

Sunday 27th September

This short act of worship has been prepared for you to use whilst we are unable to use Methodist Church premises. 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.

Opening Prayer

As we still ourselves we recognise that wherever we are, we are in God's presence.

Lord our God, help us to know Your ways and teach us Your paths.
Lead us in Your truth for You are the God of our salvation.

Hymn: 379 Eternal Father

Let us pray together

Loving God, all worship and adoration belongs to You for You alone are Lord, You alone are the mighty God, Creator of all that is good.

You give us our very breath in this new day and we are humbled as we recognise without You we have no hope, no life, no breath.

You are closer than my breath and I thank You Lord that You have promised to be with us always and never to forsake us.

Whether I know it or not,

Whether I recognise it or not,

Whether I delight in it or not.

You are constant and although the world around us may change and quake, You remain the same, for You are a mighty rock on which we have our hope.

With You there is always comfort and challenge to live our lives for You in faith and obedience.

Thank you for Your saving presence.

Amen

You might like to bring to mind the things you are sorry for this week, confident in God's loving mercy and forgiveness.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 21: 23 - 32

Read Rev. Ken's Sunday Sermon: Doing what is right in our own eyes!

Time to Reflect

Take a time to sit quietly and to reflect on the times you have felt distant from God and the times you have known God's presence.

Take time to pause and be present to God

Hymn: 706 Where shall my wondering soul begin?

A time of prayer

Lord we have set aside this time to pray, yet as people and situations pop into our minds today and in the week to come help us to take time to hold them in Your love and to pray for them.

Now Lord I use this time to bring my concerns to You. I ask for Your Holy Spirit to guide my thoughts that I may pray in accordance with Your perfect will and for Your glory.

I pray for those who have suffered this week...

I pray for those who have rejoiced this week...

I pray for those I have seen this week...

I pray for those I have longed to see this week.

I pray for myself..

Lord with me here, take these prayers in the name of Jesus. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer *Our Father*

Hymn: StF 530 To be in your presence

or sing a verse of a hymn that comes to mind

To be in your presence,
to sit at your feet,
where your love surrounds me,
and makes me complete:

*This is my desire, O Lord,
this is my desire.*

*This is my desire, O Lord,
this is my desire.*

To rest in your presence,
not rushing away,
to cherish each moment --
here I would stay.

Noel Richards (b. 1955)

A blessing for you

May you know the Lord with you each day
of your life, may you answer the call to
listen and the challenge to follow.

And the blessing of God, Father, Son and
Holy Spirit will be with you as you go.
Amen

Matthew 21: 23 - 32

The Authority of Jesus Questioned

When he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, 'By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?' Jesus said to them, 'I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?' And they argued with one another, 'If we say, "From heaven", he will say to us, "Why then did you not believe him?" But if we say, "Of human origin", we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet.' So they answered Jesus, 'We do not know.' And he said to them, 'Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.'

The Parable of the Two Sons

'What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, "Son, go and work in the vineyard today." He answered, "I will not"; but later he changed his mind and went. The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, "I go, sir"; but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?' They said, 'The first.' Jesus said to them, 'Truly I tell you, the tax-collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax-collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.'

Amended Original Materials by Rev'd Anne Smith

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