

## **Tavistock Methodist Circuit – At Home Service for Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2022**

*Prepared by Kelvin Shillabeer*

May God's grace and peace be with you wherever you find yourself today. Scattered though we are in these times, we join together as God's family to praise him.

*I will extol the Lord at all times; his praise will always be on my lips.*

*I will glory in the Lord; let the afflicted hear and rejoice.*

*Glorify the Lord with me: let us exalt his name together.*

**Psalm 34:1-3**

We lift our praise to God today, celebrating his eternal goodness, his infinite love and his transforming power at work in our lives.

**'Light of the World (Here I Am to Worship)'** by Tim Hughes, Singing the Faith 175

Light of the world, You stepped down into darkness, opened my eyes let me see  
Beauty that made this heart adore You, Hope of a life spent with You

*And here I am to worship, here I am to bow down, here I am to say that you're my  
God*

*You're altogether lovely, altogether worthy, altogether wonderful to me*

King of all days, oh so highly exalted, glorious in heaven above  
Humbly you came to the earth you created, all for love's sake became poor

*So here I am to worship, here I am to bow down, here I am to say that you're my God  
You're altogether lovely, altogether worthy, altogether wonderful to me*

And I'll never know how much it cost to see my sin upon that cross

I'll never know how much it cost to see my sin upon that cross

*Here I am to worship, here I am to bow down, here I am to say that you're my God  
You're altogether lovely, altogether worthy, altogether wonderful to me.*

Let's come before the Lord now in prayer, knowing that He is ready to hear and respond wherever and whenever we turn to Him.

Heavenly Father,

We are indeed here to worship You as we offer You our praise, our prayers and our hearts.

How lovely is Your holy name, how worthy are Your incredible deeds, and how wonderful is Your loving care that we can but worship You. We praise You for the beautiful creation You have made and for the love with which You have filled it.

Yet we approach with fear, as we are all too aware of our own failings and weaknesses. We often fail You and one another and we recognise our unworthiness before You. And so, we do seek Your forgiveness today for all that is wrong in our lives and in our world – and in Jesus, we find that forgiveness. Thank You, Lord!

We ask that as we offer You this time, You would meet with each of us by the Holy Spirit, revealing more of Your love for us and Your purpose in our lives.

Amen

***The Lord's Prayer***

As we approach God to read his word to us today, we invite him by his Holy Spirit to work within us and change us, with the words of this hymn and the prayer that follows.

**'May the mind of Christ my Saviour'** by Katie Barclay Wilkinson, Singing the Faith 504

*May the mind of Christ, my Saviour, live in me from day to day,  
By his love and power controlling all I do and 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-abasing: this is victory.*

*May we run the race before us, strong and brave to face the foe,  
Looking only unto Jesus as we onward go.*

Father God, we give thanks for your word to us.  
In living form through Jesus Christ, the Living Word, You showed us the way back to You.  
In written form, the Holy Bible, inspired by the Holy Spirit through Your servants through the years, You lead us in right paths.  
In this time of quiet reflection may this same Spirit show us something new of You today.  
In Christ's precious name we pray. Amen.

Although some readers will have various electronic ways to access this service, many will take delivery of it on paper from our wonderful sisters and brothers visiting them at home. Today's reflection comes from a passage of scripture given in much the same way!

The first-century church was made up of numerous Christian communities started and supported by the apostles around the Mediterranean Sea. Hand-delivered letters were the easiest way for the first apostles to communicate. Even during times of imprisonment, Paul wrote expansively to those church groups he had visited, giving instruction, correction and encouragement through his writings. One such group was in Philippi, in Macedonia. Their faithfulness gave Paul great joy and in his letter he continues to lead them in the best ways to serve Christ and one another.

