

Welshpool & Bro Hafren Methodist Circuit

Home Worship Sheet, 7th February

This short act of worship has been prepared and written for
you by Eleri Williams

Opening Prayer

In our troubled world today, we ask for your love and guidance to shine through us, that we can be a support for those who are lonely , afraid, lost and seeking comfort, help us to be what you want us to be, and give us the strength to do your will.

Amen

Hymn: God has spoken – by his prophets

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

- 1 **God has spoken by his prophets,
spoken his unchanging word,
each from age to age proclaiming
God, the one, the righteous Lord.
'Mid the world's despair and turmoil,
one firm anchor holding fast,
God eternal reigns forever,
God the first, and God the last.**

- 2 **God has spoken by Christ Jesus,
Christ, the everlasting Son,
brightness of the Father's glory,
with the Father ever one,
spoken by the Word incarnate,
God from God, ere time was born,
Light from Light, to earth descending,
Christ, revealing God to all.**

**3 God is speaking by the Spirit,
speaking to our hearts again,
in the age-long word expounding
God's own message, now as then.
Through the rise and fall of nations
one sure faith is standing fast,
God still speaks, the Word unchanging,
God the first, and God the last.**

George Wallace Briggs (1875–1959)

Psalm 84

To listen to the reading, from the Good News Bible, by a member of the American Bible Society, in a new tab press Shift and Ctrl together and click [here](#). Close the tab after the reading.

How I love your Temple, Lord Almighty! How I want to be there! I long to be in the Lord's Temple. With my whole being I sing for joy to the living God.

Even the sparrows have built a nest, and the swallows have their own home; they keep their young near your altars, Lord Almighty, my king and my God.

How happy are those who live in your Temple, always singing praise to you. How happy are those whose strength comes from you, who are eager to make the pilgrimage to Mount Zion.

As they pass through the dry valley of Baca, it becomes a place of springs; the autumn rain fills it with pools. They grow stronger as they go; they will see the God of gods on Zion.

Hear my prayer, Lord God Almighty. Listen, O God of Jacob! Bless our king, O God, the king you have chosen. One day spent in your Temple is better than a thousand anywhere else; I would rather stand at the gate of the house of my God than live in the homes of the wicked.

The Lord is our protector and glorious king, blessing us with kindness and honour. He does not refuse any good thing to those who do what is right.

Lord Almighty, how happy are those who trust in you!

Prayer

Our heavenly Father, who by your love has made us, and through your love has kept us, and in your love we have been made whole. We humbly confess that we have not loved you with all our heart and soul and mind and strength, we have not always loved one another as Christ loved us. Your life is within our soul, but our selfishness has hindered your way. We do not live by faith, we resist your spirit, we neglect your inspirations. Forgive us for what we have been. Help us to amend what we are, and in thy spirit direct what we should be, that you should come to the full glory of thy creation in us and all people.

Amen

John 4:19-24

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

‘Sir,’ the woman said, ‘I can see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshipped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.’

‘Woman,’ Jesus replied, ‘believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews.

Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshippers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.’

Prayer

O God, it is good to unite together for a few moments, to forget the world and to come closer to you and all that is true and good. Let us open our hearts and minds to you and you alone, let us hear your words and not the despondency that seems to shout all around us.

Give us courage to clear the high hurdles facing us daily, give us humility to do the difficult jobs without whining, give us grace to know when we must ask for help.

In the busy rush of life we need time to renew, we need times of quiet meditation and spiritual rebuilding, we may not be able to meet others in one place, but we can unite virtually with you now as we ask you to come into our lives with strength and insight we need, that we may reformulate the images by which we live, re-examine the goals we seek and redefine the purposes we serve. We find it easy to blame others for our misfortune, but we must accept that we are not blameless. Give us compassion to help others less fortunate than ourselves. Show us that we have a responsibility for what goes on in our world, so that we cannot be self-righteous or complacent.

Our Father, we would be sensitive now to those around us whose lives know challenge and despair, frustration and defeat. May we reach out with hearts that are understanding and compassionate, to enfold them, and to assure them that we care about them. Let us pray especially for all NHS and Care staff, all key workers, all those affected by this pandemic. We remember with compassion those who are grieving and hold each of them in our hearts.

Father we ask for your loving care on all our lives, for your strength that we can face each day with hope and know that you will be with us till the end of time.

Amen.

Reflection:

“How I love your temple, Lord Almighty! How I want to be there. I long to be in the Lord’s temple.”

Psalm 84 :1-2

The current “lockdown” has found Eirian & myself home, teaching two children Lowri, 8, and Iestyn, 14, to say we are exhausted at the end of each day would be an understatement! We are having to dredge up things we learnt so many years ago, but it is quite enjoyable (at times). My granddaughter had an R.E. lesson about the local church, she had to list what was in the church e.g.: altar, cross, stained glass window, pulpit etc., and I was explaining to her what they all meant, including the use of the altar for Holy Communion, and what it all means to us as Christians.

During the past months quite a few have said to me “I really miss going to church” which certainly has surprised me, when many churches and chapels are struggling with dwindling membership, and I have seen many closures in the past few years. These people are however, loyal worshippers who would not let anything stop them attending a service. That weekly gathering was their lifeline, their opportunity for a chat, and meeting others, it was their anchor in good times and bad.

It made me think really hard about the Lord’s temple, our church and what makes us attend. It also made me ask, why do we attend? and I came up with three reasons (you will probably think of more)

Companionship. Communion. Comfort

We live in a world that would have you believe that money and power are the only things that matter, that we are the rulers of our own destiny. Church attendance to many is seen as something to be done when we have time to spare, after all it is the weekend and the weekends are for leisure, so fit it in if and when we can.

