



# The Methodist Church

## Bury St Edmunds Circuit.

Worship Sheet for 27<sup>th</sup> September 2020

### Welcome to worship

Be still, you may like to light a candle. Take some time to remember and focus on God's loving presence with each one of us, wherever we are.

### Call to Worship : 66: Paraphrased

Make a joyful noise to God, all who are on earth. Sing so everyone will know the glory of his name. Give Him praise and glory for your deeds are awesome. May all the earth bow down and worship You our God and king. **Amen.**

### Hymn: StF 455 All my hope on God is founded

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DohxO6ytsaU>

1. All my hope on God is founded;  
he doth still my trust renew,  
me through change and chance he guideth,  
only good and only true.  
God unknown,  
he alone  
calls my heart to be his own.
2. Human pride and earthly glory,  
sword and crown betray his trust;  
what with care and toil we fashion,  
tower and temple fall to dust.  
But God's power,  
hour by hour,  
is my temple and my tower.
3. God's great goodness aye endureth,  
deep his wisdom, passing thought:  
splendor, light and life attend him,  
beauty springeth out of naught.  
Evermore  
from his store  
newborn worlds rise and adore.
4. Daily doth the almighty Giver  
bounteous gifts on us bestow;  
his desire our soul delighteth,  
pleasure leads us where we go.  
Love doth stand  
at his hand;  
joy doth wait on his command.

5. Still from earth to God eternal  
sacrifice of praise be done,  
high above all praises praising  
for the gift of Christ, his Son.  
Christ doth call  
one and all:  
ye who follow shall not fall.  
(Robert Bridges: 1844-1930)

### Prayer of Praise

Creator God, we thank you for places to grow:  
To grow flowers, fruit and vegetables, to grow  
community, friendship and togetherness, to grow in  
health, wellbeing and self worth, to grow in  
awareness of your hand in all things.  
God of growing places, may we grow in you. **Amen.**  
(2020 Prayer handbook day 27)

In the fading of the summer sun,  
the shortening of days, cooling breeze,  
swallows' flight and moonlight rays  
**WE SEE THE CREATOR'S HAND**

In the browning of leaves once green,  
morning mists, autumn chill,  
fruit that falls frost's first kiss  
**WE SEE THE CREATOR'S HAND: Amen**

### Prayer of Thanksgiving

Thank you Lord God, for the opportunity of worship,  
for the freedom to be amongst your family  
meeting together in your house or our house, via zoom  
or face to face or just sitting quietly with this worship  
sheet. We feel the warmth of your embrace

Thank you that in worship we can put aside,  
all our uncertainties and rest upon the certainties of the  
Kingdom, even in these ever changing days when we are  
not sure about going out or staying home.

Thank you that we can bring to you  
all the hurts and fears that trouble us,  
and leave them with you,  
knowing that your strength and assurance  
are all that we require

Thank you that as we draw near in worship,  
we pray our prayers, sing our hymns, listen to your word,  
join in fellowship with others and know that we are held  
in your love.

Thank you Lord God for the opportunity of worship.  
**Amen.**

### Prayer of Confession

**We now confess our sins to God.**

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you, in thought and word and deed. We have not loved you with our whole heart. We have not loved our neighbour as ourselves.

### *Silence*

Lord, forgive what we have been, help us to amend what we are, and direct what we shall be; that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### *Assurance of pardon*

When we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. **Amen. Thanks be to God**

### **Hymn: StF 57 Let all the world in every corner sing**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PfXldoDnvq4>

1. Let all the world in every corner sing:  
My God and King!  
The heavens are not too high,  
His praise may thither fly;  
The earth is not too low,  
His praises there may grow.  
Let all the world in every corner sing:  
My God and King!

2. Let all the world in every corner sing:  
My God and King!  
The church with psalms must shout,  
No door can keep them out;  
But above all, the heart  
Must bear the longest part.  
Let all the world in every corner sing:  
My God and King!

