

Welshpool & Bro Hafren Methodist Circuit

Home Worship Sheet – 23rd August

This short act of worship has been prepared and written for you by Rev Marian Jones.

Today, as we gather for worship, we are aware of those of you who, as yet, are not able to join the gathered community. You are the people of God where you are, and we join together to worship. Today's service reflects as closely as possible, the service that will be held in Welshpool Methodist Church.

Call to worship:

**The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with us all.
Amen**

Hymn: Christ triumphant, ever reigning

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

- 1 Christ triumphant, ever reigning,
Saviour, Master, King!
Lord of heaven, our lives sustaining,
hear us as we sing:
Yours the glory and the crown,
the high renown, the eternal name!**
- 2 Word incarnate, truth revealing,
Son of Man on earth!
Power and majesty concealing
by your humble birth:
Yours the glory and the crown,
the high renown, the eternal name!**

3 Suffering servant, scorned, ill-treated,
victim crucified!

Death is through the cross defeated,
sinners justified:

Yours the glory and the crown,
the high renown, the eternal name!

4 Priestly king, enthroned for ever
high in heaven above!

Sin and death and hell shall never
stifle hymns of love:

Yours the glory and the crown,
the high renown, the eternal name!

5 So, our hearts and voices raising
through the ages long,
ceaselessly upon you gazing,
this shall be our song:

Yours the glory and the crown,
the high renown, the eternal name!

Michael Seward (b. 1932)

Reproduced from Singing the Faith Electronic Words Edition, number 319

Let us pray:

**Give us, O God, a vision of your glory,
that we may worship you in spirit and in truth,
and offer the praise of glad and thankful hearts;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Let us call to mind our sins:

Lord Jesus, you came into the world to save sinners:

Lord, have mercy.

We have brought sorrow and hurt to you,

to others and to ourselves:

Christ, have mercy.

You give yourself to heal and renew us,
and to bring us strength:
Lord, have mercy.

May almighty God
have mercy on us,
forgive us our sins,
and keep us in life eternal. **Amen.**

Prayer for today:

Merciful God,
grant that your Church,
being gathered by your Holy Spirit into one,
may reveal your glory among all peoples,
to the honour of your name;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

A reading from Old Testament: Isaiah 51:1 – 3

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.

‘Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness and who seek the Lord: look to the rock from which you were cut and to the quarry from which you were hewn; look to Abraham, your father, and to Sarah, who gave you birth. When I called him he was only one man, and I blessed him and made him many.

The Lord will surely comfort Zion and will look with compassion on all her ruins; he will make her deserts like Eden, her wastelands like the garden of the Lord. Joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the sound of singing

New International Version

The Gospel according to St Matthew 16:13 – 18

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.

When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, ‘Who do people say the Son of Man is?’

They replied, ‘Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.’

‘But what about you?’ he asked. ‘Who do you say I am?’

Simon Peter answered, ‘You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.’

Jesus replied, ‘Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

New International Version

Reflection

A few years ago, I began researching my family tree. Not an easy task as I belong to what is now called a ‘blended’ family and I wasn’t sure which route I wanted to explore! In the process, I found out that a friend of mine had been involved in transferring parish and local records to computer and she was very helpful . . . but in the end, even she gave up!

‘Remember the rock from which you were hewn’. It’s almost too easy to ‘grow out’ of our past, almost as we would grow out of a set of clothes, to forget where we’ve come from or, sometimes, to give up on the search.

Isaiah goes even further: it isn’t only about where we’ve come from, the rock from which we were hewn, it’s about remembering who we are and whose we are. ‘Look to Abraham your father’.

Abram, who obeyed God’s command to go from the place he knew, setting out not knowing where God would lead him. When he arrived, his first task was to build an altar and to worship God. In spite of Sarah’s laughter, God promised in a covenant with Abram that his descendants would be as numerous as the stars in the sky.

And here we are; descendants of Abraham, along with the Jewish and Muslim communities – all of us looking to Abraham as our father in

faith. In Hebrew scriptures, in Chronicles and Isaiah, Abraham is 'the friend of God'; it's taken up in the Christian Letter of James, and in the Qur'an, Ibrahim is 'the friend'. Yet it sounds as though it almost didn't happen as Abraham obediently prepared to sacrifice his son Isaac, as he was asked.

The picture is one you'll recognise from news bulletins, an iconic picture of Jerusalem showing the Dome of the Rock.



The rock within is the summit of Mount Moriah, the place of sacrifice where Abraham was to prepare an altar to sacrifice his son, a gift more precious than his own life; the place where the successive Temples were built and probably the most fought over piece of land in the world, sacred to Jews and Muslims, visited by Christians, a symbol of faith and trust and part of our heritage; the rock from which we were hewn. Are we able love without possessing, to hold on to people and things so lightly that we can let them go? Can we let go of resentments and hurts as well?



Remember the history of the people of God and claim your place in that long line of God's people!

In his letter to the Christians in Rome, Paul picks up echoes of Isaiah's call to remember Abraham as he writes to the people about commitment, about offering our very selves in faith and trust. Paul invites us to remember who we are, members of the Body of Christ, interdependent, relying on each other. The constant refrain is: Remember who and whose you are. You belong to the people of God, among the many descendants of Abraham. Remember who you are. Remember the rock from which you were hewn.

