



# The Methodist Church

Nottingham North East Circuit - Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> August 2021



## Caring & Learning

This short act of worship has been prepared for you by Rev John Wiseman to use at home. 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. Please follow the internet links should you wish to access recorded versions of the songs for today.

### Opening Prayers psalm 119:169-176

May my cry come before you, LORD;  
give me understanding according to your word.

<sup>170</sup> May my supplication come before you;  
deliver me according to your promise.

<sup>171</sup> May my lips overflow with praise,  
for you teach me your decrees.

<sup>172</sup> May my tongue sing of your word,  
for all your commands are righteous.

<sup>173</sup> May your hand be ready to help me,  
for I have chosen your precepts.

<sup>174</sup> I long for your salvation, LORD,  
and your law gives me delight.

<sup>175</sup> Let me live that I may praise you,  
and may your laws sustain me.

<sup>176</sup> I have strayed like a lost sheep.  
Seek your servant,

for I have not forgotten your commands.

### Bible reading Luke 10:38-42

<sup>38</sup> As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. <sup>39</sup> She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. <sup>40</sup> But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!"

<sup>41</sup> "Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, <sup>42</sup> but few

things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."

### Let's continue to worship God by singing an old favourite STF 504

May the mind of Christ, my Saviour,  
Live in me from day to day,  
By His love and power controlling  
All I do and say.

May the Word of God dwell richly  
In my heart from hour to hour,  
So that all may see I triumph  
Only through His power.

May the peace of God my Father  
Rule my life in everything,  
That I may be calm to comfort  
Sick and sorrowing.

May the love of Jesus fill me,  
As the waters fill the sea;  
Him exalting, self abasing,  
This is victory.

May I run the race before me,  
Strong and brave to face the foe,  
Looking only unto Jesus  
As I onward go.

May His beauty rest upon me  
As I seek the lost to win,  
And may they forget the channel,  
Seeing only Him.

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=gE5fOXSymBc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gE5fOXSymBc)

### Today's Message

Now it might seem from the bible passage we have just read a little earlier that Jesus is placing the learning that Mary does above the caring that Martha provides, but as we will find out next week there is a time and a place for both....so just be patient.

Today we are going to do something a little different today. Rather than focus on the bible passage, instead I am going to base today's message on the next song we are going to sing verse by verse as we explore today's theme from our Methodist Way of Life, that of **learning and caring**. So if using the internet clip below...get ready to hit the pause button!

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=N9bOiAxwi4U&t=64s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N9bOiAxwi4U&t=64s)

**1 Let us build a house where love can dwell,  
and all can safely live.  
A place where saints and children tell,  
how hearts learn to forgive.  
Built of hopes and dreams and visions.  
Rock of faith and vault of grace.  
Here the love of Christ shall end divisions,  
All are welcome, all are welcome,  
All are welcome in this place.**

Although it was written for a church dedication, the words of this hymn do not really refer to the physical construction of a church building. Rather it uses the metaphor of a building to actually focus on the church that meets there to worship God, the people, the living body of Christ.

A living body full of love and hope, life and faith, successes and failures, hospitality and nurture, peace, justice and equality, acceptance and welcome. A mission based community that as it learns more about God's love is able to act as a channel of that love in the way it cares for its members and its local community. A missional body of people where all can feel safe and secure in who they are, where people are able to live out

lives that not only receive forgiveness from God but as able to offer forgiveness to other and even to themselves. It is a song in which people through learning more about the God they believe in will be able to care for others in the way God cares for us

**2 Let us build a house where prophets speak,  
and words are strong and true.  
Where all God's children dare to seek  
to dream God's reign anew  
Here the cross shall stand as witness.  
And a symbol of God's grace.  
Here as one we claim the faith of Jesus,  
All are welcome, all are welcome,  
All are welcome in this place.**

As he toured the Mediterranean on his three missionary journeys, a record of which we have in the book of Acts and of course Paul's own letters, Paul was faced with many different issues that demanded his attention. As he attempted to console, calm, comfort, challenge and occasionally correct, Paul proclaimed to those early communities of faith that it didn't matter where they were, didn't matter who they were, it didn't matter which level of society they came from, it didn't matter whether they were Jew or Gentile, free or slave, man or woman. Despite their differences they all held one thing in common which united them more than other things could ever divide them. And that was the cross. Indeed in 1 Corinthians 2:2 we hear Paul declare

*"I determined that while I was with you I would speak of nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified.*

And it is through lens of the redeeming work of Jesus' death on the cross that **ALL** of God's children can not just dream about God's new reign but can be active participants in bringing that kingdom into being. A kingdom declared in a united prophetic voice that there is Good news for all

**3 Let us build a house where love is found,  
in water, wine and wheat.  
A banquet hall on holy ground,  
where peace and justice meet  
Here the love of God, through Jesus,  
is revealed in time and space.  
As we share in Christ the feast that frees us  
All are welcome, all are welcome,  
All are welcome in this place.**

During the last meal that he had with his disciples Jesus shared bread and wine with his closest friends. Taking the break and wine, blessing it and sharing it he declared that his body and blood were being given for them Do this he said 'in remembrance of me'

I have often pondered on whether Jesus was simply asking them to share bread and wine in memory of him, or whether what he was actually saying was 'whenever you find yourself having to put your body in the firing line, whenever your blood might get shed...do it in memory of me.' Do it because you believe in the things I stood for, in the things I did, in the words I spoke, in the way I interacted with all kinds of people, in the way I sought to bring God and humanity together.

