

# Worship at Home

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## Welcome to our Service

Wherever you are and whatever the hour, know that you are amongst people from all over our world, worshiping, praising, and seeking our wonderful God as he seeks us.

*'As o'er each continent and island the dawn brings on another day the voice of prayer is never silent, nor dies the sound of praise away.' And so, we play our small part in this worldwide offering of thanksgiving, petition, and praise.*

## We Pray

Wonderful and Holy God, enable us by your spirit to worship you today.

Thank you that Jesus has shown us clearly the heights and depths, the breadth and length, of the divine love that pours from your being.

Father, Son and Spirit, we come. **Amen**

## STF 56: King of Glory, King of Peace

**King of Glory, King of Peace, I will love thee;  
and that love may never cease I will move thee.  
Thou hast granted my request, thou hast heard me;**

**thou didst note my working breast, thou hast spared me.**

**Wherefore with my utmost art I will sing thee,  
and the cream of all my heart I will bring thee.  
Though my sins against me cried, thou didst clear me;  
and alone when they replied, thou didst hear me.**

**Seven whole days, not one in seven, I will praise thee;  
in my heart, though not in heaven, I can raise thee.  
Small it is, in this poor sort to enrol thee:  
e'en eternity's too short to extol thee.**

George Herbert (1593-1633)

## We Pray

**Our Father God**, you are the almighty power for good upon which we rely. We are able to come to you, because in Jesus, your goodness is shown clearly to us: firstly, as an example of how we should live, and then, as a true picture of what you are like.

In Jesus we see infinite power and love nailed to a cross and buried in a tomb, yet know of his resurrection, because of his presence here with us all today. We thank you that through Jesus our sins are forgiven and we wear his righteousness with gratitude and hope. We ask that we can serve you in our world, true witnesses of Christ and filled with your Holy Spirit.

We ask our prayers in Jesus' name, who taught us to pray together:

***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***

## Reading: Matthew 9: 9-13 and 18-26

*The calling of Matthew and a girl restored to life and a woman healed...*

## Reflection

It would be hard to find better examples of the changes that Jesus brought and brings to people's lives, than these in our Gospel reading today: three people, all excluded by religious society because of different, but equally isolating problems.

Maybe like me you have more sympathy with the lady, as her illness was not of her choosing, whereas we believe that Matthew's occupation and subsequent 'uncleanness' was. This difference may matter to us, but it didn't seem to matter much to Jesus. We see throughout the gospels how he seamlessly moves between the clean and the unclean, without concern for the very things that those around him found concerning. At the same time, Jesus was observing the Jewish traditions and laws, as he interpreted them into their intended God-given guidance for mankind's good.

We can read on in Matthew 9 and discover the dramatic change that Jesus brings about in Matthew's life. Not least, is Matthew's subsequent relationship with Jesus, as he becomes one of Jesus' closest friends and one of the inner 12 who became Apostles.

Sometimes our focus remains on the reparations Matthew makes to his countrymen, but what really matters is that he followed Jesus from that day on.

**As with Matthew, it will be our relationships with Jesus that will shape both what we do and who we are within his kingdom on earth and in heaven.**

From Matthew, our attention is drawn to the remarkable tale of a Synagogue ruler begging Jesus to save his little daughter. Something about resurrection always needed Jesus to personally attend and it still does. Remember Jesus said, *"I am the resurrection and the life"* and we rise to life in him, long before our mortal bodies give up.

We have the benefits from having eternal life through him, but because in today's scripture we are hearing about resurrection of the body, something about Jesus **actually being** there was needed. Note that Lazarus remained in his tomb for four days and Jesus needed to be there to have the stone rolled away and call him to life again.

## Once again Jesus is found making the unclean clean.

He goes with the Synagogue ruler to his house and hears the commotion of mourning. A dead body should not be touched, but Jesus takes the little girl by the hand and speaks. *O the power of the Word of God who speaks life ...*

...and merged within this remarkable story is the miserable separation suffered by a woman who is never able to mix with others because she is ill. We hear Jesus was impressed by her faith and so are we. *"If I can just touch his cloak I shall be healed"*, and she was.

Whilst we do not believe that illness is a result of sin, Jesus often began with the assurance that a person's sins were forgiven, before giving them healing as a sign of the forgiveness of their sins.

It is not too great a stretch of our imagination to acknowledge that if mankind gave up wasting money and resources on war and other excesses, many illnesses and diseases would be cured and much suffering prevented. Some healings are just literally a conflict away, the sin of war needs to be abandoned and forgiven, in order to see healing for all mankind.

The vast amounts of waste that western countries create are costing our most vulnerable brothers and sisters and children too much, and not just in money.

Have I strayed too far from Jesus our Prince of Peace who walked our earth forgiving, healing and feeding people to show us how to live? Forgive me if you think so and let these scripture verses speak to you instead, of Jesus' unflinching care for those unclean and outside of respectable society.

Helping them didn't hurt him, and it won't hurt us either. **Amen.**



## STF 613: God, how can we forgive

*(sung to The God of Abraham praise)*

**God, how can we forgive when bonds of love are torn? How can we rise and start anew, our trust reborn?**

**When human loving fails and every hope is gone, your love gives strength beyond our own to face the dawn.**

**When we have missed the mark, and tears of anguish flow, how can you still release our guilt, the debt we owe?**

**The ocean depth of grace surpasses all our needs. A priest who shares our human pain, Christ intercedes.**

**Who dared to throw the stone to damn another's sin, when you, while knowing all our past forgive again?**

**No more we play the judge, for by your grace we live.**

**As you, O God, forgive our sin, may we forgive.**

Ruth C. Duck (1947- 2024)

## Prayers of Intercession

Heavenly Father **we pray** for those who need our help today, and ask that we have opportunity and grace to be the people you want us to be.

**We pray** for a world broken by war and injustice, help us to bravely speak up for those who have no voice. Those who have no homes. For those who have no hope.

**We pray** Dear God for all the charities and people working to help others in need. Please bless each one of them with strength and peace, may they know your encouragement and see the light of Christ in what they do.

And **we pray** Dear God for ourselves, for each other, for those we love and for those who love us. We place ourselves into your hands with trust and peace, for we do so in the name of Jesus, our Lord and our Saviour. **Amen.**

## STF 673: Will you come and follow me...

**Will you come and follow me if I but call your name?**

**Will you go where you don't know and never be the same?**

**Will you let my love be shown, will you let my name**

**be known, will you let my life be grown in you and you in me?**

**Will you leave yourself behind if I but call your name?**

**Will you care for cruel and kind and never be the same?**

**Will you risk the hostile stare should your life attract or scare? Will you let me answer prayer in you and you in me?**

**Will you let the blinded see if I but call your name?**

**Will you set the prisoners free and never be the same?**

**Will you kiss the leper clean, and do such as this unseem, and admit to what I mean in you and you in me?**

**Will you love the 'you' you hide if I but call your name?**

**Will you quell the fear inside and never be the same?**

**Will you use the faith you've found to reshape the world around, through my sight and touch and sound in you and you in me?**

**Lord, your summons echoes true when you but call my name.**

**Let me turn and follow you and never be the same. In your company I'll go where your love and footsteps show. Thus I'll move and live and grow in you and you in me.**

John L Bell (b 1949) & Graham Maule (b 1958)

## Prayers

The Blessings of God:

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

be with you all, forevermore. **Amen**

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