

**Sunday 17 October 2021**

This short act of worship has been prepared for you to use whilst we are unable to use Methodist Church premises. If you are well enough why not spend a few moments with God, knowing that other people are sharing this act of worship with you.

### **Opening Prayer**

Loving God I know that you are with me in every moment of my life but as I set this special time aside, I pray that I might feel your presence and that through the power of your Holy Spirit, I may find myself in the presence of others who worship you this day. *[Pause]*.

I pray that you would make me alive to the Holy Spirit, that in the stillness I might hear your Word and find myself drawn in tune with the melody of your grace.

Amen.

### **Hymn: May the Glory of the Lord Fill His Temple (StF 31)**

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

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FjpVwl-Ecfs>

*Jonathan Nowell*

### **Let us pray together**

Gracious God, I praise you for who you are. For you are the Lord, the giver and sustainer of life whose nature is love. I thank you that even when I rebel against you, your unquenchable love seeks me out. I thank you that in Jesus, you made the first move and have rescued me. I pray that as your Word ministers to me, that I might so open my heart to your grace that it might fill me, transform me and overflow into all my relationships and dealings with the world. Amen.

**Today's Reading from the Old Testament**  
Hebrews 5: 1-10

### **Today's Gospel Reading:**

Mark 10: 35-45

### **Time to Reflect**

Social anthropology reveals that in every culture in every time and in every place, human beings create religion. Where there is religion, there are priests; intermediaries who seek to "help" the masses to navigate divine forces that must be placated if they are to prosper. Israel had its own aristocratic line of priests but was frequently let down and disappointed by them. Always aloof, they were frequently corrupt.

In the chapters leading up to our Gospel reading this morning, Jesus has been identified (privately for now) as the Messiah, the Christ, the anointed king in waiting. As in every time and place, James and John want to be the intermediaries. If Jesus is going to be King, they want in on it.

How different then the message given to us in Hebrews! God has decided that Jesus is indeed the anointed King, but *this* king is also to have the dual role of Priest-King, modelled on Melchizedek (see Psalm 110 and Genesis 14). King Jesus does not need an intermediary for he is also High Priest forever because, far from being aloof, this Priest-King has also shared our life of joy and of suffering. In Jesus, we need no intermediaries but can approach the throne of grace with confidence (Heb 10:19) and with prayer.

We get to share in this nature through our baptism. As the Body of Christ, we are a "Priestly Community" but, like James and

John, we need Jesus to reshape our all too human, religious instincts and replace them with God's model of kingship and servanthood.

Grace and peace.

### **A time of prayer**

Loving God,

You call us to share in your baptism and in your work. In response, I offer these prayers for the world that you made and that you love. In a world where wealth and power are hoarded by a few, I pray that there would be an equal sharing of the vaccines and the necessities of life. In a world where vested interests imprison us and rob others of the life you offer, so I pray that your people, networked through prayer, might rise up to call out injustice wherever we see it. In a world confronted with climate emergency, I pray that you would make us enemies of apathy and agents of your Kingdom.

Finally because I know that you love me too, I take time to lay before you those things that are close to my heart..... {pause to reflect}

I ask these prayers in the only way that I can; in the power of your Holy Spirit and in the name, grace and character of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Amen.

### **The Lord's Prayer**

*Our Father .....*

### **Hymn: "One Human Family God Has Made" (StF 687)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QnBjppHddkI>

One human family God has made,  
and all for each to care.  
One world, to be the home of all,  
with all its wealth to share.  
One Christ, to manifest on earth  
love's ultimate design.  
One Church to know the mystery  
of broken bread and wine.

One race, one world -- yet torn apart,  
we spurn the way of love.  
But still ahead, the Christ leads on  
and calls his Church to move  
from love of power to power of love,  
to give the word to all --  
to trust the love that conquered death,  
outside the city wall.

And are we brave enough to join  
with that great company --  
the cost not less than all we have  
and are or hope to be --  
the bitter cup of human sin  
to drink with him who died,  
and take his love outside the wall  
to all the crucified?

Claim him who claims us for his own,  
to share his pain and grief,  
to bear the scars that stamp us his --  
the hallmark of belief.  
As partners of the living Christ,  
who risk the path he trod,  
with wondering love we find we share  
the timeless joy of God.

*Rosemary Wakelin (b. 1932)*

### **A prayer of blessing**

God to enfold you,  
Christ to uphold you,  
Spirit to keep you in heaven's sight ;  
so may God grace you,  
heal and embrace you,  
lead you through darkness  
into the light.

John L. Bell (b. 1949)

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number 648

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