
Not to be served but to serve,  
And give your life that we might live.

*This is our God, the Servant King,  
He calls us now to follow him,  
To bring our lives as a daily offering  
Of worship to the Servant King.*

There in the garden of tears,  
My heavy load he chose to bear;  
His heart with sorrow was torn,  
'Yet not my will but yours,' he said.

*Refrain*

Come, see his hands and his feet,  
The scars that speak of sacrifice,  
Hands that flung stars into space  
To cruel nails surrendered.

*This is our God, the Servant King,  
He calls us now to follow him,  
To bring our lives as a daily offering  
Of worship to the Servant King.*

So let us learn how to serve,  
And in our lives enthrone him;  
Each other's needs to prefer,  
For it is Christ we're serving.

**Blessing**

Go into the world to show God's glory,  
and may you always know God's blessing  
and God's peace.

**Amen.**

## Time to Meditate

Take a time to sit quietly with these poems:

Poems by Major Malcolm Westwood, Salvation Army

### COVID-19

There will come a time when we look back  
To the days filled with terror and fear,  
When 'locked down', 'stay home', were words we heard  
And we longed for hope to appear.

We were worried about our loved ones  
In their hospital wards all alone,  
And wondered just how they were coping  
With so much that was still unknown.

We wore masks to prevent the virus  
From infecting our families and friends,  
And we anxiously watched the broadcasts  
Where we saw the disturbing trends.

Two metres apart were demanded,  
Though unnatural behaviour it felt,  
No handshakes or hugs were permitted  
All to preserve each other's health.

'Why does God allow such diseases?'  
Asked those searching for someone to blame;  
They forget the love that he showed us  
When he carried our sin and shame.

The rules that he gave been broken  
Diseases were not part of his plan,  
God's heart must be breaking with sadness-  
His perfection ruined by man.

But though the result of our failure  
Causes anguish and times of despair,  
The promise God gave is still valid  
'Wherever you are, I'll be there.'

### ONE DAY!

One day it will be over  
And better days will come,  
Times of joy will come again  
When youngsters will have fun;  
The old folk won't have to worry  
Just where to get their food,  
They'll shop just where they want to,  
And not in solitude;  
Grandmas, hugs will give again,  
The churches will be used,  
Shops will welcome shoppers, too,  
No one will be confused;  
No more keeping yards apart  
To dodge the flying germs,  
Face masks in the rubbish bin,  
And folk on friendly terms;  
People meeting socially  
Not only on the phone,  
Valuing the personal touch  
Not being all alone;  
So let's embrace the future  
With thanks for mercies past  
And give God all the glory  
For giving all we asked.

Take a time to sit quietly with these thoughts/Response:



What do you think these three figures are doing?  
What sort of things do you 'glorify' by the way you live?  
How best can you, as a church, lift each other up?

© ROOTS for Church

## Additional Prayers for use at Home

A Celtic prayer, which we hope will help you to start the day and be aware of God's presence, as you go about your day.

This day and Every day  
I arise today  
In your strength to uplift me,  
In your power to direct me,  
In your love to enfold me  
In your wisdom to guide me,  
In your way to lead me  
This day and every day.  
Celtic

### Prayers in difficult times

A prayer reflection

It's difficult to live with uncertainty.  
However bad a situation,  
knowing what you have to face  
means that you can start coming to terms  
with it,  
facing your fears,  
planning your strategy.  
When the 'big picture' is too big or too  
blurred  
and indistinct,  
it's easier to focus on small details,  
to try to control what you can.

The world has changed,  
how does that affect our living in the  
meantime?  
How do I need to change?  
How do I want to change?  
Is it possible to live each day as a new  
opportunity,  
while knowing that it feels the same as  
yesterday?

I need your help, God,  
to listen for you in the clamour of voices  
calling for my attention,  
to focus on you in the midst of competing  
priorities,  
to trust you in this time of uncertainty.  
**Amen.**

### God of hope

God of hope,  
where things seem to be one big tangle of  
pain and unhappiness,  
intervene with your saving love;  
where people are in conflict or locked in a  
stalemate,  
release them from the cycle of war;  
where your name is outlawed and your  
children are forced to hide,  
break through their darkness and be God-  
revealed to them;  
where despair takes centre stage and  
depression and anxiety  
sharpen their claws,  
fill those situations with unexpected peace  
and joy.

God of hope,  
God-with-us,  
God of all time and of every place:  
may the earth be filled with the knowledge of  
you,  
and may your light flow over the world like a  
covering,  
bringing protection from the darkness  
and from the evil that often frightens and  
wounds us.  
**Amen.**

## Sunday & Mid-week Worship

### **BBC 1 – Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> May 11.45am**

Sunday After Ascension, The Very Rev Kathy Jones leads a service from Bangor Cathedral.

### **Circuit live streaming**

You are warmly invited to join others in the North Kent Methodist Circuit in worshipping from home on **Sunday 24th May at 10.30am..** **If you have access to the Internet**, the service will be 'live streamed' at 10.30am.

Via the North Kent Methodist Circuit website

[www.nkmethodists.org.uk/news/invitation-to-worship-from-home.html](http://www.nkmethodists.org.uk/news/invitation-to-worship-from-home.html)

or

Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/groups/northkentmethodistworship/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/northkentmethodistworship/)) to find the live stream.

You can download the order of service from the same page.

**Alternative worship: Swan Bank Methodist Church** in Burslem, this worship will be studio based, contemporary style. **Sunday 10:45am**

[www.youtube.com/user/SwanBank](https://www.youtube.com/user/SwanBank) and [www.facebook.com/swanbank/](https://www.facebook.com/swanbank/)

### **Mid-Week Prayers**

A short service of prayers to set you up for the day.

Join the Wesley's Chapel for morning Prayer. The service uses the Methodist Worship Book but it doesn't matter if one doesn't have it in one's own possession. The services lasts about 15 mins and is led by either, Rev Jen Smith, or her husband Rev Keith Raglan or Rev Steve Cooper.

[www.wesleyschapel.org.uk/livestreaming/](http://www.wesleyschapel.org.uk/livestreaming/)