In March, our busy world ground to a halt and everything including the churches closed. Ways of reaching out to the faithful and others were devised, so people could participate in worship together & sing those lovely hymns, without passing the virus around. I have been able to watch “Dechrau Canu” and Songs of Praise and admit to shedding a tear when singing some well-known hymns in my mother tongue. I and many others have found **Comfort** in these services.

So why attend church, firstly to acknowledge that this difficult world would be much worse if the Living God, the light above all the dark clouds, who stands for truth ,justice, integrity, helpfulness, kindness and consideration ,and to me, these days, human decency, things that this world seems to have forgotten.

We go to pray, to offer ourselves to God, to ask for his forgiveness for all our transgressions, and they can be many. For many of us it is an opportunity to allow God into our hearts, into our busy lives, but most of all, at this difficult time God has been our comfort, our “rock”, stability when all else is tumbling around us. “ let not your heart be troubled” were Jesus words. We are given hope, we are **comforted**.

Communion, this can be interpreted in two ways, first as meeting people with the same attitudes and feelings as us and secondly as The Sacrament. I have missed both, more than I imagined. Being out on Sundays means I do not get the opportunity as often to attend the Communion service as a participant, it is for me a vital part of my faith, I am reminded that Jesus gave so much for us, and that we need to show our gratitude by serving Him.

My first Communion was in Dolgellau, I was disappointed as only my mother was standing with me, while the other 12 being made members had both parents! It was not till later in life I realised what a significant moment that had been- my own father gave me my first communion. The Sacrament means different things to people, but it unites us in Christ and with Christ, we are all together “in remembrance”.

Companionship. The most important thing to people is meeting and talking to others, Jesus went out and found twelve different and diverse men to join him in his work, he sometimes sent them away, to be alone, but he also used them as his supporters, they would assist him in spreading the word of God.

The number of people who found themselves isolated and alone has been worrying. Mental health issues have become a huge problem, in all age groups. The pandemic caused fear and as a result no-one wanted to call and see others, they were not allowed to. When the churches and places of worship re-opened, people could go and meet others, have a little chat for a few minutes ,they had companionship and did not feel so alone. Thankfully in villages and towns there were and still are, Good Samaritans who made sure neighbours were looked after, shopping done, a chat through a window, a friendly wave, pet dogs walked, medication collected. I believe we saw that willingness to help, more in the lockdown, than seen for a very long time, “treating your neighbour as yourself”, a Christian ideal.

I asked a question, what and why do we go to church? We need the church in our lives, just as much as the church needs us to be faithful members. Perhaps this Pandemic has made us see God and his church differently, and sometimes we need change to shake us out of our comfort zone and look at positive aspects of that change. God really does not mind if we meet in a posh building or a “pigsty”, but we need

to meet, be that in body or “virtually”. None of us can live without the three C’s **Comfort, Communion and Companionship.**

C S Lewis said “ A good shoe is a shoe you don’t notice. Good reading becomes possible when you need not consciously think about eyes or light or print or spelling. The perfect church service would be one we were almost unaware of. Our attention would have been on God”.

“I long to be in the Lord’s temple”.

Prayer

Our loving father, you have asked us to draw close to each other, to become a living community.

We are people who are drawn to you through your Son Jesus Christ.

Draw us closer to you, draw us closer to each other.

Forgive us that we have fallen far from the Christian ideals that you have set for us, that we allow differences to divide us, opinions to be voiced, and problems to become hurdles, all this has taken us away from you.

Forgive us for thinking too much about ourselves and our problems and not looking at the immense problems in your world, which you gave to us for safe keeping.

Forgive us for not making the most of opportunities to share joy and sadness with others, for ignoring the needs of those who have less than us.

Draw us closer to you, draw us closer to each other.

Help us to draw closer to others. When they are suffering, we all suffer. When they are joyful, we all will be joyful

Help us to show that we care for each other, that we are one body in Christ.

We rely on each other, we must support each other, this is your will and this is our responsibility as your children.

Let us be kind and friendly, let us be welcoming, let us be a healing community, ready to reach out to all who seek your comfort.

Whether we be in church, in our homes or out on the street, let us show that we are Gods children, we follow Jesus in our lives and we are ready to respond whenever and wherever we are called to act.

Draw us closer to you, draw us closer to each other

We ask this in the name of Jesus and join together in the prayer of unity

**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: There is a Redeemer, Jesus God's own son

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

**1 There is a Redeemer,
Jesus, God's own Son,
precious Lamb of God, Messiah,
Holy One.**

**Thank you, O my Father,
for giving us your Son,
and leaving your Spirit
till the work on earth is done.**

**2 Jesus my Redeemer,
name above all names,
precious Lamb of God, Messiah,
O for sinners slain.**

**Thank you, O my Father,
for giving us your Son,
and leaving your Spirit
till the work on earth is done.**

**3 When I stand in glory
I will see his face,
and there I'll serve my King for ever
in that holy place.**

**Thank you, O my Father,
for giving us your Son,
and leaving your Spirit
till the work on earth is done.**

vv. 1-2 Melody Green (b. 1946)
v. 3 Keith Green (1953–1982)

Prayer

**Whatever happens today, whatever happens tomorrow, our future is
safe because Jesus is with us, the same now and forever.**

Let us live each moment with Him, in faith and silent praise.

Amen.