

Bangor & Holyhead Methodist Circuit

Sunday Worship Sheet 23rd February 2025

Our worship for this week was written by Mr Paul Eckersley. 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

Psalm 37:1-11

Hymn 519(StF) Father I place into your hands

Prayer of Adoration

Heavenly Father, we worship and adore you. You are the King who has risen from the dead. Let us remember that it is you and you alone that we worship. Help us to focus on you and through your Holy Spirit let us commune with you in this act of worship. Amen

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Bountiful God, we thank you for all the good gifts around us; we thank you for your creation. Help us to be better stewards of this world. Show us how we can save this planet from unwanted disaster and help us to be more thankful of the world that we live in. Amen

Prayer of Forgiveness

You came to save us, Risen Lord, and we are grateful that you did. Yet we sometimes fail to live up to the way you want us to be, in our word, deeds and thoughts. Forgive us, Father, and show us how to live a better way. Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name
your kingdom come,
your will be done
on earth as on heaven.
Give us today our daily bread
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,
now and for ever. Amen

Hymn 249(STF) Jesu, Jesu, fill us with your love

Reading Luke 6:27-38

Reading 1 Corinthians 15:35-38,42-50

Reflection

As followers of Christ we are called to follow his way; to those who crucified him Jesus said: "Father forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." (23:34)

Jesus calls his followers to live out this different way: a way of love, generosity, mercy and forgiveness. This way is not driven simply by our feelings, because we may forgive and then find our emotions rising up again, meaning we will have to forgive again once they've subsided. There is more to it than that.

People who fail to forgive are storing up problems for themselves. A failure to show mercy can lead to people becoming damaged mentally and physically, and being unable to move forward in their lives because this event from the past holds them back like an anchor.

If we, as Christians, are unable or unwilling to forgive this calls into question whether we have truly appreciated what God has done for us in Christ. We run the risk of thinking that we are excused, while everyone else needs to be forgiven ! We think that it is understandable when we sin and, therefore, that we can be excused because of our circumstances, our temperament, or whatever. But when someone else does something wrong then we find ourselves thinking that they deserve to be punished. Of course, they can be forgiven by God, but only if they are contrite enough !

We say in the Lord's Prayer 'forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us'. This is not saying that we can earn our forgiveness, which is a free gift from God through Jesus death on the cross, brought into our hearts by His Holy Spirit. Rather it is saying that our forgiving others is a true reflection of the fact that we have fully appreciated the forgiveness that Christ has secured for us.

The art of forgiving is a spiritual grace every Christian should develop, but because this is so difficult to put into practice, I offer the following suggestions:

- 1) Begin by assuring yourself that compared to Christ's suffering you haven't been seriously wronged at all.
- 2) Recall the many kind deeds that have been shown to you, perhaps even by the person who has harmed you.
- 3) List the benefits you have received from the Lord.
- 4) Thank Him for blessing you with His love and forgiveness each day.
- 5) Make an honest effort to pray for the one who has injured you.
- 6) Go even further by looking for an opportunity to help them.
- 7) If the offence is especially hard to forget, try to erase the memory by thinking gracious and generous thoughts.
- 8) Finally, before you fall asleep at night, repeat slowly and thoughtfully that phrase from the Lord's Prayer, 'forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us'.

Forgiveness is a refusal to copy what someone has done to us. It breaks the circle of violence, hate, and condemnation. It prevents the wronged person from sinking to the level of the one who has wronged them. It offers an alternative way forward.

Amen.

Hymn 303 (StF) I know that my Redeemer lives

Prayers of Intercession

We come to you now with our prayers of intercession

In this troubled world of war, remembering the struggles in Ukraine and Palestine, illness and natural disaster, we ask that you look down on us with your grace and mercy. We pray for peace in a world torn with conflict and struggle. We pray for guidance and healing power for all nations at this time of increased tension between nations. We ask that you give strength to those helping in situations that seem impossible, for you are a God who loves his children. Help us, Father, in these situations

Heavenly Father hear our prayer.

We pray for those struggling at this time, those whose minds are wondering and confused. For those who are ill both physically and mentally, help us, Father, and give us the strength to carry on.

Heavenly Father hear our prayer.

We pray for our churches, for all their ministers and stewards. Help us to be more ready for each other. Help us to be one and let us continue to grow in you and you alone. Let your Spirit indwell each and every one of us.

Heavenly Father hear our prayer.

We pray for ourselves, for whatever situation we may be in: for those struggling with life, give us grace; for those who don't know what the future may hold, give us hope; for those who are troubled by what is going on, give us mercy.

Heavenly Father give us the strength to carry on and may we always walk in the ways of your Kingdom.

For these and all our prayers, we ask in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ. **Amen**

Hymn 306(StF) Now the green blade rises

The Grace

Hymn 519

- 1 Father, I place into your hands
the things I cannot do.
Father, I place into your hands
the times that I've been through.
Father, I place into your hands
the way that I should go,
for I know I always can trust you.
- 2 Father, I place into your hands
my friends and family.
Father, I place into your hands
the things that trouble me.
Father, I place into your hands
the person I would be,
for I know I always can trust you.
- 3 Father, we love to see your face,
we love to hear your voice.
Father, we love to sing your praise
and in your name rejoice.
Father, we love to walk with you
and in your presence rest,
for we know we always can trust you.
- 4 Father, I want to be with you
and do the things you do.
Father, I want to speak the words
that you are speaking too.
Father, I want to love the ones
that you will draw to you,
for I know that I am one with you.

Jenny Hewer (b. 1945)

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

Hymn 303

- 1 I know that my Redeemer lives —
what joy the blest assurance gives !
He lives, he lives, who once was dead ;
he lives, my everlasting Head !
- 2 He lives, to bless me with his love ;
he lives, to plead for me above ;
he lives, my hungry soul to feed ;
he lives, to help in time of need.
- 3 He lives, and grants me daily breath ;
he lives, and I shall conquer death ;
he lives, my mansion to prepare ;
he lives, to lead me safely there.
- 4 He lives, all glory to his name ;
he lives, my Saviour, still the same ;
what joy the blest assurance gives,
I know that my Redeemer lives !

Samuel Medley (1738–1799)

Hymn 306

- 1 Now the green blade rises from the buried
grain,
wheat that in the dark earth many days has
lain ;
Love lives again, that with the dead has
been :
*Love is come again, like wheat that springs
up green.*
- 2 In the grave they laid him, Love who had
been slain,
thinking that he never would awake again,
laid in the earth like grain that sleeps
unseen :
- 3 Forth he came at Easter, like the risen grain,
he that for the three days in the grave had
lain,
quick from the dead my risen Lord is seen :
- 4 When our hearts are wintry, grieving, or in
pain,
then your touch can call us back to life
again,
fields of our hearts that dead and bare have
been :

John Macleod Campbell Crum (1872–1958) (*alt.*)