

Kevin Barry has prepared this resource for all in worship – you are welcome

May your mind be transformed to the will of God!

Welcome, welcome, welcome. All are welcome to this service. God's Word does not go out and return empty handed. We trust that as you enter into this time of worship and praise, God will draw you further into a relationship with him and bless you through his LOVE.

Matthew 11: 27-30 ²⁷ All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

²⁸ 'Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.'

In this passage, from Matthew, there are two distinct promises: firstly, that through Jesus, we are exposed to the truth about God and are given the capacity to engage with him as children would with a father or as friends; secondly, Jesus makes it plain that the kind of relationship that he wants to foster, is one based on LOVE. The image is of a good father son relationship, where the father is always there to support and cherish the son [daughter].

As we open ourselves up to God in worship, both of these factors should be with us. We always come to worship with expectant hearts, expecting to encounter God, to learn more of his LOVE and to be touched by His Presence through the Spirit. But, that in this fresh encounter with God's Spirit, we do not need to fear. God knows where we are, what our concerns are and the problems that we face in life. Worship is a time to open up to God and ask him to support us through our difficulties, with the assurance that his Spirit is always with us.

We pray that through this service we may all hear the call of God's Word on your lives and have the grace to hear and respond to that call.

So, as we gather as a connected fellowship through his word, we invite Jesus into our midst and pray that though the Spirit he will minister into our hearts. To lead us into worship let us open with **Singing the Faith (StF) number 20:**

1. Be still,
for the presence of the Lord,
the Holy One, is here;
come bow before him now
with reverence and fear:
in him no sin is found –
we stand on holy ground.
Be still,
for the presence of the Lord,
the Holy One is here.

2. Be still,
for the glory of the Lord,
is shining all around;
he burns with holy fire,
with splendour he is crowned:
how awesome is the sight –
our radiant King of light!
Be still,
for the glory of the Lord,
is shining all around.

3. Be still,
for the power of the Lord,
is moving in this place;
he comes to cleanse and heal,
to minister his grace:
no work too hard for him –
in faith receive from him.
Be still,
for the power of the Lord,
is moving in this place.

Davin J Evans

[Be Still for the Presence of the Lord \[with lyrics for congregations\] - YouTube](#)



Prayer Adoration and Confession – Psalm 130 - New Revised Standard Version

¹ Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord.

² Lord, hear my voice!

Let your ears be attentive
to the voice of my supplications!

³ If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities,
Lord, who could stand?

⁴ But there is forgiveness with you,
so that you may be revered.

⁵ I wait for the Lord, my soul waits,
and in his word I hope;

⁶ my soul waits for the Lord
more than those who watch for the morning,
more than those who watch for the morning.

⁷ O Israel, hope in the Lord!

For with the Lord there is steadfast love,
and with him is great power to redeem.

⁸ It is he who will redeem Israel
from all its iniquities.

We turn to you our Lord and God, creator and sustainer of all life, receive our praise and worship, as a genuine offering. We acknowledge that all we have comes from you. We pray that your spirit will continue to guide us and lead us in your ways. We are aware that there are times when we digress from your ways and follow our own selfish ways. We pray that as we offer our repentance you will wipe the slate clean and set us free again.

Through the authority of the lamb, that sits upon the throne, Jesus Christ, **'You are forgiven'**, whenever you truly repent! Amen, amen, amen.

The Lord's Prayer – let us now join together, in our preferred form, those words our Lord taught us:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name;
your kingdom come; your will be done; on earth as it is in
heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now
and for ever. Amen

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, forever and
ever. Amen

Opening ourselves up to God is always an act of LOVE from both parties. However, we look to transformation in our lives as we grow closer to God in our lives. **Hymn: StF 76 (Anonymous)** - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vg2lk3Hwczc>

1. Give me joy in my heart, keep me praising,
give me joy in my heart, I pray;
give me joy in my heart, keep me praising,
keep me praising till the break of day:

*Sing hosanna! Sing hosanna!
Sing hosanna to the King of Kings!
Sing hosanna! Sing hosanna!
Sing hosanna to the King!*

3. Give me love in my heart, keep me serving,
give me love in my heart, I pray;
give me love in my heart, keep me serving,
keep me serving till the break of day:

Sing hosanna! Sing hosanna!

2. Give me peace in my heart, keep me loving,
give me peace in my heart, I pray;
give me peace in my heart, keep me loving,
keep me loving till the break of day:

Sing hosanna! Sing hosanna!

2 Samuel 7: 4-16 - New Revised Standard Version

⁴ But that same night the word of the Lord came to Nathan: ⁵ Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the Lord: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? ⁶ I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. ⁷ Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, 'Why have you not built me a house of cedar?' ⁸ Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the Lord of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; ⁹ and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. ¹⁰ And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, ¹¹ from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house. ¹² When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come forth from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³ He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever. ¹⁴ I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me. When he commits iniquity, I will punish him with a rod such as mortals use, with blows inflicted by human beings. ¹⁵ But I will not take my steadfast love from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you. ¹⁶ Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure for ever before me; your throne shall be established for ever. ¹⁷ In accordance with all these words and with all this vision, Nathan spoke to David.

