

Worship at Home – Sunday 16 October 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

As you come to worship today, take time to acknowledge how this week has been for you. What has been enjoyable? What has been challenging? What is on your mind? Take a few moments to reflect and, when you are ready pray:

Loving God, here I am today to worship you.
Amen.

Hymn StF24: Come, now is the time to worship:

Sing/ Read /pray /proclaim the words or listen to it here, where the writer also speaks briefly about the inspiration for the hymn:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=i6guWKnmxYU

Come, now is the time to worship.
Come, now is the time to give your heart.
Come, just as you are to worship.
Come, just as you are before your God, come.

One day every tongue
will confess you are God,
one day every knee will bow.
Still, the greatest treasure remains
for those who gladly choose you now.

Come, now is the time to worship ...
Brian Doerksen (b. 1965)

Let us pray together

Gracious God,
We adore you grateful that we can come just as we are to worship you.
We praise you that our worship is not constrained by being in a particular place and that wherever we are, we can worship you.

We give thanks for everyone who will be joining in this act of worship today and the connection of faith that you offer us. We acknowledge with sadness therefore, the times we have put up barriers to worship either for ourselves or for others. Times when our words and actions have not confessed you as God. We are truly sorry. We offer our adoration, praise and thanksgiving that, by your grace, we are forgiven and we come once more in worship before you, our God of love. Amen.

Today's Gospel Reading: Luke 18:1-8

Time to Reflect

Even from being a child, I have been quite a persistent person. Once I get an idea in my head, I am not easily distracted from it. In fact, it is one of those character traits I have sometimes found myself criticised for. I have even been told I am annoying on occasion because of it.

Imagine my delight then at reading something that seems to be positive about being persistent. It can be fruitful and lead to change or action. I may well find a response to my persistence in the end. It is possible for the time and energy of persistence to make a difference. There is hope in persistence.

Yet I also find I am challenged by the persistence revealed here, particularly when it comes to prayer. I wonder if, like me, there are prayers you have offered over a long period of time. Prayers that have been both fervent and persistent and still have not yielded the response hoped for. Somehow,

when that happens, despite our persistence, the pain of disappointment feels devastating.

To persist or not to persist then, that is the question... To help reflect on that I found myself asking why Jesus might encourage us to be persistent and not give up, especially when it comes to prayer?

You will have your own answers, I am sure, but for me persistence in prayer is about maintaining a connection with God. When people call the emergency services about important things, they are often asked to 'stay on the line' so that the person they are connected to can best support them through whatever is happening. I think that's how it is with God, God wants us to stay on the line, to keep connected.

I think that does take persistence, both when we are filled with hope and when we are struggling with disappointment. It isn't easy to persist at times and we may find others don't understand us or even criticise us for our persistence.

My persistent prayer today then is that we can all keep connected to God in prayer. My persistent hope is that when we do, we will see the justice of God's Kingdom realised in the world today.

Take a time to sit quietly.

A time of prayer

Take a moment to reflect on where God is calling you to persist in prayer for yourself and for others. You might find it helpful to make a note of these.

Once you have a few things in mind or written down, spend time bringing each prayer before God. It doesn't matter if you do this with words or a time of quiet, what matters is keeping that connection.

Take a moment to ask God if there are one or two prayers that you might offer persistently over the next week. Don't worry if you aren't

quite sure which ones, it may become clearer over time and you can always keep praying for all of them.

When you are ready, draw your prayers together by saying the Lord's Prayer.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father

Hymn StF530: To be in your presence

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

www.youtube.com/watch?v=typ7cueKdT4

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 prayer of blessing

May you keep connected to God as you journey into whatever else this day holds for you. May you not lose heart.

And the blessing of God who loves you will stay with you, now and always. Amen.

Original Materials by Rev'd Lorna Valentine, North Bedfordshire Methodist Circuit

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

Luke 18: 1-8, NRSV

18 Then Jesus told them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart. ² He said, 'In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor had respect for people. ³ In that city there was a widow who kept coming to him and saying, "Grant me justice against my opponent." ⁴ For a while he refused; but later he said to himself, "Though I have no fear of God and no respect for anyone, ⁵ yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that she may not wear me out by continually coming.'" ⁶ And the Lord said, 'Listen to what the unjust judge says. ⁷ And will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long in helping them? ⁸ I tell you, he will quickly grant justice to them. And yet, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?'