



The Methodist Church

Bury St Edmunds Circuit.

Worship Sheet for 15th November 2020

Welcome to worship

Be still, you may like to light a candle. Take some time to remember and focus on God's loving presence with each one of us, wherever we are.

Call to Worship : John 15:16

You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you.

Hymn: StF 340 Ye servants of God, your master proclaim

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wZ9j3e8_yQc

Ye servants of God, your Master proclaim,
and publish abroad his wonderful name;
the name all-victorious of Jesus extol;
his kingdom is glorious and rules over all.

"Salvation to God, who sits on the throne!"
let all cry aloud, and honour the Son;
the praises of Jesus the angels proclaim,
fall down on their faces and worship the Lamb.

Then let us adore and give him his right:
all glory and power, all wisdom and might,
all honour and blessing with angels above
and thanks never ceasing and infinite love. Amen

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

Prayer of Praise

How can we praise you
In life's ordinary moments,
bus, car or train,
pedestrian moments,
at home and employment,
with all those distractions.
How can we praise you?

How can we praise you
when time is so precious,
appointments and targets
distracting our focus,
muddying waters,
made clean for your purpose.
How can we praise you?

How can we praise you?
Through all of our actions,
a smile and a greeting,
a shoulder to lean on,
a word in due season,
love and compassion,
in all situations.

Lord help us to praise you, alone or in company, in word and silence, wherever we may be. **Amen.**

Prayer of Confession

Lord God, your love for humankind,
present in the beginning of all things,
extends throughout history
and touches even my life.
Your love sees failings
and forgives.
Your love feels pain
and wipes away our tears.
Your love knows grief,
and comforts the sorrowful.
Your love sees sin
and still loves the sinner.
Forgive us when we fail to live
lives that reflect your love.
Forgive us the many times
when we take for granted
all that you have done for us.
Transform us, through your Spirit,
and empower us to serve you
this day and all days
Amen

Assurance of forgiveness

May healing
flow like a stream
through our lives,
sweeping away
stones,
debris,
all that impedes,
leaving us
refreshed,
renewed,
at peace. **Amen**

Hymn: StF 566 Take my life and let it be

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gf11rReeWIs>

Take my life and let it be
consecrated, Lord, to thee.
Take my moments and my days;
let them flow in endless praise.

Take my hands and let them move
at the impulse of thy love.
Take my feet and let them be
swift and beautiful for thee.

Take my voice and let me sing
always, only, for my King.
Take my lips and let them be
filled with messages from thee.

Take my silver and my gold;
not a mite would I withhold.
Take my intellect and use
every power as thou shalt choose.

Take my will and make it thine;
it shall be no longer mine.
Take my heart it is thine own;
it shall be thy royal throne.

Take my love; my Lord, I pour
at thy feet its treasure store.
Take myself, and I will be
ever, only, all for thee.

Frances Ridley Havergal (1836-1879)

Bible reading: 2 Peter 1: 3-8

Confirming One's Calling and Election

³ His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. ⁴ Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

⁵ For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; ⁶ and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; ⁷ and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. ⁸ For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 25: 14-30

The Parable of the Talents

'For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; to one

he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, "Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents." His master said to him, "Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master." And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, "Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents." His master said to him, "Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master." Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, "Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours." But his master replied, "You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Reflection



I'd like us to think this morning about 'The Snowball Effect'!

I'm sure that like me you remember your childhood days when the first signs of snow were greeted with jubilation! We would go out in the garden and make a snowball, then roll it round the lawn. It accumulated

more and more snow as it went, until it was big enough to make the snowman's body, then similarly with the head.

We could look at this parable in that way, too. All three servants started small, some smaller than others, and the first two accumulated more and more as they worked at it. The third, as we know, was not so successful.

We all know people like these servants. Some seem to have so many gifts and graces and they work hard to use them, not only for their own benefit, but for the good of others. These are not always the 'noisy' ones. Many of them are beavering away behind the scenes, using what God has given them and developing their faith, in the power of the Spirit.

I often feel sad for the third servant. Maybe he found it hard to be given so little in comparison with the rest, maybe he didn't really know what he should be doing, or maybe he was just a bit careless with what was entrusted to him. However, we have all been entrusted with something and, like this servant, we have to account for what we have done with it.

Are **we** faithfully engaged on the business God has entrusted to **our** particular care?

Sometimes we may reflect on which of the servants most resembles us and it's possible we could conclude that there are elements of all three in us. There are times when we rejoice in the many gifts God has given us and, like with the snowball, we work really hard at using them. In doing so, we feel a growing sense of the Spirit's presence and power, we are deepening our faith and seeing its outworking in bearing fruit. At other times, the snowball is not gathering so much snow as we wearily push it round, but we press on and are able to present some harvest to the Lord. In the worst times we sense we have got no further than the initial snowball we started with, and we even think of giving up and hiding away.

