

Worship at Home - Sunday 18 September 2022

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

God of faithfulness, who values each one of us as made in your image, we come to you this morning. Help us through our worship to see the value you place in us, and in others, help us to measure our worth in you, and with all that we are to worship you, in spirit and in truth.

AMEN

Hymn: STF595 Lord we have come at your own invitation

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

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5GpxTkvatxc>

Lord, we have come at your own invitation, chosen by you, to be counted your friends; yours is the strength that sustains dedication, ours a commitment we know never ends.

Here, at your table, confirm our intention, give it your seal of forgiveness and grace; teach us to serve, without pride or pretension, Lord, in your Kingdom, whatever our place.

When, at your table, each time of returning, vows are renewed and our courage restored, may we increasingly glory in learning all that it means to accept you as Lord.

So, in the world, where each duty assigned us gives us the chance to create or destroy, help us to make those decisions that bind us, Lord, to yourself, in obedience and joy.

Fred Pratt Green (1903-2000)

Let us pray together

Loving God, as we respond to your invitation today, we come as we are.

Please receive us as we are but don't let us go unchanged.

We come with our inconsistencies and flaws.

We come with our questions and doubts.

We come with our fears and concerns.

We come, confident that you know all, receive all, and forgive all.

We give thanks, praise and adore you, for we can never be separated from your love, you do not turn us away, even when we turn from ourselves.

Your love is constant, your love is pure, your love is from everlasting to everlasting,

With this as our assurance we come confident of your forgiveness, and free to adore and praise you.

AMEN

Today's OT Reading Jeremiah 8: 18-9:1

Today's Gospel Reading: Luke 16: 1-13

Time to Reflect

Pause to pray and reflect upon the two readings, what are the similarities, what are the differences, how do they connect?

Have you ever felt the desperation of the dishonest manager?

What do you think of his actions?

What do you think of the way that he was commended for them?

Where do we see reflections of this in the world today?

In the Gospel of Luke, this parable and two more on a similar theme follow the Parables of the Lost Sheep, The Lost Coin, and the Lost Son, all of these tell us of the value that God places in the recovery of, and the restoration of those things, those people who were thought to be lost. In those parables, it is God who seeks out, and restores. In this parable the manager is looking after himself, cutting the debts of his masters debtors.

Was this wise, or foolish?

Where do you see God at work here?

Jesus was ridiculed by the Pharisees who were listening. Jesus responded:

"You are those who justify yourselves in the sight of others, but God knows your hearts, for what is prized by humans is an abomination in the sight of God."

God knows your hearts, does this comfort or disturb you?

Take a time to sit quietly

A time of prayer

Loving God , who knows our hearts, and the hearts of all that you have made, we pray for your world.

We pray for those who have responsibility in the world, of finance, business and industry, we pray that they would place the welfare of people over profit, the needs of the environment over greed.

Loving God , who knows our hearts, and the hearts of all that you have made, we pray for your world.

We pray for those who walk the corridors of power in this and other lands, we pray that they might govern with care and fairness, considering the needs of those they serve, and that they might not be swept up by the seduction of power.

Loving God , who knows our hearts, and the hearts of all that you have made, we pray for your world.

We pray for our own situations, our local councils, our towns, villages and homes, may they be places of truth and justice, filled with the compassion and acceptance of Christ who taught us to pray:

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be Thy name;
Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.

Hymn: Listen to **Blessed be your name**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rw4H5t3TWHM>

A prayer of blessing

Oh God who blesses us with such abundance, we have come to you seeking your blessing, your grace.

So bless us as we go from this time of worship we pray.

Bless us with wisdom.

Bless us with a heart of justice.

Bless us with your grace.

Send us out as those who live for you, and long for your kingdom come.

In the name of God, the creator, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, we receive your blessing

AMEN.

Original Materials by Reverend Sally Coleman

All Hymns reproduced under CCLi 1144191.

CCLi 294176

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 and will end at the end of 2022.

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)

Jeremiah 8: 18-9:1

My joy is gone; grief is upon me;
my heart is sick.

¹⁹ Listen! The cry of the daughter of my people
from far and wide in the land:

“Is the LORD not in Zion?
Is her King not in her?”

(“Why have they provoked me to anger with their
images,
with their foreign idols?”)

²⁰ “The harvest is past, the summer is ended,
and we are not saved.”

²¹ For the brokenness of the daughter of my people
I am broken,

I mourn, and horror has seized me.

²² Is there no balm in Gilead?
Is there no physician there?

Why then has the health of the daughter of my
people
not been restored?

⁹ ^[a] O that my head were a spring of water
and my eyes a fountain of tears,
so that I might weep day and night
for the slain of the daughter of my people!

Luke 16: 1-13

Then Jesus said to the disciples, ‘There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was squandering his property. So he summoned him and said to him,

“What is this that I hear about you? Give me an account of your management, because you cannot be my manager any longer.” Then the manager said to himself, “What will I do, now that my master is taking the position away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. I have decided what to do so that, when I am dismissed as manager, people may welcome me into their homes.” So, summoning his master’s debtors one by one, he asked the first, “How much do you owe my master?” He answered, “A hundred jugs of olive oil.” He said to him, “Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it fifty.” Then he asked another, “And how much do you owe?” He replied, “A hundred containers of wheat.” He said to him, “Take your bill and make it eighty.” And his master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly; for the children of this age are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light. And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of dishonest wealth so that when it is gone, they may welcome you into the eternal homes.

‘Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much; and whoever is dishonest in a very little is dishonest also in much. If then you have not been faithful with the dishonest wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? And if you have not been faithful with what belongs to another, who will give you what is your own? No slave can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.’