

Bangor & Holyhead Methodist Circuit
Sunday Worship Sheet, 19th January 2025

Our worship for this week was written by Keith Alexander, Visiting preacher, Ordained Elder of the URC and member at Amlwch Methodist Church.

You may wish to have your Bible to hand. Please note the hymns are now at the back of the sheet for ease of printing. CCLI licence 556292

Call to worship:

I lift up my eyes to the mountains. Where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth

Hymn: 608 All praise to our redeeming Lord

Prayers of Adoration, Confession & Thanksgiving:

Adoration:

God, whose love reaches to the highest heavens, how can we keep silent? God, whose righteousness stands like the tallest mountain, how can we keep silent? God, whose justice is deeper than any ocean, how can we keep silent? God, whose grace flows like a never ending river, how can we keep silent? How can we not proclaim your majesty from generation to generation? How can we not raise the lamp of your salvation for all the world to see? God whose love reaches to the highest heavens, we lift up your mighty name!

Confession:

We pray for confidence to share your word with others and for the opportunity to proclaim it. Forgive our reluctance, our timidity. We pray for wisdom to know what should be said and the moment in which to say it. Forgive our reticence, our anxiety. We pray for knowledge of the fullness of your grace and the willingness to live it. Forgive our ignorance, our self reliance. Be the centre of all we are, the light by which we walk, the grace by which we talk, the blessing that we share.

Thanksgiving:

For the gifts of your spirit, present within us in knowledge, teaching, wisdom, healing, in faith that is strong, in words and song, we thank you, Lord. Use them in this place and build us up, Lord, for in your power lives are transformed, in your power lives are made new, in your power your church is revived and your name is lifted high. For the gifts of your spirit, present within us, we thank you Lord. **Amen.**

Hymn: 249 Jesu, Jesu, fill us with your love

Readings: Isaiah 62:1-5; John 2:1-11

Reflection:

John's gospel is my favourite of the four. It's theme is all about who Jesus is, rather than what he did as expressed by the three synoptic gospels. Preachers all know that in John's gospel there are seven signs that speak of the purpose of Jesus and his glory. Today's gospel reading is the first of the seven signs. (*Look it up online for the other signs*) We are told

about his visit to a village wedding with his mother and his friends. The event was in danger of experiencing a disaster because the wine was starting to run out. It was Mary who suggested that Jesus did something about it. He turned the purification water into a wine that the Master of Ceremonies declared to be the very best. His glory entered that house and the wine deficiency was dealt with. His glory entered that house and made a difference. It was a moment of transformation brought about by the Son of God.

Not only this but it was a sign of the heavenly feast offered to all who committed themselves to God through Jesus. Jesus of Nazareth was the pathway to eternity in God's presence. Whether the wedding guests realised what had happened we do not know. What we do know is that Jesus graciously saved the day.

The Christian life is one where Jesus still saves the day, when he still makes a difference for good. We can all speak of special moments when we experienced this in way or another. I once asked a minister if she believed in angels. The answer was that she did and she went on to tell of an angel coming to her and giving her healing. The fact is that angels are not creatures that spend their time singing and praising God as they wing their way from here to there. Angels are human beings who have been nudged by God to go to help a sufferer. I always say God has good elbows because he is forever nudging people into place for the benefit of others.

A minister friend of mine declared that God works through all agencies. How true this is. God does not just work through the church. Every single person is his creation and worthy of God's love and care. When the glory of God enters life things change for the good, just as in the Wedding at Cana. It was a sign that God was at work, and that is what Jesus came to say through word and deed. Amen

Prayer of intercession

Almighty God,
we are your church,
a body of the faithful.

We have committed ourselves to your service.
Show us where we must go and what we must do.

Take us into the corners of life where people are crouching with fear.
May we speak to them soft, soothing words of comfort and assurance.
Through us, heal the hurt and remove the fear.

Take us to the places where people are starving.
May we feed them with food for the body and the mind.
Through us, replace their bodily hunger with a hunger for truth.

Take us to the places where people are almost deaf with the clamour of life.
May we touch their ears with words of peace.

Through us, cause them to listen for your still small voice.
May we, with them, say "Speak Lord for your servant hears."
Amen

Lord's Prayer

Hymn: 346 Christ is the world's light

Blessing:

"The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace."

Amen

Hymn 608

- 1 All praise to our redeeming Lord,
who joins us by his grace,
and bids us, each to each restored,
together seek his face.
- 2 He bids us build each other up ;
and, gathered into one,
to our high calling's glorious hope
we hand in hand go on.
- 3 The gift which he on one bestows,
we all delight to prove ;
the grace through every vessel flows,
in purest streams of love.
- 4 E'en now we think and speak the same,
and cordially agree ;
concentred all, through Jesu's name,
in perfect harmony.
- 5 We all partake the joy of one,
the common peace we feel,
a peace to sensual minds unknown,
a joy unspeakable.
- 6 And if our fellowship below
in Jesus be so sweet,
what heights of rapture shall we know
when round his throne we meet !

Charles Wesley (1707–1788)

Hymn 249

*Jesu, Jesu,
fill us with your love,
show us how to serve
the neighbours we have from you.*

- 1 Kneels at the feet of his friends,
silently washes their feet,
master who acts as a slave to them.
- 2 Neighbours are rich folk and poor,
neighbours are black folk and white,
neighbours are nearby and far away.

- 3 These are the ones we should serve,
these are the ones we should love.
All these are neighbours to us and you.
- 4 Kneel at the feet of our friends,
silently washing their feet,
this is the way we should live with you.

North Ghanaian song

adapted by Tom Colvin (1925–2000)

Hymn 346

- 1 Christ is the world's light, Christ and none other ;
born in our darkness, he became our brother.
If we have seen him, we have seen the Father :
glory to God on high.
- 2 Christ is the world's Peace, Christ and none other ;
no one can serve him and despise another ;
who else unites us, one in God the Father ?
Glory to God on high.
- 3 Christ is the world's Life, Christ and none other ;
sold once for silver, murdered here, our brother —
he, who redeems us, reigns with God the Father :
glory to God on high.
- 4 Give God the glory, God and none other ;
give God the glory, Spirit, Son, and Father ;
give God the glory, God with us, my brother :
glory to God on high.

Fred Pratt Green (1903–2000)

