

Worship at Home

8th March 2026 - Lent 3

Prepared by Plymouth and Devonport Circuit

Formatted and edited by the South Devon Circuit

Opening prayer

Lord, we take this time to worship and give you praise. We praise you for Your creation, for the signs of new growth in leaves and flowers; for the song of birds and Your love for us wherever we are and whatever we're doing. Lord, we praise You.

Amen

StF 440: Amazing Grace

**Amazing grace (how sweet the sound)
that saved a wretch like me!**

**I once was lost, but now am found,
was blind, but now I see.**

**'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
and grace my fears relieved;
how precious did that grace appear
the hour I first believed!**

**Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come:
'tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
and grace will lead me home.**

**The Lord has promised good to me,
his word my hope secures;
he will my shield and portion be
as long as life endures.**

**Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
and mortal life shall cease:
I shall possess, within the veil,
a life of joy and peace.**

**When we've been there ten thousand years
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
than when we first begun.**

John Newton 1725-1807

Let us pray

Heavenly Father we worship and praise You and give You thanks for Your love and care for us.

We praise You for Your creation – for flowers and trees, for animals, for hills and valleys, seas and rivers.

We praise You and give thanks for our family and friends.

We praise You for the gifts we have; for the gift of sight and sound enabling us to see the beauty around us and hear the sound of music, birds and our fellow human beings.

Lord, we have so much to praise You for that we run out of words. Lord, we praise You.

Amen

Heavenly Father, on this, the third Sunday in Lent we remember how you were led into the wilderness and fasted for 40 days and nights and were tempted by Satan.

We pray for your forgiveness when we give in to the temptations that we face – not loving as You asked; being cross or impatient; upsetting others by our thoughtless words and deeds.

Bring to mind things for which you need to say sorry...

We pray for forgiveness...

Jesus said 'when you are truly sorry your sins are forgiven'. Thanks be to God. **Amen.**

Reading John 4: 1-42

Jesus meets the Woman at the Well

Reflection

Have you ever had an encounter which has changed your life? It may have been just a small change or one which completely changed your life.

Our woman at the well certainly had one. We understand that she is shunned by her fellow

villagers due to her lifestyle: she's been married four times and is living with someone who is not her husband. Which is why she comes to the well, on her own, in the middle of the day.

Mostly the women came early in the morning and evening in a group. I can imagine her trudging along, feeling low, lonely and wondering if this was going to be her life for ever. She must have been very surprised when she saw a man sitting by the well. What should she do? Turn away? Keep going?

The story breaks many taboos. Men didn't talk to lone women; Jews [Jesus was a Jew] and Samaritans [she was a Samaritan] didn't mix [hadn't done for centuries]; sharing drinking vessels wasn't done; and for a woman to challenge a man – well!

It's a strange conversation, starting with what seems a reasonable request – will you give me a drink? But it isn't – you didn't share cups. It moves on to talking about everlasting water. What a wonderful idea – no more trudging to the well. But that isn't what Jesus meant. He meant spiritual water, which is available to all, wherever we are, as long as we believe in Him.

He then discloses that He knows all about her. A bit frightening, that. We all have things we'd rather others didn't know.

The woman's challenge, "...when the Messiah comes" is met with Jesus' saying, "I am He." Another surprise. So often Jesus tells folk not to tell. But here, it's different.

The penny drops and she rushes back to the village to tell others about her meeting. The interesting thing is they listen to her - and that is life-changing in itself. And they want to know more; to see for themselves. Not just one life changed but many.

That's what Jesus does: He breaks down barriers. He changes people. He shows a better way of life, a life led by love – the love that wants the best for others; a sacrificial love that is full of compassion and care.

Our Samaritan woman's life was changed along with that of many of her fellow villagers. May we encounter Jesus and be His faithful, obedient disciples. **Amen**

StF 707: Make me a channel...

