

Welshpool & Bro Hafren Methodist Circuit

Home Worship Sheet – 12th July

This short act of worship has been prepared and written for you by Rev Bob Thomas

There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus in whom we live under the law of the Spirit of life.

Hymn: O God thou art the Father of all that have believed

To listen to this hymn in a new tab: press Shift and Ctrl together and click [here](#). Close the tab after the hymn.

- 1 O God, thou art the Father of all that have believed:
from whom all hosts of angels have life and power received.
O God, thou art the maker of all created things,
the righteous Judge of judges, the almighty King of kings.

- 2 High in the heavenly Zion thou reignest God adored;
and in the coming glory thou shalt be Sovereign Lord.
Beyond our ken thou shinest, the everlasting Light;
ineffable in loving, unthinkable in might.

- 3 Thou to the meek and lowly thy secrets dost unfold;
O God, thou doest all things, all things both new and old.
I walk secure and blessed in every clime or coast,
in name of God the Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost

St. Columba (521-597)

Prayers

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly king, almighty God and father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only son of the father, lord God, lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the father: receive our prayer.

For you alone are the holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the father. Amen

Give us, we pray, gentle God, a mind forgetful of past injury, a will to seek the good of others and a heart of love, that we might learn to live in the way of your son, Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen

Isaiah 55:10–13

To listen to this reading, by David Suchet from BibleGateway in a new tab press Shift and Ctrl together and click [here](#). Close the tab after the reading.

As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: it will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands.

Instead of the thorn-bush will grow the juniper, and instead of briars the myrtle will grow. This will be for the Lord's renown, for an everlasting sign, that will endure for ever.'

Psalm 63

To listen to this reading, by David Suchet from BibleGateway in a new tab press Shift and Ctrl together and click [here](#). Close the tab after the reading.

You, God, are my God, earnestly I seek you; I thirst for you, my whole being longs for you, in a dry and parched land where there is no water.

I have seen you in the sanctuary and beheld your power and your glory.

Because your love is better than life, my lips will glorify you.

I will praise you as long as I live, and in your name I will lift up my hands.

I will be fully satisfied as with the richest of foods; with singing lips my mouth will praise you.

On my bed I remember you; I think of you through the watches of the night.

Because you are my help, I sing in the shadow of your wings.

I cling to you; your right hand upholds me.

Those who want to kill me will be destroyed; they will go down to the depths of the earth.

They will be given over to the sword and become food for jackals.

But the king will rejoice in God; all who swear by God will glory in him, while the mouths of liars will be silenced.

Hymn: Sweet is the work, my God my king

To listen to this hymn in a new tab: press Shift and Ctrl together and click [here](#). Close the tab after the hymn.

- 1 Sweet is the work, my God, my King,
to praise thy name, give thanks, and sing;
to show thy love by morning light,
and talk of all thy truth at night.
- 2 Sweet is the day of sacred rest,
no earthly cares shall here molest;
O, may my heart in tune be found
like David's harp of festive sound!
- 3 My heart shall triumph in the Lord,
and bless his works, and bless his word:
thy works of grace, how bright they shine!
How deep thy counsels, how divine!
- 4 Soon shall I share a glorious part,
when grace has well refined my heart,
and new supplies of joy are shed,
like holy oil, to cheer my head.

5 Then shall I see, and hear, and know
 all I desired or wished below;
 and every power find sweet employ
 in that eternal world of joy.

Isaac Watts (1674–1748)

Matthew 13: 1 – 9

To listen to this reading, by David Suchet from BibleGateway in a new tab press Shift and Ctrl together and click [here](#). Close the tab after the reading.

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. Such large crowds gathered round him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore.

Then he told them many things in parables, saying: ‘A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants.

Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop – a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. Whoever has ears, let them hear.’

The readings have been taken from the New International Version

Reflection

Until I came to verify it, I believed it was Augustine who wrote of the restlessness of the human heart until such time as it finds a home in God. Whoever it was, they wrote of an experience common to humankind, an experience so many seek to avoid in so many ways, an experience those of us who have followed government guidance over these last few months have felt in spades. Shunted out of our comfort zones by the experience of quarantine, cut off from people and places familiar to us, unable to participate in the activities we enjoy with the people we love – life it might be, but little like we have known it to be. In the discomfort of familiar surroundings we have sensed an agitation previously unknown to us. In the opening lines of Psalm 63 David

declares his restlessness “. . . my soul thirsts for you, my body yearns for you.” He looks forward to the day when he will once again “. . . behold you in the sanctuary, and see your might and glory.”

The psalm is born in David’s experience of the wilderness, on the run from Saul or Absalom, in fear for his life, seen to be a threat to the nation of Israel, a terrorist; distanced from all that was familiar to him – God included. The wilderness is a vital component in the divine activity – something like Egdon Heath in some of Thomas Hardy’s novels. Adam and Eve are sent out into it after eating the forbidden fruit, the nation of Israel are driven into it as they learn to be free of slavery, Joseph, Daniel and Esther are abandoned in it, Jesus wanders there after his baptism. The wilderness is at once the place where God is believed to be absent and the place where God is to be found. The place that nobody would choose to dwell in and the place that everybody is the better for visiting – if only occasionally.

