

This short act of worship has been prepared for you to use whilst we are unable to use Methodist Church premises. If you are well enough why not spend a few moments with God, knowing that other people are sharing this act of worship with you.

Opening Prayer

Jesus, I come to you to celebrate your love and to receive your word.

You taught that we must worship God in spirit. I long to worship with your people, but I know you are with me, in these difficult times. Amen.

Hymn: Love divine, all loves excelling (Singing the Faith No 503) Sing/ Read /pray /proclaim the words or listen to it here

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=igs3mNsppls>

Love divine, all loves excelling,
joy of heaven to earth come down,
fix in us your humble dwelling,
all your faithful mercies crown.
Jesu, you are all compassion,
pure, unbounded love thou art;
visit us with your salvation,
enter every trembling heart.

Come, almighty to deliver,
let us all your grace receive;
suddenly return, and never,
never more your temples leave.
You we would be always blessing,
serve you as your hosts above,
pray, and praise you, without ceasing,
glory in your perfect love.

Finish then your new creation,
pure and sinless let us be;
let us see your great salvation,
perfectly restored as thee:
changed from glory into glory,
till in heaven we take our place,
till we cast our crowns before you,
lost in wonder, love, and praise!

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

Let us pray together:

Lord God, I am in wonder at the world you have created and the life you have given me. I thank you for that gift of life and the joy of sharing my life with others.

I have not always lived my life as you would wish. Yet, even as I confess this to you, I know your forgiveness by the suffering and death of your Son, Jesus Christ, my Saviour. Amen.

Today's letter to an Early Church: Romans 7. 15-25a

Romans 7. 15-25a

I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. But in fact it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me.

So I find it to be a law that when I want to do what is good, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God in my inmost self, but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind, making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!

So then, with my mind I am a slave to the law of God, but with my flesh I am a slave to the law of sin.

Matthew 11: 28-30

'Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.'

Time to reflect

Jesus' says that he is offering a new way to God. Like the old way, it aims for salvation, but He offers us strength and comfort on our path to God.

He calls us to accept the need for forgiveness, and the salvation He offers to us. Then we can receive the

Spirit to follow God's way with the knowledge of His Love.

Jesus says people criticise him for not conforming to their expectations. Those who fear his message point to how he lives his life, as they had done regarding John the Baptist.

If, through our calling, we receive or fear such criticism, we must rise above it. Seeing others we should look to what their words and actions mean for us, rather than judging their outward appearance.

Jesus speaks of the word of God being hidden from the wise, of those who allow wisdom or knowledge to hide the love of God, and who see the detail of the Law as overriding God's calling that we should love God and our neighbour.

In the tale of the 'Good Samaritan' it was a priest and a Levite (someone who would assist the priest in the Temple), who would know the Law, who walked by.

In writing to the Romans, Paul speaks of the conflict between following the Law and accepting the call of Jesus.

This does not mean that we can disregard the Law. Indeed often the Law shows us how to love our neighbour, but the love God shows us is not following a set of rules but a supreme act of love through suffering. Our call to respond should also be through Love.

All this is through God's love for us, shown in the grace we are offered when he sent His Son to die for our forgiveness and salvation.

Take a time to sit quietly

A time of prayer

I thank you Lord for the gift of your Son: for His life, His sufferings and death and for His Resurrection and Ascension, for the witness, salvation and hope He gives.

I thank you for the gift of your Holy Spirit to those who have come to you, and especially for the gift of that Spirit in your Church.

I rejoice in the work and witness of your Church and pray that it may continue to strive to fulfil your work and proclaim your Love.

I pray for the needs of the world, thinking especially at this time of those affected by the Coronavirus, but remembering too all who suffer including those whose plight seemingly goes unnoticed. Be with all

those suffering in any way. Especially be with.....(people known to me)

Be with those whose lives impact others: leaders in government, or the workplace, health care workers, teachers, emergency workers and all those on whom people depend. Grant them the wisdom and the strength to know and to follow your way.

Lord, I commend all men, women and children to your unfailing love through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour.

Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father

Hymn: Listen to "All hail the power of Jesu's name" (Singing the Faith no 342)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5WVSyGBBfi8>

- 1 All hail the power of Jesu's name !
Let angels prostrate fall ;
bring forth the royal diadem,
and crown him Lord of all.
- 2 You chosen seed of Israel's race,
you ransomed from the fall,
hail him who saves you by his grace,
and crown him Lord of all.

(omit verse 3)

- 4 Let every kindred, every tribe
on this terrestrial ball,
to him all majesty ascribe,
and crown him Lord of all.
- 5 O that with yonder sacred throng
we at his feet may fall,
we'll join the everlasting song,
and crown him Lord of all !

Edward Perronet (1726–1792)

adapted by John Rippon (1751–1836)

A prayer of blessing

May the blessing of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit rest and remain with each of us sharing His worship today and always.

Original Materials by Ralph Frankland

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