Matthew 16: 13-20 - New Revised Standard Version

¹³ Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, 'Who do people say that the Son of Man is?' ¹⁴ And they said, 'Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.' ¹⁵ He said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?' ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, 'You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.' ¹⁷ And Jesus answered him, 'Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. ¹⁸ And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.' ²⁰ Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

Romans 12: 1-8 - New Revised Standard Version

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. ² Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

³ For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgement, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. ⁴ For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, ⁵ so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. ⁶ We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ⁷ ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; ⁸ the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

Reflection: [Please pray with me, that the words of this reflection and the meditations of our hearts, be pleasing in your sight, O Lord, our Rock and Redeemer.](#)

As we read through Matthew's account of Jesus ministry, it is clear that all the time he is looking to the future, as modern management speak would have it, he is looking to his succession planning. Jesus knew that this was a turning point in history. That though his life, death and resurrection, God was about to start a whole new thing, a new creation. Just as in Noah's time, the sins of mankind will be washed away and a fresh start will be made possible. But it would require others to take up the mantle and carry the church forward.

Our reading from Matthew, would appear to record a time, when Jesus was alone with the disciples. He takes the opportunity to prob their understanding of who he was. He opens up with asking, who the people say that he is; to which they reply that the word was, that he was one of the prophets, come back. This was backed up by many of Jesus' actions and sayings, mirroring those of the prophets, in particular Jeremiah, who had often preached against the way the Temple was functioning; and of course, Jesus was no stranger to pointing the finger at those in authority. In fact,

the previous verses in chapter 16, are taken up with Jesus having to face down the Pharisees and Sadducees, when they came to test him. Jesus then goes on to question the disciples, 'But who do you say that I am?' Simon Peter responds on their behalf and for the first time confesses that Jesus is 'the Messiah, the Son of God'. Jesus, in line with the whole concept of the new creation being inaugurated, declares that he [Jesus] will build his church on this foundation. Messiah means anointed one, that is a king, and thus following on from the end of Samuel reading, proclaimed Jesus to be in the Davidic line and called specifically by God to lead his people.

We need to go back to 2 Samuel to fully understand the significance of these statements. In some ways, God is having a go at David and Israel, for not having thought of providing him with a permanent house. It is on the basis of this, that he declares that he will give David a son, whose role it will be to construct the first Temple in Jerusalem, the permanent house of God, where he could dwell and be with his chosen people. It would provide a focus for Israel's religious life and be the place where they were able to come and offer worship, make sacrifices and in particular, where once a year the High Priest would enter the Holy of Holies seeking forgiveness for his own and the people's sins. The significance of the Temple could not be overlooked. For Jesus, the Temple should have functioned as a House of Prayer and been the place where compassion was dispensed. The temple should offer good news to the poor. These were models that had long since been abandoned and it had become a place of privilege and status for the elite.

Jesus' reference to the keys of the kingdom of heaven, again reference back to Samuel, where we see in the last verse, that the establishment of a home for God amongst the people, allowed for the formation of God's kingdom forever. For Jesus, the establishment of the church, the new temple, would bring about the same result. That is, that through the church, God would establish his kingdom here on earth as it is in heaven. It would be the place where God's presence would be found and his Spirit work to transform lives. That is, through the church, people are able to seek forgiveness of sins and a realignment of their wills with God.

Paul, when writing to the church in Rome, stresses that for the church to operate, truly as the new temple, it needs to be supported by the whole congregation. It will no longer fall all on Peter's shoulders, or that of the first disciples, but it would be a combined effort of the whole church. God has provided the gifts and skills necessary to build and sustain his church, all we need to do is recognise that the gifts we have come from God and should be offered back to him, as 'living sacrifices', for the unity and holiness of the whole church. In this way the church will prosper and we will see our minds transformed, so that we may discern God's will. That is, that our actions will be representative of Jesus in our communities, our love and compassion, will reach out just as his did. Our church must be good news to the poor.

Amen.

Prayers of intercession

Lord, we pray that we might never forget that this is your world and that we have been called to steward it and look to maintain it, to wonder at its diversity and complexity, to see, reflected in all that we see, your finger print, the handywork of your hands. We pray for those people, wherever they might be, facing wars, draught, famine, disease, fires in Europe, forced to live lives that are far less than they could be. We pray for the agencies of the world, working to bring good news to the poor and reflect your LOVE out into the world.

We pray for this country and the new Labour government. We pray that it will focus on making a real difference to people's lives, lifting the marginalised out of poverty, bring an end to child poverty and the waste of young lives through the lack of real opportunities for work. Let our country be a place where all receive good news, love and compassion.

Lord, we offer the churches of our circuit and beyond, as living sacrifices to you. Help us all to discern your will for each of us. Help us, to recognise the gifts that we have been given and to ensure we find the right course to take, in order to best serve you and see the church prosper. Let the focus of the church be to bring good news to the poor.

We bring before you those that we know who are in particular need of your LOVE and presence at this time. We pray for Rev Jo and all the members of the circuit helping to ensure we continue to function and offer God's LOVE where it is needed. We pray for each other as we read this service, in whatever circumstances you may find yourself, may the LOVE and Peace of God be with you. Now, take this opportunity to remember those particularly known to you.

Amen

*May the LORD bless us and keep us;
May the LORD make his face to shine upon us, and be gracious to us;
And may the LORD lift up his countenance upon us,
and give us peace.*

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

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