**Make me a channel of Your peace
Where there is hatred let me bring Your love
Where there is injury, Your pardon, Lord
And where there's doubt, true faith in You.**

*Oh, Master, grant that I may never seek
So much to be consoled as to console
To be understood as to understand
To be loved as to love with all my soul*

**Make me a channel of Your peace
Where there's despair in life let me bring hope
Where there is darkness, only light
And where there's sadness, ever joy.**

*Oh, Master, grant that I may never seek...
Make me a channel of Your peace
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned.
In giving to all men that we receive,
And in dying that we're born to eternal life.*

*Sebastian Temple (1928-1997)
from the Prayer of St Francis*

Prayers

Lord, there are so many things and people we are concerned about; some we hear about from news coverage or social media and much that we never even know about.

We pray for peace for the places around the world where there is conflict, war and persecution.

We pray for those who have lost loved ones, lost homes and possessions and those who are struggling to find shelter, food and medical care.

We pray for people who live with the helplessness of famine, climate change and humanity's inhumanity to one another and to the planet.

We pray for strength and blessing on those helping to rescue and support others.

We pray for Governments and leaders that they make wise decisions and recognise their responsibilities towards those they represent. We pray for a change of heart and leadership inside global corporations. We pray for our country: for those struggling to make ends meet; for foodbanks and other charities trying to help those in need.

We pray for those who are ill in hospital, hospice or home and all those involved in providing care – whether paid or volunteers or family – and in whatever way.

Take a few moments to think of those you know and situations that have come to light in this current week...

Lord, You know us so well – our fears, our concerns, our hopes – we bring them to you now in the name of Jesus, Your Son and our Saviour. **Amen.**

Lord, we pray for ourselves:

Bring your needs and concerns to the Lord now and pause for a few minutes before concluding with...

The Lord's Prayer

StF 655: We cannot measure...

**We cannot measure how You heal
or answer every sufferer's prayer,
yet we believe your grace responds
where faith and doubt unite to care.
Your hands, though bloodied on the cross,
survive to hold and heal and warn,
to carry all through death to life
and cradle children yet unborn.**

**The pain that will not go away,
the guilt that clings from things long past,
the fear of what the future holds,
are present as if meant to last.
But present too is love which tends
the hurt we never hoped to find,
the private agonies inside,
the memories that haunt the mind.**

**So some have come who need Your help
and some have come to make amends,
as hands which shaped and saved the world
are present in the touch of friends.
Lord, let Your Spirit meet us here
to mend the body, mind and soul,
to disentangle peace from pain
and make Your broken people whole.**

John Bell (b 1949) & Graham Maule (b1958)

As we come to the end of today's worship at home service, we give thanks that we are also nearing the end of the winter season, with the Spring Equinox just a couple of weeks away. However, this may be a time of mixed emotions for some of us, if we have lost loved ones over the winter.

Our final hymn draws together many of the strands from this week's service and reminds us that ultimately the only permanent and reliable thing in life is our living Lord, Lord Jesus Christ, our Saviour, Friend, Confidant and Ally. If this hymn is not familiar to you, you may like to read the words as a personal reflection.

StF 441: As Water to the Thirsty

As water to the thirsty, as beauty to the eyes, as strength that follows weakness, as truth instead of lies, as song time and springtime and summertime to be, *so is my Lord, my living Lord; so is my Lord to me.*

Like calm in place of clamour, like peace that follows pain, like meeting after parting, like sunshine after rain, like moonlight and starlight on the sea, *so is my Lord, my living Lord; so is my Lord to me.*

As sleep that follows fever, as gold instead of grey, as freedom after bondage, as sunshine to the day, as home to the traveller and all we long to see, *so is my Lord, my living Lord; so is my Lord to me.*

Timothy Dudley Smith (1926-2024)

Blessing

May God bless you, those you love and those you pray for today and forever more. And may the peace of God, the love of Jesus and the presence of the Holy Spirit be with you now and always.

Amen.

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