

Worship at Home - Sunday 1 May 2022

This short act of worship has been prepared for you to use at home. We invite you to spend a few moments with God, knowing that other people across the Methodist Connexion are sharing this act of worship with you.

Opening Prayer:

Almighty God, we gather in your presence once again. Lord, be with us and bless us so that this time of worship may edify us and bring you glory. Amen

Hymn: Jesus calls us here to meet him John L. Bell and Graham Maule **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.

Let us pray together: adapted from Nick Fawcett's 'Prayers for all seasons'

God of all, we come to proclaim your greatness, to sing of your might and to declare your majesty. We lift up our hearts and voices to praise you for all you have accomplished in Christ. We come to praise you for your faithfulness, your amazing grace and forgiveness.

We come to acknowledge Jesus as our Saviour and master – the way, truth and the life.

We praise you for the constant presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives. As we worship you today, draw us closer to you and to Christ.

Merciful God, we are ashamed of our weakness and faults, selfishness, pride and envy, the feeble discipleship and the shallowness of our faith.

Help us to live as your people, worthy of our calling and bring you honour. In Jesus' name, **Amen**

Gospel Reading: John 21.1-19

After these things Jesus showed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias; and he showed himself in this way. ²Gathered there together were Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples. ³Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will go with you."

They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing. ⁴Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach; but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. ⁵Jesus said to them, "Children, you have no fish, have you?" They answered him, "No." ⁶He said to them, "Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in because there were so many fish. ⁷That disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!"

When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on some clothes, for he was naked, and jumped into the sea. ⁸But the other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, only about a hundred yards off. ⁹When they had gone ashore, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish on it, and bread. ¹⁰Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught." ¹¹So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, a hundred fifty-three of them; and though there were so many, the net was not torn. ¹²Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." Now none of the disciples dared to ask him, "Who are you?" because they knew it was the Lord. ¹³Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. ¹⁴This was now the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

¹⁵When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my lambs." ¹⁶A second time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Tend my sheep." ¹⁷He said to him the third time, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?"

And he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep. ¹⁸Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go." ¹⁹(He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this he said to him, "Follow me."

1. Now the green blade rises from the buried grain,
Wheat that in the dark earth many years has lain;
Love lives again, that with the dead has been:
Love is come again, like wheat that springs up green.

2. In the grave they laid Him, Love Whom we had slain,
Thinking that He'd never wake to life again,
Laid in the earth like grain that sleeps unseen:
Love is come again, like wheat that springs up green.

3. Up He sprang at Easter, like the risen grain,
He that for three days in the grave had lain;
Up from the dead my risen Lord is seen:
Love is come again, like wheat that springs up green.

4. When our hearts are saddened, grieving or in pain,
By Your touch You call us back to life again;
Fields of our hearts that dead and bare have been:
Love is come again, like wheat that springs up green.

Time to Reflect:

Once again, we have a familiar text for this Sunday. I am reflecting on Jesus' question to Simon Peter, "Do you love me?" This question is asked not once, not twice, but three times! Of course, many agree that this is a reversal of Peter's earlier denial of Jesus three times.

But why did Jesus ask Peter this question?

Why did he not ask the other eleven disciples?

Was Jesus 'love-sick' after his resurrection?

What did Jesus want to convey to Peter?

Was it meant to be a clear reminder of Peter's betrayal?

Was there something that none of the disciples knew or anticipated...?

It is worthwhile noting that Jesus used the Greek word '**agapas**' here whereas Peter used the word '**philo**' in his response. Biblical commentators think that after the betrayal, Peter became a little reserved and hence he used reciprocal 'friendly love' ('philo') rather than 'unselfish, unconditional, committed love' (agapas).

We know from the text that Jesus was not seeking apology or request for forgiveness from Peter; what he was sought was commitment, focus and passion to care for his 'sheep' as this decision would require Peter to be out of his comfort zone throughout his future ministry. It was important for Jesus to restore Peter before his ascension, and also to confirm whether Peter was willing or not! We read, "**Peter was grieved because Jesus said to him the third time, do you love me?**" (v.17).

How will you respond if Jesus appears in your own situation and asks, do you love me? Are you prepared to hear what he tells you to do in our situations?

How much do we commit to Jesus' mission and kingdom? Are we saying to Jesus – what about him, her/others? Churches have changed in all kinds of way recently, particularly during the current pandemic. So is our commitment to see church function, as it was pre-pandemic time even sustainable? How will those activities further the Kingdom of God? Should our discipleship be focused on maintenance of our church buildings? Let us ask the Lord to give us a renewed vision, a fresh passion and a courageous heart, so that we may do what He calls us to do in the current circumstances.

Take a time to sit quietly

A time of prayer:

All knowing God, we thank you for our calling as your disciples. We acknowledge that your love is beyond our understanding. So we pray for those who feel that they are unworthy of your love...

May they be touched afresh as Peter was touched and restored by Jesus.

Lord God, we pray for those whose faith is tested daily due to poverty, persecution or any other difficulty.

May they have the courage to trust in Jesus.

We pray for those too who find Christian faith not relevant, those who are searching you in other things.

May they be moved by the Holy Spirit to 'know' you as St. Paul knew on the road to Damascus.

We pray for the leaders of nations, church leaders and, our Queen and the royal family.

May they have your wisdom and discernment to act responsibly and work for the good of all.

We ask all these prayers in confidence and in Jesus' name.

Amen

Now let us join our prayer together as we say 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

