



The Methodist Church

Bury St Edmunds Circuit.

Worship Sheet for 29th March 2020
5th Sunday in Lent

Welcome to worship

I pray that you will use this sheet on a Sunday morning, so that together we can draw strength as we worship God as a circuit.

you may wish to light a candle as a focus

As preparation for worship read through the words of **Psalm 130 - A song of ascents.**

¹ Out of the depths I cry to you, LORD;

² Lord, hear my voice.

Let your ears be attentive
to my cry for mercy.

³ If you, LORD, kept a record of sins,
Lord, who could stand?

⁴ But with you there is forgiveness,
so that we can, with reverence, serve you.

⁵ I wait for the LORD, my whole being waits,
and in his word I put my hope.

⁶ I wait for the Lord
more than watchmen wait for the morning,
more than watchmen wait for the morning.

⁷ Israel, put your hope in the LORD,
for with the LORD is unfailing love
and with him is full redemption.

⁸ He himself will redeem Israel
from all their sins.

Prayer of approach

Out of the depths, we cry to you, O God.
Hear our voices, and be with your people as we
gather in worship, at this time, in a different
way.

Come through Your Spirit, living God, and
partner with us; lead us to paths of steadfast
love; lead us to new life; and lead the world to
the peace which you offer.

Breath through us; help us to hear your words,
and to become even more alive, filled with your
Spirit, and help us to look for the new, the
unexpected, and to dream beyond our
boundaries, striving towards a new creation as
your people.

Be with us as we gather across the circuit,
renew us; fill us; and open our hearts to your
presence, for Jesus' sake. Amen

Prayer of Confession

We are in your presence, Lord, knowing that
without you we can do nothing; without the
breath of God, we are dry bones; without the
word of God, we have stumbled and fallen;

without being part of God's people, we have put
ourselves above contradiction, and lived as
though we only had ourselves to answer to.
We see that the world is not as it could be, and
forgive us when we have failed to see you in
our neighbour

SILENCE – for private prayers of confession

By your love, shown in Christ, we know that we
are forgiven, guide us that we may follow you
more closely. AMEN

Our Lent Liturgy

Reading John 19 : 1

“Then Pilate took Jesus
and had him flogged.”

By the cross we lay the
symbol of the whip



Prayer:

Lord Jesus Christ, we thank you for all the
benefits you have won for us: for all the insults
and pains you have borne for us. Most merciful
Redeemer, friend and brother may we know
you more clearly; love you more dearly, day by
day. Amen. (*St Richard of Chichester*)

Hymn StF 673 vv. 1 and 5

You Tube link:

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=you+tube+song+will+you+come+and+follow+me&view=detail&mid=AB1CC29E23FF23F64AE8&FORM=VIRE>

1 Will you come and follow me
if I but call your name ?
Will you go where you don't know
and never be the same ?
Will you let my love be shown,
will you let my name be known,
will you let my life be grown
in you and you in me ?

5 Lord, your summons echoes true
when you but call my name.
Let me turn and follow you
and never be the same.
In your company I'll go
where your love and footsteps show.
Thus I'll move and live and grow
in you and you in me.

*John L. Bell (b. 1949) and Graham Maule (b. 1958)
Words: © 1987, WGRG, Iona Community, Glasgow
G2 3DH Scotland. <www.wrg.co.uk>*

This hymn also has an alternative title “The
Summons”, it is a calling to us all especially in
these times but also as we travel towards Holy
Week and all that our Lord would suffer.

Today's Lectionary Gospel Reading

John 11 : 1 – 45 The death of Lazarus

Now a man named Lazarus was ill. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. ² (This Mary, whose brother Lazarus now lay ill, was the same one who poured perfume on the Lord and wiped his feet with her hair.) ³ So the sisters sent word to Jesus, 'Lord, the one you love is ill.'

⁴ When he heard this, Jesus said, 'This illness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified through it.'

⁵ Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. ⁶ So when he heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed where he was two more days, ⁷ and then he said to his disciples, 'Let us go back to Judea.'

⁸ 'But Rabbi,' they said, 'a short while ago the Jews there tried to stone you, and yet you are going back?'

⁹ Jesus answered, 'Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Anyone who walks in the day-time will not stumble, for they see by this world's light. ¹⁰ It is when a person walks at night that they stumble, for they have no light.'

¹¹ After he had said this, he went on to tell them, 'Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up.'

¹² His disciples replied, 'Lord, if he sleeps, he will get better.' ¹³ Jesus had been speaking of his death, but his disciples thought he meant natural sleep.

¹⁴ So then he told them plainly, 'Lazarus is dead, ¹⁵ and for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.'

¹⁶ Then Thomas (also known as Didymus^[a]) said to the rest of the disciples, 'Let us also go, that we may die with him.'

Jesus comforts the sisters of Lazarus

¹⁷ On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. ¹⁸ Now Bethany was less than two miles^[b] from Jerusalem, ¹⁹ and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother. ²⁰ When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home.

²¹ 'Lord,' Martha said to Jesus, 'if you had been here, my brother would not have died. ²² But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask.'

²³ Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.'

²⁴ Martha answered, 'I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.'

²⁵ Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; ²⁶ and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?'

²⁷ 'Yes, Lord,' she replied, 'I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.'

²⁸ After she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary aside. 'The Teacher is here,' she said, 'and is asking for you.' ²⁹ When Mary heard this, she got up quickly and went to him. ³⁰ Now Jesus had not yet entered the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. ³¹ When the Jews who had been with Mary in the house, comforting her, noticed how quickly she got up and went out, they followed her, supposing she was going to the tomb to mourn there.

³² When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.'