So why is Jesus asking his disciples who people are saying that he is? Surely, he, more than anyone, knows who he is. Yet his mission is to help others see who God is. David Jenkins, onetime Bishop of Durham said: 'God is as he is in Jesus'. In Jesus, there is nothing 'unGodlike'.

'Who do you say that I am?' was as crucial a question for the disciples as it is for us. A question each of us is asked to answer . . . maybe not only once but over and over again. The answer we give will determine who and whose we are. Yes, there will be times of doubt; times of questioning; maybe, even, times of denial of what we once believed. There is room for seekers and doubters, for the wavering and the sure.

Peter takes a risk, speaking for the followers of Jesus from then till now – Jesus is Messiah, Son of the living God. Then this shaky, unreliable man, because of his insight, is called Petros, the Rock, because of his profession of faith, and on this profession, the church is built. Another rock, this proclamation of faith in God and in Jesus Christ whom God has sent. 'Remember the rock from which we were hewn'.

We, descendants of Abraham are to remember where we've come from, to remember the stories of our faith and find ourselves in them as we discover who Jesus is and who God in Christ can make us.

Still, Jesus asks: 'Who do you say that I am?' How do you reply?

Prayers of Intercession:

God our Father,

**grant us the help of your Spirit
in our prayers for the salvation of all people.**

**We pray for the Church throughout the world
for the church to which we belong and all its members
for . . .**

**that in faith and unity we may be constantly renewed
by your Holy Spirit for mission and service.**

Your kingdom come

Your will be done.

We pray for the peoples of the world

for the leaders of the nations

for . . .

that they may seek justice, freedom and peace for all.

Your kingdom come

Your will be done.

We pray for our country

for those who have authority and influence

for . . .

that all may serve one another

in wisdom, honesty and compassion.

Your kingdom come

Your will be done.

We pray for those among whom we live and work

for those angry and distressed by 'A' level and GCSE grades,

for all our neighbours

for . . .

**that we may so use your gifts that together we may find joy in your
creation.**

Your kingdom come

Your will be done.

We pray for all in sorrow, need, anxiety or sickness
for . . .
that in their weakness they may know your strength,
and in despair find hope.

Your kingdom come
Your will be done.

In you, Father,
we are one family on earth and in heaven.
We remember in your presence those who have died . . .
giving thanks especially for those who have revealed to us your
grace in Christ.
Help us to follow the example of your saints in light and bring us
with them to the fullness of your eternal joy,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Peace:

Our Lord Jesus Christ said:
'I leave you peace,
my peace I give to you.'
May the peace of the Lord
be always with us.

Prayer of Thanksgiving:

It is right, always and everywhere,
to give thanks to you, the true and living God.
Endless is your mercy and eternal is your reign.
All creation rejoices in your radiant splendour.
You made a covenant with your people
and declared your purpose of justice and love.
When all things were ready,
you sent your Son to be our Saviour.
In words and deeds he proclaimed your kingdom,

and obeyed your will even to death on the cross.

Through his mighty resurrection

he overcame sin and death

to set the whole creation free.

Therefore with saints and angels

and with all the choirs of heaven,

we join in the song of eternal praise:

Holy, holy, holy Lord,

God of power and might,

heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

We praise you, Father,

that on the night in which he was betrayed,

our Lord Jesus took bread and gave thanks,

broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying,

'Take and eat. This is my body,

given for you.

Do this in remembrance of me.'

After supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,

and gave it for all to drink, saying,

'This cup is the new covenant of my blood,

shed for you and for all people

for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this in remembrance of me.'

**Jesus my brother,
who brought divine Life out of human death,
you are meeting me here and now in this place, in this moment.
I pause to remember that the one thing I desire above all others
is for you to be with me.**

**Though I cannot receive you in bread and wine today,
come into my heart and show me you were already there within me,
by your love lighting my darkness from within.**

**Open my eyes to your sacred presence
in each thing you have created and in every moment you give.**

**As each of your followers does their part where they are, may we all
grow together in love and in richer, fuller communion.**

**Make us one with you and with all who love you in every time and
place.**

**Help us to feel and to know that we are united as members of your
body. With all your people, may I share your risen life, which renews
all creation. I offer myself to you in service, as an act of spiritual
worship. Amen.**

**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.

Hymn: Lord, in the strength of grace

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

- 1 Lord, in the strength of grace,
with a glad heart and true,
myself, my residue of days,
I consecrate to you.**

- 2 Your ransomed servant, I
restore to you your own;
and, from this moment, live or die
to serve my God alone.**

Charles Wesley (1707–1788)
Reproduced from Singing the Faith Electronic Words Edition, number 448

**Loving God, be with me/us and with all your people
in these days when we cannot gather in person
and help us to hope in that great day
when we will all gather at your heavenly banquet;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**The Lord bless us
and keep us;
the Lord make his face
to shine on us
and be gracious to us;
the Lord look on us with kindness
and give us peace. Amen**