*(George Herbert 1593-1633)*

### **Gospel Reading: Matthew 21: 23-32**

#### **The Authority of Jesus Questioned**

<sup>23</sup> When he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, 'By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?' <sup>24</sup> Jesus said to them, 'I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. <sup>25</sup> Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?' And they argued with one another, 'If we say, "From heaven", he will say to us, "Why then did you not believe him?"' <sup>26</sup> But if we say, "Of human origin", we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet.' <sup>27</sup> So they answered Jesus, 'We do not

know.' And he said to them, 'Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.'

### **The Parable of the Two Sons**

<sup>28</sup> 'What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, "Son, go and work in the vineyard today." <sup>29</sup> He answered, "I will not"; but later he changed his mind and went. <sup>30</sup> The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, "I go, sir"; but he did not go. <sup>31</sup> Which of the two did the will of his father?' They said, 'The first.' Jesus said to them, 'Truly I tell you, the tax-collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. <sup>32</sup> For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax-collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.'

### **Reflection**

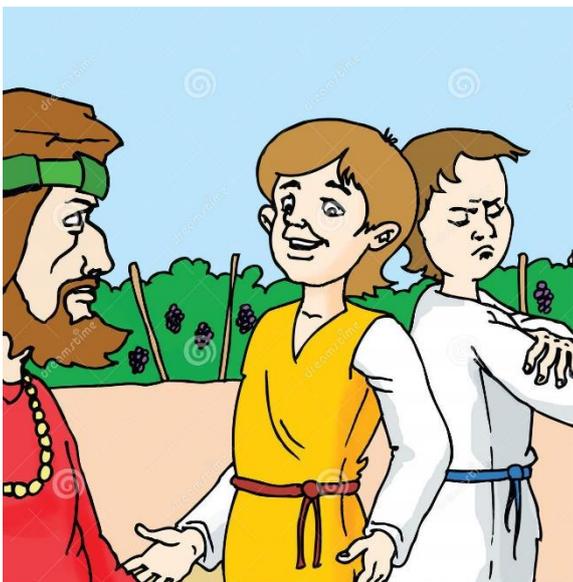
In the passage this week from Matthew's gospel, Jesus is getting near the end of his ministry. The beginning of this chapter tells the story of Jesus returning to Jerusalem, and His triumphant entry. Here Jesus is in the Temple, teaching and commanding authority. Those gathered would have asked, 'who is this that he commands such authority'.

Can you imagine if a stranger came into one of churches and spoke with such authority that everything stopped and everyone listened. Then the whispers would go round of who the person was where they came from and doubt would begin to creep in. Imagine even more so if they walked into Methodist Central Hall at Westminster and questioned all that they did. Well in a way this is what it must have been like when Jesus entered the temple. And so, the chief priests and elders wanted to know who he was. Was he the Messiah? No one else had the authority to say these things, or do these things or act in this way. So they questioned His authority. After all Jesus has caused a disturbance and attracted a lot of attention. But, Jesus did not answer but asked them a question. This question concerned them, for whatever way they answer it, they would be in the wrong.

They can't say, that John the Baptist was led by God because they know Jesus would then ask why they took no notice of him. They can't

criticize John's ministry either as that would lose them favour with the people. They are at a stale - mate. However, Jesus doesn't leave it there, He tells them a parable. Jesus is a good story teller and people like to listen to stories. He tells of two sons. One who appears to be quite an awkward fellow and quite rebellious and another who appears to be loyal and industrious. Jesus is pointing out that you don't always get what you see. Not like the advert 'it does what it says on the tin'. This time the roles are reversed. The first son does go to work and the second son decides not to bother. Jesus likens this story to the work and ministry of John the Baptist. He says that religious people who were committed to God, failed to respond. But, many from the edges of society, those whom you would never expect to respond did so in a very dedicated and committed way.