³³ When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled.

³⁴ 'Where have you laid him?' he asked.

'Come and see, Lord,' they replied.

³⁵ Jesus wept.

³⁶ Then the Jews said, 'See how he loved him!'

³⁷ But some of them said, 'Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?'

Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead

³⁸ Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. ³⁹ 'Take away the stone,' he said.

'But, Lord,' said Martha, the sister of the dead man, 'by this time there is a bad odour, for he has been there four days.'

⁴⁰ Then Jesus said, 'Did I not tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?'

⁴¹ So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, 'Father, I thank you that you have heard me. ⁴² I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me.'

⁴³ When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come out!' ⁴⁴ The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth round his face. Jesus said to them, 'Take off the grave clothes and let him go.'

⁴⁵ Therefore many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary, and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him.

Reflection

Last Sunday we were asked to light a candle and place it in a window as we prayed for hope in the darkness and remembered that Christ is the light. In today's lectionary reading we see that light in action as Christ tells us that he is the life.

As we sit and reflect on this reading I wanted us to think about the reactions of people in this story and to think about our own reactions at this time.

v. 21 and v. 32

"if you had been here my brother would not have died"

Mary and Martha both said the same thing and yet reacted in different ways – Martha ran out to Jesus and Mary stayed at home. When someone we love dies, we become acutely aware of a large absence in our life, an absence that seems to fill the world. But we know too that the time of dying can also be a time of healing.

I wonder how you would have reacted – Would you have been Martha running out to Jesus?

Would you have been Mary staying at home until called?

Would you have blamed your friend Jesus?

v. 6

"Jesus heard that Lazarus was sick and yet he stayed there for two more days"

How strange that Jesus didn't go straight away to his friend, for Jesus there is no knee-jerk reaction

When have you delayed responding, and how has that worked out?

What have people around you have felt or thought about that?

v. 35

"Jesus wept"

The shortest verse in the Bible and yet it speaks volumes.

What does this say to you about Jesus?

v. 43

"Jesus called in a loud voice 'Lazarus come out'. The dead man came out."

The great miracle, while he is dead Lazarus hears the word of Jesus and obeys it.

Hearing the voice of the Son of God he lives.

Who does God speak to us through; how do we discern God's voice and know God's love? What are the words we need to hear for our lives today, and how do we open ourselves to the living breath of God's Spirit, and the one who proclaims "I am the resurrection and the life"?

We are living in strange times but we still need to be able to discern the voice of God.

The voice of Jesus calls us all away from making the tomb our natural habitat. It also challenges us to take responsibility for our brother or sister who, like Lazarus, is loved by Jesus. If we see someone buried alive we are invited to do as Jesus and the community do in the Gospel: call them, and help them go free, maybe we can do this by phoning them or writing a letter.

If we do that as part of our Lenten task, then resurrection at Easter won't come as too much of a surprise.

Prayers

Loving God

In these difficult and challenging times we pray for all those who are:

struggling with what is going on
our government
key workers
the lonely
those who are ill
those who mourn

Loving God – Hear our cry

Redeeming God – Rescue us

Spirit of God – breathe on us and bring us to life. Amen

We say together the Lord's Prayer

Hymn StF 345 And can it be

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=you+tubeand+can+it+be+that+i+should+gain&&view=detail&mid=7832C381E69E1B8D50E87832C381E69E1B8D50E8&&FORM=VDRVRV>

1 And can it be that I should gain
an interest in the Saviour's blood?
Died he for me, who caused his pain?
For me, who him to death pursued?
Amazing love! How can it be
that thou, my God, shouldst die for me?

2 'Tis mystery all: the Immortal dies!
Who can explore his strange design?
In vain the first-born seraph tries
to sound the depths of love divine.
'Tis mercy all! Let earth adore,
let angel minds enquire no more.

3 He left his Father's throne above —
so free, so infinite his grace —
emptied himself of all but love,
and bled for Adam's helpless race.
'Tis mercy all, immense and free ;
for, O my God, it found out me !

4 Long my imprisoned spirit lay
fast bound in sin and nature's night ;
thine eye diffused a quickening ray —
I woke, the dungeon flamed with light,
my chains fell off, my heart was free,
I rose, went forth, and followed thee.

5 No condemnation now I dread ;
Jesus, and all in him, is mine !
Alive in him, my living Head,
and clothed in righteousness divine,
bold I approach the eternal throne,
and claim the crown, through Christ, my own.

Charles Wesley (1707–1788)

Sending

God breathe us back to life:
fill and renew our souls,
quench our thirst, show us how to live and love
and breathe so that we may show others how
to be your people this day and always.

Grace

We say together the words of the Grace
May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with us all forever more. Amen



A Prayer from The Revd Barbara Glasson, President of the Methodist Conference

or watch it on the You Tube link

<https://youtu.be/ukXC6XKx7ds>

Loving God,
If we are ill, strengthen us.
If we are tired, fortify our spirits.
If we are anxious, help us to consider the lillies
of the field and the birds of the air.
Help us not to stockpile treasures from
supermarkets in the barns of our larders.
Don't let fear cause us to overlook the needs of
others more vulnerable than ourselves.
Fix our eyes on your story and our hearts on
your grace.

Help us always to hold fast to the good,
See the good in others,
And remember there is just one world, one
hope,
One everlasting love, with baskets of bread for
everyone.
In Jesus we make our prayer,
The one who suffered, died and was raised to
new life,
In whom we trust these days and all days,
Amen.

An image you may find helpful at this time



He's got the whole world in his hand.
He's got the whole world in his hand.
He's got the whole wide world in his hand.
He's got the whole world in his hand.