In the vagabond life of a Methodist parson many enquiries are made of the comfort and ease of the traveller – ‘How/Have you settled in?’ ‘Are you happy here?’ ‘Are you looking forward to being there?’ The honest answer to which can only ever be ‘Yes’ but a ‘Yes’ which actually has very little to do with the situation I’m in, leaving, or going to. Certain aspects of Circuit life will always for me be ‘wilderness’ experiences, as other aspects of Circuit life will always be a source of pleasure and delight regardless of the geographical location of the Circuit. Stationing can feel like a bit of a lottery at times, but having recognised my ministry as a gift of God and chosen to authorise and ordain me to exercise it on their behalf, the Methodist Connexion must be recognised as among the means of grace and guidance available to me in the exercise of it.

I am here because I believe God called me to be here, I have asked a great number of awkward questions in any number of Church Councils because I believe the congregations they represent to have a future which they might otherwise miss, I have declared what I believe to be the word of God on every occasion accorded to me, comforted the troubled to the extent that I have been able and offered opportunity to

do so. I have laughed and wept as the situation required, all in the presence of God and the company of at least some of the people of God. As the time for our departure comes round I look forward to engaging in similar activities, albeit to a lesser extent, still in the presence of God, among the Methodist people of God in Tullyroan and Cranagill.

Wherever, on whatever map we live, whatever the circumstances of life in which we find ourselves, we live in the mind of God. The things we believe ourselves to be in need of are not in the gift of God since God has already given us Jesus and in him all things. Our dissatisfaction is nothing to do with the generosity of God, all things are as nothing compared to the faithfulness of God. “Your faithfulness is better than life . . . I am sated as with a rich feast . . . for you are my help, and in the shadow of your wings I shout for joy. My soul is attached to you; your right hand supports me.” When David declares his ‘attachment’ to God there is a sense of both delight and desperation – because God alone is God, there is no other God worth clinging to, no-one else so delightful to hold and be held by.

As the years go round and the journey continues things change – people, locations, ideas, understanding – alone in all this decay and development God is at the still centre – careful, compassionate, watchful, tender-hearted – as God has ever been. In letting go of what was we can embrace the future God has for us. As quarantine comes to an end people are talking of things getting back to normal – I hope and pray they will be so much better than that. Thank you all for all we have shared these last five years, I pray we will be blessed in the next.

In the name of God, Amen.

A Prayerful Hymn by Ruth Duck (Singing the Faith 527)

Pray for a world where every child
finds welcome in a sheltered place,
where love is tender, undefiled,
and firmness intertwines with grace.

**Pray for a world where passion's fire
burns not in force or careless lust,
where God's good gift of deep desire
is safe in arms of faith and trust.**

**Pray for a nation just and fair
that seeks the welfare of us all,
where leaders guide with prudent care
and nurture life for great and small.**

**Pray for a world where all have voice
and none will batter, rape, abuse.
Till then, may all have rightful choice
and pray for wisdom as they choose.**

Let us continue in prayer:

**For the world as it turns and humankind as we adjust to the new
situations in which we find ourselves. [Lord have mercy.](#)**

**For the Methodist people of God as the annual stationing 'shuffle'
happens – the processes of saying 'goodbye' and 'hello' at a sociable
distance. [Lord have mercy.](#)**

**For those who travel and those who stay, that we might remember we
are all pilgrims. [Lord have mercy.](#)**

**For those who walk alone in grief and those who ail – that we might
know you with us. [Christ have mercy.](#)**

**For those who tend the ailing and seek to mend the broken, those who
journey with us. [Christ have mercy.](#)**

**For those threatened by the closing of quarantine, those for whom the
new normal holds little attraction. [Christ have mercy.](#)**

For those who over the 72 years of its existence have given and shared their lives in the N. H. S. **Lord have mercy.**

For those responsible for the future care of the vulnerable in our society. **Lord have mercy.**

For humankind in general, that we might recognise as angels the strangers who cross our paths. Open our eyes, our hearts and our hands we pray. **Lord have mercy.**

Amen

We say together the prayer Jesus gave us

*Our father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil

*For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,
now and forever.*

Amen

Hymn: Be thou my vision O lord of my heart.

To listen to the tune: press Shift and Ctrl together and click [here](#). Close the tab after the hymn.

- 1 Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart,
be all else but naught to me, save that thou art;
be thou my best thought in the day and the night,
both waking and sleeping, thy presence my light.

- 2** Be thou my wisdom, be thou my true word,
be thou ever with me, and I with thee, Lord;
be thou my great Father, thy child let me be;
be thou in me dwelling, and I one with thee.
- 3** Be thou my breastplate, my sword for the fight;
be thou my whole armour, be thou my true might;
be thou my soul's shelter, be thou my strong tower:
O raise thou me heavenward, great Power of my power.
- 4** Riches I heed not, nor earth's empty praise:
be thou mine inheritance now and always;
be thou and thou only the first in my heart:
O Sovereign of heaven, my treasure thou art.
- 5** High King of heaven, thou heaven's bright Sun,
O grant me its joys after victory is won;
Great Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
still be thou my vision, O Ruler of all.

Irish, 8th century
translated by Mary Elizabeth Byrne (1880–1931)
versified by Eleanor Henrietta Hull (1860–1935) (alt.)
Reproduced from Singing the Faith Electronic Words Edition, number 545

**May the road rise up to meet you and the wind be always at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face and the rain fall soft upon your
fields. And, until we meet again, may God hold you in the hollow of his
hand. Amen.**

