

Bangor & Holyhead Methodist Circuit
Sunday Worship Sheet – 21 May 2023

Our Worship was written by Keith Alexander, Visiting Preacher and Ordained Elder of the URC, and member at Amlwch Church. You may wish to have your Bible to hand. Please note the hymns are now at the back of the sheet for ease of printing. CCLI licence 556292

Call to worship: Speak to us, encourage and forgive us.
In the meeting of our lives, Lord,
be the focus of all that we are. Amen

1st Hymn 6 Father, we love you

Prayers of adoration, confession, and thanksgiving.

Adoration: The one whose hands created us is the one who lives within us, the one whose breath sustains us, the one who rose to life for us whose arms embrace us, the one who longs that we might be one as he is one, Father, Son, and Spirit – the three in one whose praise we bring.

Confession: There are times, Lord when doubts flood in, and faith struggles to keep our heads above water. Forgive our weakness and grant us strength, for you endured all this and so much more – scourged and hated, humiliated and slaughtered, yet rising victorious to demonstrate the paradox of strength through weakness, love conquering all. We are weak but through the grace of Christ we are strong, and with your help will daily overcome.

Thanksgiving: You are father of the fatherless, friend to the outcast, restorer of the broken, liberator of the captive, rescuer of the fallen, lover of creation. You are the one whose name we praise, whose truth we proclaim, whose life we live; you are our God and we thank you. **Amen**

The Lord's Prayer

2nd Hymn 317 At the name of Jesus

Reading: John 17:1-11

Reflection

In today's lectionary reading we hear Jesus at prayer. In the gospels we often discover him at prayer but not always do we hear his words. In this instance we do and are able to learn the context of the prayer. He notes that "the hour has come". His ministry is now complete, and he goes over how it all began with the father who gave him authority over all people so that those called may have eternal life. The story began with the twelve disciples and drew in many who heard the words of Jesus and committed themselves to following him. Jesus refers to this and asks to be glorified in God's presence as it was before he came to his ministry.

He then goes on to pray for his disciples. At this point we are reminded that whilst we often think that Jesus chose the twelve it was actually God who picked them out and Jesus then knew who he had to call. They have now reached the point where they are fully aware of Jesus being the one to bring to earth the words of God, his Father. Now he prays specifically for them. They will continue in the world, preaching the good news and healing the sick. Jesus began the great task, showing them how it all worked through. They are now not only aware that Jesus is in the Father, but they are now to step into his shoes and take the gospel forward.

In Matthew 22:14 (King James Bible) we hear “For many are called but few are chosen”. The disciples were the few to be chosen. Much rested on their shoulders as Jesus laid down his responsibility for them to take it up. We have a reminder here that we, in our own time, have picked up the race baton. It is we in 2023 who are tasked with taking the gospel forward. A daunting task, maybe, but we have been chosen to do this work.

The glorified position of Jesus was foretold in Daniel 7 **“I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.**

And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. Having ended his earthly task in person Jesus is now raised to his true position at the side of God himself. We now hold the responsibility for telling all people about one who has been raised to be king of the universe. For us, the new life is already underway and eternal life has begun. We do not have to wait for death because it is ours right now.

So, let us think about some words with which we are very familiar – the first verse of a favourite hymn:

***Crown him with many crowns,
The Lamb upon his throne.
Hark! How the heavenly anthem drowns
All music but its own.
Awake my soul, and sing
Of him who died for thee,
And hail him as they matchless King
Through all eternity.
Amen***

Prayers of Intercession

Thank you God for the glimpses of your light shining

and your love working in the world
which are such a privilege to see.

Thank you God.

Thank you for glimpses of your presence here.

With Abram, we thank you that when life seems to present us
only with a blank wall,
you open doors we did not know were there.

Thank you God.

Thank you for glimpses of your presence here

With the Psalmist, we thank you that when we feel we're standing alone
against the evil in humankind
we're suddenly aware of you, standing alongside us.

Thank you God.

Thank you for glimpses of your presence here.

With the first Christians, we thank you that when selfish pleasures
entice us to turn our backs on you
you remind us of eternal joys.

Thank you God.

Thank you for glimpses of your presence here.

With Peter, James and John we thank you that when life is confusion
and shadowed by worries of what might be
you engulf us in your holy presence.

Thank you God.

Thank you for glimpses of your presence here
yesterday, today and tomorrow.

Amen.

3rd Hymn 345 And can it be that I should gain

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace. Amen.

Hymn 6

1 Father, we love you,
we worship and adore you :
glorify your name
in all the earth.

Glorify your name,
glorify your name,
glorify your name,
in all the earth.

2 Jesus, we love you,
we worship and adore you :
glorify your name
in all the earth.
Glorify your name,
glorify your name,
glorify your name,
in all the earth.

3 Spirit, we love you,
we worship and adore you :
glorify your name
in all the earth.
Glorify your name,
glorify your name,
glorify your name,
in all the earth.

Donna Adkins (*b.* 1940)

Hymn 317

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1 At the name of Jesus
every knee shall bow,
every tongue confess him
King of Glory now.
'Tis the Father's pleasure
we should call him Lord,
who from the beginning
was the mighty Word.
2 Humbled for a season,
to receive a name
from the lips of sinners
unto whom he came,
faithfully he bore it
spotless to the last,
brought it back victorious
when from death he passed :
3 Bore it up triumphant
with its human light,
through all ranks of creatures
to the central height,
to the throne of Godhead,
to the Father's breast ;
filled it with the glory
of that perfect rest.
4 In your hearts enthrone him ;
there let him subdue
all that is not holy,
all that is not true ;
crown him as your captain
in temptation's hour :

let his will enfold you
in its light and power.

5 For this same Lord Jesus
shall return again,
with his Father's glory,
with his angel train ;
all the wreaths of empire
meet upon his brow,
and our hearts confess him
King of Glory now.

Caroline Maria Noel (1817–1877)

Hymn 345

And can it be that I should gain
an interest in the Saviour's blood ?
Died he for me, who caused his pain ?
For me, who him to death pursued ?
Amazing love ! How can it be
that thou, my God, shouldst die for me ?

2 'Tis mystery all : the Immortal dies !
Who can explore his strange design ?
In vain the first-born seraph tries
to sound the depths of love divine.
'Tis mercy all ! Let earth adore,
let angel minds enquire no more.
3 He left his Father's throne above —
so free, so infinite his grace —
emptied himself of all but love,
and bled for Adam's helpless race.
'Tis mercy all, immense and free ;
for, O my God, it found out me !
4 Long my imprisoned spirit lay
fast bound in sin and nature's night ;
thine eye diffused a quickening ray —
I woke, the dungeon flamed with light,
my chains fell off, my heart was free,
I rose, went forth, and followed thee.
5 No condemnation now I dread ;
Jesus, and all in him, is mine !
Alive in him, my living Head,
and clothed in righteousness divine,
bold I approach the eternal throne,
and claim the crown, through Christ, my own.

Charles Wesley (1707–1788)