

Worship at Home

Sunday 6th September 2026

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West Devon Methodist Circuit

Formatted by the Devon Moor to Shore Circuit team

Welcome to our service

As the days are shortening and signs of autumn are all around... *'now is the time to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first became believers.'* **Romans 13:11**

STF 88: Praise to the Lord the Almighty

**Praise to the Lord the Almighty the King of Creation!
O my soul praise him for he is thy help and salvation!
All ye who hear, brothers and sisters, draw near,
praise him with glad adoration.**

**Praise to the Lord, who doth prosper thy work and
defend thee; surely his goodness and mercy here
daily attend thee
ponder anew what the Almighty can do,
who with his love doth befriend thee.**

**Praise to the Lord who doth nourish thy life and
restore thee, fitting thee well for the tasks that are
ever before thee,
then to thy need he like a mother doth speed,
spreading the wings of grace o'er thee.**

**Praise to the Lord, who when darkness of sin is
abounding, who, when the godless do triumph, all
virtue confounding,
sheddeth his light, chaseth the horrors of night,
saints with his mercy surrounding.**

**Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in me adore him!
All that hath life and breath, come now with praises
before him!
Let the amen sound from his people again: gladly for
aye we adore him.**

Joseph Neander (1650-1680)

We Pray

Then Peter came and said to Jesus, 'if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?' Jesus said to him, 'not seven times, but I tell you, seventy times seven times.' **Matthew 18: 21-22**

Loving and merciful God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; today we turn to you and once more worship in thankfulness, for all that knowing you through Jesus means to each of us. As we bring before you those things we have done that have hidden Jesus from our world, we thank you for the forgiveness of our sins and ask that we would follow the guidance of your Holy Spirit and serve you in the days ahead. Help us to be forgiving, because you have forgiven us. Help us to be loving, because you love us. Help us to share the Good News of your love made plain in Jesus with all those we meet, through thought and word and deed, to the glory of your Holy Name. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

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.**

STF 370: Breathe on me, Breath of God

**Breathe on me, Breath of God; fill me with life anew,
that I may love what thou dost love, and do what
thou would'st do.**

**Breathe on me Breath of God, until my heart is pure,
until with thee I will one will, to do and to endure.**

Breathe on me Breath of God, till I am wholly thine,

**until this earthly part of me glows with thy fire
divine.**

**Breath on me Breath of God; so shall I never die,
but live with thee the perfect life of thine eternity**

Edwin Hatch (1835-1889)

Reading Romans 13: 8 - 14

Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. The commandments, 'You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet'; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, 'Love your neighbour as yourself. 'Love does no wrong to a neighbour; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law. Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armour of light; let us live honourably as in the day, not in revelling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarrelling and jealousy. Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

Reflection

I think it was William Barclay who said that, *"love is the debt that we can never hope to repay"*, and reading these words from Paul's letter to the Roman Church, we are very aware of how true this is. St. Paul points out how simple the whole law had become when he said, *'for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law.'* Before we get too excited, thinking that our deep love for a favoured few will suffice, we'd better realise that Paul is talking about every individual we shall ever meet or know of. So, although it seems the easy option, to love everyone certainly does not.

Paul begins by telling us to pay our debts to each other; and here the saying from Shakespeare's Hamlet is very pertinent and wise, *"Neither a borrower nor a lender be."*

I can't believe this isn't from Proverbs, because it makes such good sense. However, what does it mean?

I think we can understand it to say, if you really need something, ask for it without agreeing to pay it back or return it. There is no point promising what you can't hope to deliver, so it is better to cast yourself on someone's mercy in the first place. Every day we hear about the difficulties people get into because of short term loans, taken out in desperation, with little or no chance of ever being paid back. Our problem today is what else can desperate people do? In years gone by they might have run to another country, joined the army or begged for mercy and help from a local lord or monastery. Today, there is a Christian initiative set up to help people with 'gifts' rather than debts. I think this is something all of our churches should get involved in as it often prevents homelessness, hunger, fear, and debt, all at the same time!

Now, what about lending? Will an act of generosity turn into a difficult and unhappy situation if something is damaged or not returned? We honestly have to be very careful and make provision for whatever it is, to be 'written off' if, in the end, repayment is impossible; to be prepared to make it a gift, without destroying the borrower's life with guilt and worry. So, why would we ever do that? Well, we might, if it's our nearest and dearest who are involved.

Oh dear, do you see where our reading is leading us with all this? Paul says, *'all the commandments are summed up in this word, "Love your neighbour as yourself," love does no wrong to a neighbour; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law'*

Jesus was very clear when asked by a teacher of the law, *'who is my neighbour?'*, that in his eyes, it was anyone in need (Luke 10: 25 -37). Perhaps we will need to put on our 'Jesus-tinted' glasses more often, until we can see need in the same way that he does.

As we are loved to the uttermost, we know we can only begin to make down-payments on such a debt, if

that is what God's love is. Fortunately, it is a gift not a debt, but because of it being so, we are then bound to share something so freely given.

It cost Jesus his life to teach us this, let's give our lives to passing it on. **Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession

Loving God, we pray for all those worried about debt today, we ask you to send counsellors to help people sort their finances and responsibilities out. We pray that people will remain calm and not be driven to despair. Inspire your church to help wherever it can.

Loving God, we pray for our world at war. So many conflicts affecting so many people, and we pray for peacemakers to guide world leaders into right and fair decisions. Inspire your church to help wherever it can.

Loving God, in our beautiful South West Peninsula District, so many farms are suffering because of the Blue Tongue virus. We think of the sheep and cattle that feel so ill. We think of the farmers who are saddened by the loss and suffering of their animals, and by the ongoing impact upon animal fertility and farm finances. Lord, we pray that the vaccines work, are affordable and freely available. Inspire your church to help wherever it can.

Loving God, we pray for ourselves and for each other. May we allow you to make us the people you created us to be as we seek together to build your kingdom wherever we live. Inspire us to help each other whenever and wherever we can. In Jesus' name we pray and say **Amen.**

STF 504: May the mind of Christ...

**May the mind of Christ my Saviour
live in me from day to day, by his love and power
controlling all I do or say.**

**May the word of God dwell richly
in my heart from hour to hour, so that all may see I
triumph only through his power.**

May the peace of God my Father

**rule my life in everything, that I may be calm to
comfort sick and sorrowing.**

**May the love of Jesus fill me,
as the waters fill the sea;
him exalting, self forgetting - this is victory.**

**May I run the race before me,
strong and brave to face the foe, looking only unto
Jesus as I onward go.**

Kate Barclay Wilkinson (1859-1928)

Blessing

May the Lord bless our giving,
may the Lord bless our living,
may the Lord bless our loving.
Blessed be the name of the Lord. **Amen.**

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