Jesus is giving those listening to him the opportunity to change their ways. He says to them 'even when you saw you did not believe'. But, there is still time. Parables are like an onion with layers, some laying where they can be seen, and others have hidden depths. As the folk left the temple and went on their way, they would have mulled this story around in their minds until they made sense of it. So those who were there that day and had not thought much of John or had been critical of Jesus were given the opportunity to reconsider their beliefs and respond positively to Jesus. This way they too would find their place in the Kingdom of God. The original question remains unanswered 'by whose authority does Jesus do these things?'. When we read on in Matthew, we will begin to be offered an answer. **Amen.**



**Hymn: StF 317 At the name of Jesus**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OI2rKRCWmOU>

1. At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow,  
every tongue confess him King of glory now;  
this the Father's pleasure, that we 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. Christians, this Lord Jesus shall return again,  
with his Father's glory, with his angel train; for  
all wreaths of empire meet upon his brow,  
and our hearts confess him King of Glory now.

(Caroline Maria Noel 1817-1877)

**Prayers of Intercession**

**Response:** Lord of faith and truth

**We bless your holy name.**

Lord, your Kingdom reaches from the heavens embracing the whole of creation. You call your Church to assist with harvest, schooling people in your love. Give us willing hearts, hands and voices with which to respond to your summons.

Lord of faith and truth

**We bless your holy name.**

Lord, you see more fully into our hearts and all that we can become. We thank you for those who affirm and encourage our growth and development. Bring us to flourish in the warmth of your love.

Lord of faith and truth

**We bless your holy name.**

Lord, you know our needs and concerns before we ask. Hear us as we bring before you all who are ill or

in need. Anoint all those who are sick with your healing Holy Spirit. Bless them and bring them to rejoice in you.

Lord of faith and truth  
**We bless your holy name.**

Lord, you hear all our prayers spoken and unspoken and we leave some silence now for our own prayers and concerns.....

Lord of faith and truth  
**We bless your holy name.**

Lord, there is no darkness that can extinguish your eternal light. In faith we entrust to you those who have died. Raise us with them to your eternal kingdom and comfort all those who mourn their passing.

Lord of faith and truth  
**We bless your holy name.**

Lord, enable us to live in hope, you set your cross before us as a symbol of hope and love. Give us courage to all who find this hard to bear.

Lord of faith and truth  
**We bless your holy name**

**We ask this and all our prayers in your Holy name. Amen.**

We say together the prayer that Jesus gave us:

**Our Father...**

#### **Prayer over our gifts**

Heavenly Father, we come to you as we are. We offer our gifts to you. We offer our lives for your service. We offer our gifts to enable your kingdom to grow. We offer our money to ensure the church continues to flourish. All that we have we give to you. **Amen.**

**Hymn: StF 470 Lord for the years**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MkTrFQLy6js>

1. Lord, For the Years Your Love has Kept and Guided,  
Urged and Inspired Us, Cheered Us on Our Way,  
Sought Us and Saved Us, Pardoned and Provided:  
Lord of the Years, We Bring Our Thanks Today.

2. Lord, For that Word, The Word of Life which Fires Us,  
Speaks to Our Hearts and Sets Our Souls Ablaze,  
Teaches and Trains, Rebukes Us and Inspires Us:  
Lord of the Word, Receive Your People's Praise.

3. Lord, For Our World when We Disown and Doubt Him,  
Loveless in Strength, and Comfortless in Pain,  
Hungry and Helpless, Lost Indeed Without Him:  
Lord of the World, We Pray that Christ May Reign.

4. Lord, For Ourselves; In Living Power Remake Us  
Self on the Cross and Christ Upon the Throne,  
Past put Behind Us, For the Future Take Us:  
Lord of Our lives, To Live for Christ Alone.

(Timothy Dudley-Smith 1926)

#### **A prayer of dismissal**

May your day be blessed  
by moments of quietness,  
light in your darkness,  
strength in your weakness,  
grace in your meekness,  
joy in your gladness,  
peace in your stillness.  
May your day be blessed

#### **THE GRACE**

We say together...

**May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God  
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all  
forever more. Amen.**

Some prayers taken from [www.faithandworship.com](http://www.faithandworship.com)  
[The Prayer handbook. Intercessions by Ian Black.](#) CCLI:7749