

Worship at Home - Sunday 7 August - Rev Jean Hudson

This short act of worship has been prepared for you to use at home. We invite you to spend a few moments with God, knowing that other people across the Methodist Connexion are sharing this act of worship with you.

Opening Prayer

Thank you, Creator God, for summer's warmth and light, your gift

Help us to joy in the promise of each day

Thank you, Jesus, for summer's peace and stillness, your gift

Help us to rest in the beauty of each day

Thank you, gentle Spirit, for summer's colour and life, your gift

Help us to thrive in the hope of each day

Holy Trinity, dynamic and loving, we thank you for seasons and cycles

But especially for today, in this season of summer

Hymn: StF134 Christ, whose glory fills the skies https://youtu.be/Xvni-t_71-k

Sing/ Read /pray /proclaim the words or listen to it here

Christ, whose glory fills the skies,
Christ, the true, the only Light,
Sun of Righteousness, arise,
triumph o'er the shades of night;
Day-spring from on high, be near;
Day-star, in my heart appear.

Dark and cheerless is the morn
unaccompanied by thee;
joyless is the day's return,
till thy mercy's beams I see,
till they inward light impart,
glad my eyes, and warm my heart.

Visit then this soul of mine;
pierce the gloom of sin and grief;
fill me, radiancy divine;
scatter all my unbelief;
more and more thyself display,
shining to the perfect day.

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

Let us pray together

Wherever we are, vibrant God, please colour our days with love and gladness. Gladness because before we ever approach you, you hold us in mercy, forgiveness and grace, free gifts in and through Jesus, our Saviour and travelling Companion. We thank you and we give ourselves to you in joy. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Today's Reading from the Old Testament:

Zechariah 4: 1, 6-10 – a vision for rebuilding the Temple on return from exile

Today's Gospel Reading: Matthew 13: 31-33

Time to Reflect

We must not despise the day of small things.

During the pandemic small things became so important that they shaped how we lived each day – small journeys, small walks, small ways to keep in touch with family and friends, small visits to essential shops. Thankfully, for most of us in this country those days seem to be over. There are some, however, who are still vulnerable, grateful for areas specifically for those who want to wear a mask. And in parts of the world, covid is still rampant.

Now, there is something else in our world reminding us to be thankful for everyday gifts with which God blesses our lives – light, silence, beauty, clean water, the laughter of children, family celebrations. As I write this in May, in Ukraine the sounds of war drown out any possibility of rest or happiness. 'There is no safe haven here' – haunting words from BBC reporter, Fergal Keane in Lviv.

The everyday small sounds and possibilities of our lives fill us with profound thankfulness and we can use them as a foundation to our everyday prayers, remembering how Jesus used them to teach us of God. The ordinary items we have in our homes remind us that all of our life is important to God. Every action we take as a day unfolds from waking up to going to bed provides us with a nudge to pray and invite the Spirit to fill our days with thanksgiving and love. Small everyday sights and sounds remind us of a world full of joy and delight. Our everyday hopes and dreams open up the promise of new experiences filled with the grace of God and the presence of Jesus.

All is gift, all is grace, neither contentment nor suffering is of our deserving. A silent Thank you and a silent outpouring of love for all who do suffer – everywhere – can be our response to the God who loves us all.

Take a time to sit quietly

A time of prayer

Gracious and merciful God, there is much in your world to cause deep concern and anxiety, not least the war in Ukraine, from which we receive reports and profoundly disturbing pictures of suffering that should never happen. We pray for an end and ask that the people still there, grieving and many wounded, and those now living elsewhere will be able to keep faith that there will be an end. As our tears are joined with yours, Lord, in your mercy

Hear our prayer

Just and holy God, we pray for integrity to be reclaimed in politics, in our own country as well as elsewhere. In dealings with refugees and asylum seekers, keeping the way open for peaceful government in Northern Ireland, the desire for Scottish independence and the real cost of living crisis for thousands of families, may we be able to trust our leaders to be honest and compassionate.

As our yearnings for justice, safety, dignity and enough for all are joined to yours, Lord, in your mercy

Hear our prayer

Generous and saving God, we thank you for all who see need in our world and give unstintingly of time, energy and love to help to meet it. Provision of food, safe havens, transport, sport and play for all abilities, places to journey through grief to name but a few in the hands of volunteers who embody compassion. Thank you for all of them. As our dreams for fulness of life for all are joined to yours, Lord, in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

We bring our prayers together in the prayer Jesus taught us..

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father

Hymn: StF431 O, the love of my Lord is the essence <https://youtu.be/v7H6CZIKL68>
or sing a verse of a hymn that comes to mind

O, the love of my Lord is the essence of all that I love here on earth.

All the beauty I see he has given to me, and his giving is gentle as silence.

Every day, every hour, every moment has been blessed by the strength of his love. At the turn of each tide he is there at my side, and his touch is as gentle as silence.

There've been times when I've turned from his presence, and I've walked other paths, other ways; but I've called on his name in the dark of my shame, and his mercy was gentle as silence.

Estelle White (b. 1925)

A prayer of blessing

May the love of the Father surround us
may the grace of the Son fill us
may the energy of the Spirit lift us
so that we might build the kingdom of God.

Original Materials by Jean Hudson

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We are grateful to all the Ministers and Local Preachers from around the Connexion who have contributed to Worship at Home. This resource is administrated by Ministries: Vocations and Worship in the Connexional Team.

For more worship resources see

[The Bible \(methodist.org.uk\)](http://methodist.org.uk)

[Singing the Faith Plus \(methodist.org.uk\)](http://methodist.org.uk)

Zechariah 4: 1, 6-10a

4 The angel who talked with me came again, and wakened me, as one is wakened from sleep.

⁶He said to me, 'This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: Not by might, not by power, but by my spirit, says the Lord of hosts.⁷What are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain; and He shall bring out the top stone amid shouts of 'Grace, grace to it!' '

⁸Moreover, the word of the Lord came to me saying, ⁹The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; he hands shall also complete it. Then you shall know that The Lord of hosts has sent me to you. ¹⁰For whoever has despised the day of small things shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel.'

Matthew 13: 31-33

³¹Jesus put before them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; ³²It is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.'

³³He told them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.'