**Read *Philippians 2:1-13*.**

Paul is celebrating what this effective church community is doing and encouraging them to continue their good work. This is a powerful model for us to follow, with the emphasis on love, serving one another and preserving unity within a community of believers. Jesus led the way in this respect, as we read in verses 6 to 7. Unlike the rest of us, Jesus could consider himself equal to God, yet he gave up this exalted position and became a humble servant.

What if we could behave like this – putting others first? How our churches, our communities, our country would be transformed! It was in Jesus's divine nature to be so loving, but it doesn't come so easily to us. Such a change in how we act must start with a change of heart.

These verses have a special meaning to me as I look back over my walk with Jesus so far. While I was a teenager our church appointed a new Youth Worker, who began a weekly discipleship group and made this passage a memory verse for us. The group even took the name 'D2:5' – D for discipleship, and 2:5, for Philippians 2:5 - "Your attitude should be the

same as Christ Jesus". I was inspired at that time to make my own commitment to Christ, taking the step from knowing Jesus in my mind to giving Jesus my heart.

Jesus gives us the ultimate example of obedience to God, and as disciples we are to follow him. We all have the opportunity to make this choice for ourselves. What Jesus has done for each one of us has made it possible not only for us to be saved but for us to 'work out' this salvation in practice to the glory of God. For God to be glorified we must be willing to be humbled, just as Jesus was, and express our love for Jesus by serving those around us.

The second part of this passage is set out in verses thought to have been an early Christian hymn. It begins with Jesus setting aside his glory to live and die as a man, but ends with him receiving the glory he deserves, as ultimately all will come to recognise him as King. As we reflect with the words of this well-known updating of this hymn, we ask him to help us show his love to the world as we look forward to the day that every tongue confesses him Lord of All.

**'At the Name of Jesus'** by Caroline Maria Noel, Singing the Faith 317

*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.*

*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:*

*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.*

*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.*

*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.*

Let us now respond to God's call in prayer.

King of Glory,  
We give you our thanks that you continue to transform lives with acts of service, healing and love. We offer you our own service in whatever form we can. Help us to see what we can do to show your love for others and to be humble when the meeting the needs of others isn't compatible with our own desires.

We lift to you all those we know who are experiencing difficult times and need to know that you are with them:  
Comfort those who are grieving, and help us to be compassionate.  
Heal those who are unwell in body, mind or spirit, and help us to bring your peace.  
Strengthen those who are exhausted, and help us to carry the load.  
Surround those who are lonely, and help us to befriend.  
Reach those who are lost, and help us to show them the way to you.

Give us each the strength to follow where Jesus has led, becoming obedient to you at every step, so that he might be glorified. We ask it in Jesus' holy name. Amen.

As we take this time of reflection into the coming days we are inspired by the words of this modern hymn, asking God to fill us with all we need to do his work.

**'Hear the Call of the Kingdom'** by Keith & Kristyn Getty and Stuart Townend, Singing the Faith 407

Hear the call of the Kingdom, lift your eyes to the King;  
Let his song rise within you as a fragrant offering  
Of how God, rich in mercy, came in Christ to redeem  
All who trust in his unfailing grace.

*King of Heaven, we will answer the call.  
We will follow, bringing hope to the world,  
Filled with passion, filled with power to proclaim  
Salvation in Jesus' name.*

Hear the call of the Kingdom to be children of light,  
With the mercy of Heaven, the humility of Christ;  
Walking justly before Him, loving all that is right,  
That the life of Christ may shine through us.

*King of Heaven, we will answer the call.  
We will follow, bringing hope to the world,  
Filled with passion, filled with power to proclaim  
Salvation in Jesus' name.*

Hear the call of the kingdom to reach out to the lost  
With the Father's compassion in the wonder of the cross,  
Bringing peace and forgiveness, and a hope yet to come:  
Let the nations put their trust in him.

*King of Heaven, we will answer the call.  
We will follow, bringing hope to the world,  
Filled with passion, filled with power to proclaim  
Salvation in Jesus' name.*

God bless you and bring you peace. Amen.