What can we do about it? 2 Peter 1. 3-8 suggests that God is looking for a response from us to what He has given us. Patient endurance, Godliness and love for everyone are just three of the gifts we can offer to God to be multiplied in His generous hands. Verse 8 concludes 'The more you grow like this, the more productive and useful you will be in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.'

'The Man Who Planted Acorns' is the tale of a shepherd who planted 100 acorns at a time in a desolate landscape. Over the years he planted 100,000, of which about 10,000 grew into mature trees. Now there is a huge forest covering a large

expanse, where once there was nothing. (You can watch the short film of this story on YouTube.)

So, as we work at it now, the snowball will grow and grow, and something great will be accomplished by each servant of the Lord, no matter how many or few their gifts.

Jenny Benfield

Hymn: StF 513 Take this moment, sign and space
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ymXD_4R292Q

Take this moment, sign and space;
Take my friends around;
Here among us make the place
Where your love is found.

Take the time to call my name,
Take the time to mend
Who I am and what I've been,
All I've failed to tend.

Take the tiredness of my days,
Take my past regret,
Letting your forgiveness touch
All I can't forget

Take the little child in me
Scared of growing old;
Help me here to find my worth
Made in God's own mould.

Take my talents, take my skills,
Take what's yet to be;
Let my life be yours, and yet
Let it still be me.

John Bell (b.1949) and Graham Maule (b.1958)

Prayers of Intercession

In this time of lockdown, let us pray for our world, our communities and ourselves.

For all whose day starts with anxiety,
as they leave the security of home
worrying about the risk of infection;
particularly those whose health
or age classifies them as vulnerable.
Loving God, be close, keep them safe,
along with all whose tasks today
includes the care of frail and elderly.
And for all of us, grant wisdom
to make sensible choices, not just
for ourselves, but for everybody.

Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Bless all who work in stressful situations; healthcare, teaching, law enforcement, social services and other occupations where patience, love and perseverance can wear thin, and daily stress levels rise. Keep them safe and keep them well, equipped to follow their vocation through the most difficult of times. And at the end of their day, grant rest.

Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

We pray for this world's leaders, with difficult decisions to make affecting the lives of so many. May they be guided not by any personal agenda, but work for the common good of all, that this world might be led to a better place, where trust and honesty are the values both sought and demonstrated in those we choose to lead us.

Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Bless the good neighbours, Lord, who call to check that all is well, with those unable to get out, and whose gentle act of service brings a ray of light into a day that would otherwise be cheerless. Bless them, and all who likewise give of their time for others in following your good example, that this might become a better and more caring world in which to live.

Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Loving God, what we desire is this; that people see not us, but through our smile, greeting, helping hand or helpful word, your love reach out and touch, maybe at a time of need. Keep us focussed through this day on being your servants in this place, or wherever you might take us, and may your name be glorified.

Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

We join all our prayers together as we pray the Lord's Prayer...

Our Father...

Prayer over our gifts

Lord God, you give us so much. Help us to recognise that all that we have comes from you and, like the servants in the parable, help us to use your gifts to share your love, so that your kingdom may grow to your praise and glory. **Amen.**

Hymn StF 185 Sing we the king who is coming to reign

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3iNVjv0xrkE>

Sing we the King who is coming to reign,
Glory to Jesus, the Lamb that was slain;
Righteousness, peace then His empire shall bring,
Joy to the nations when Jesus is King.

*Come let us sing: Praise to our King,
Jesus our King, Jesus our King:
This is our song, who to Jesus belong:
Glory to Jesus, to Jesus our King.*

All men shall dwell in His marvellous light,
Races long severed His love shall unite,
Justice and truth from His sceptre shall spring,
Wrong shall be ended when Jesus is King.

All shall be well in His kingdom of peace,
Freedom shall flourish and wisdom increase,
Foe shall be friend when His triumph we sing,
Sword shall be sickle when Jesus is King.

Kingdom of Christ, for thy coming we pray,
Hasten, O Father, the dawn of the day
When this new song Thy creation shall sing,
Satan is vanquished and Jesus is King.

Charles Silvester Horne 1865-1914

A prayer of dismissal

May God pour out upon us the riches of his love and may we offer our time, our talents and our faith to His glory, this week and in the weeks to come. **Amen.**

THE GRACE

We say together...

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.

Some prayers taken from www.faithandworship.com
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