Be prepared to put your body on the line and have your blood spilled in memory of me because you believe in truth, in peace, in justice, in equality, in grace, in forgiveness, in reconciliation and in a love that can and will overcome all things.

Remember me by how you live out your faith through worship, through service, through evangelism but also through leaning and caring, through continuing to learn more and about me and through how you care for others and for yourself

4 Let us build a house where hands will reach,  
beyond the wood and stone.  
To heal and strengthen, serve and teach,  
and live the word they've known.  
Here the outcast and the stranger,  
bear the image of God's face,  
let us bring an end to fear and danger.  
All are welcome, all are welcome,  
all are welcome in this place.

As we explore our faith through scripture and the example of Jesus, we learn we are not called to be static in either our being or doing. Rather we are called to move, move forward towards the future God is calling us into. To move deeper in our discipleship and witness. To move wider, taking that good news, taking that love for the least, the lost and the lonely that Jesus demonstrated so visibly in his own ministry, out of the place where we meet to worship God and into the communities

in which we live in order to serve God through our care and compassion. In doing so we remember the words of Jesus in Matthew 25 when he revealed....' whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

5 Let us build a house where all are named,  
their songs and visions heard.  
And loved and treasured, taught and claimed,  
as words within the Word.  
Built of tears and cries and laughter,  
prayers of faith and songs of grace,  
let this house proclaim from floor to rafter.  
All are welcome, all are welcome,  
all are welcome in this place.  
**Marty Haugen @ GIA Publications Ltd 1994**

Although I am extremely reluctant to use a phrase that has been on the lip of politicians over the past few months, I wonder as we emerge out of the pandemic whether we, as individuals, as churches, as a circuit can indeed..Build back better. Build back better by engaging in more inter generational activities, that allow all people across the age spectrum to listen and learn from old and young alike. To create a fellowship where despite our sometimes contradictory convictions, people's understanding of our faith and their own individual faith journeys are not just tolerated but accepted. A community of faith where the high and the lows, the tear and the laughter can all be learning experiences and moments when we can share and care for each other and our local communities.

Learning and caring together as one strand of our Methodist Way of Life, perhaps we can emerge out of the darkness of the past 16 months into the light of the future God has laid out for us. Maybe we can build back better so that as the living body of Christ, the church is able to proclaim that all are indeed welcome in this place. Amen

**We are going to sing / read a new hymn that is sung to the tune O Wally Wally**

When hands reach out and fingers trace  
The beauty of a loved one's face,  
We thank you, God, that love relies  
On gifts of grace not seen with eyes.

When fingers spell and signs express  
Our prayer and praise and thankfulness,  
We thank you, God, that hands can sing;  
You bless the silent songs we bring.

When broken bodies will not mend,  
We thank you, God, for Christ our Friend.  
In him, our healing can begin:  
He welcomes all the wounded in.

And when the ways we learn and grow  
Are not the ways that others know,  
We thank you, God, that we have learned  
Your love's a gift, and never earned.

Your Spirit gives us differing ways  
To serve you well and offer praise.  
When all are joined as one, we'll be  
Your able, strong community.

© 2001 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=6JxCsHB7hoE&t=3s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6JxCsHB7hoE&t=3s)

### **Prayers of Intercession**

For all those who have given their best in the  
Tokyo Olympic games which end today

For all those entering final preparations for the  
Tokyo Paralympics which start on 24<sup>th</sup> August

For all those who provide learning opportunities  
across a wide range of settings

For all those involved working in the care sector

For those who are able to get away on holiday and  
for those who are not

For Rev Moses and his family as they begin their  
new ministry in Winchester

For Deacon Julie Morton as she prepares to arrive  
here as part of the NNE circuit.

That all of our churches can be learning and caring  
communities

We bring all our prayers together by joining our  
voices to say the prayer Jesus gave his first  
disciples....Our Father

### **Our final song is sung to the tune Tallis Cannon for 'Come all who look to Christ today**

Teach me, O Lord, thy holy way  
and give to me an obedient mind;  
that in thy service I may find  
my soul's delight from day to day.

Guide me, O Saviour, with thy hand,  
and so control my thoughts and deeds,  
that I may tread the path which leads  
right onward to the blessed land.

Help me, O Saviour, here to trace  
the sacred footsteps thou hast trod;  
and, meekly walking with my God,  
to grow in goodness, truth, and grace.

Guard me, O Lord, that I may ne'er  
forsake the right, or do the wrong:  
against temptation make me strong,  
and round me spread thy shelt'ring care.

Bless me in ev'ry task, O Lord,  
begun, continued, done for thee:  
fulfil thy perfect work in me;  
and thine abounding grace afford.

Praise God, the Son and Holy Ghost

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Eb2u14kxcs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Eb2u14kxcs)

### **Blessing**

Into this week we go, our hearts and minds set on  
learning more about your endless love for us, and  
promising to offer your care and compassion to all  
that we meet, for it is in Jesus name that we go to  
serve and care. Amen