

Mickleover and Dean Street Methodist Churches Service Sheet for Sunday 15th November 2020

**During the current lockdown worship services cannot be held in church.
Worship this Sunday will be on Zoom at 10am, preacher Phil Royle.**

Welcome

SHARING THE LIFE OF GOD

May the Lord pour down upon us
the gentle rain of his blessings,
and open to us the heavenly treasures of his
glory.

May the Lord make us sharers in his heavenly life,
And heirs to the kingdom of heaven.

May the Holy Spirit find in us
A dwelling-place fit for Himself, and may His
glorious majesty

Be pleased to rest within our hearts.

(Benedictional of Archbishop Robert)

Hymn Stf 80 - listen to and/or sing along.

Note that the tune is in its original setting!

My God, I am Thine; what a comfort divine,
what a blessing to know that my Jesus is mine!
In the heavenly Lamb thrice happy I am,
And my heart it doth dance
at the sound of his name.

True pleasures abound in the rapturous sound;
And whoever has found it hath paradise found.
My Jesus to know as rejoicing I go
to my life everlasting, 'tis heaven below.

Yet onward I haste to the heavenly feast;
that, that is the fulness; but this is the taste;
and this I shall prove, till with joy I remove
to the heaven of heavens in Jesus's love.

(Charles Wesley, tune Harwich)

Reading: Matthew 25: 14-30

THOUGHTS ON THE READING

Do you ever read passages in the Bible and find them to be confusing? I know that I certainly do, and this is one of those occasions. It seems to go against what Jesus' teaching seems to be all about and appears to encourage us to be anti-Robin Hood and take from the poor to give to the rich. This passage has often been used to justify the oppression of the poor by the wealthy and gives license to unfair acquisition of land, money and property.

Coming from a background where money was rather tight, my grandparents were mill-workers as were both my Mum and Dad before the second world war. Inevitably, I was brought up within a strongly Methodist and socialist household. Taking this reading at face value, I must take odds with it, as it seems to be so unfair. I tend to associate with the servant/slave who was given the least. He had obviously read the small print where it says that investments can go down as well as up and that you may not get back all that you put in. The whole of this parable seems so unfair to my twenty-first century socialist eyes!

However, we are not meant to take this at face value. We must look deeper into the meanings hidden within.

First, Jesus was taking exception to the religious powers-that-be and saying that they had misused the good things which God had given to them and that unless these gifts were used properly, they would be given to others who would appreciate them.

Second, there is a message for us, living in our own time and place. The word "talent" has a different meaning nowadays from that of the translators of the early Bible where it meant an amount of money. I think it is appropriate that the word here is used in its modern sense, in that we, as a church, and also as individuals, have all been given talents, or abilities. We can choose how to use these and even whether to use them. Talents vary from person to person so that there is a balance of gifts which should be used to enhance God's kingdom. There is here a warning – in modern parlance it is a case of "use it or lose it". Unless we use those gifts/talents/abilities which God has invested in us then as a church we shall decline into oblivion and as individuals feel unfulfilled. By the simple task of using what we have and taking those gifts for use in the world around us, we can, in so many different ways, show the love of God for the whole of creation. To be seen to be doing so will bring the Kingdom into the lives of many more people.

As a lead into our prayers of intercession listen to/sing along with this version of St. Francis' prayer as sung in Africa.

Hymn – listen/sing along as you wish.

*Lord make us instruments of your peace;
where there is hatred let your love increase.
Lord make us instruments of your peace;
walls of pride and prejudice shall cease,
when we are his instruments of peace.*

Where there is hatred, we shall sow his love,
where there is injury, we will never judge.
Where there is striving, we will speak his peace;
to the people crying for release,
we will be his instruments of peace.

Where there is blindness, we will pray for sight;
where there is darkness we will shine his light;
where there is sadness, we will bear their grief.
To the millions crying for release,
we will be his instruments of peace.

*(Kirk & Debbie Dearman 1993
Expressions of Praise Music)*

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

We pray for the church, that we may build each other up in the faith and to use our talents for the benefit of others and to your glory.

We pray for our world and its leaders and ask, at this difficult time, for wisdom, compassion and tolerance amongst those who govern us.

We pray for our land in these times of uncertainty and ask for wisdom and understanding for those in our national and local governments. Especially, today, we pray for our friends in the USA during this time of transition.

We ask that our resources should be shared fairly amongst all the countries of the world.
We give thanks for the gifts which you give to all of us.

We give thanks for the skill and determination of the caring professions and those on the front line who help all of us in our daily living in difficult days. We pray that we should all learn to share what we have with others. We pray for scientists and volunteers who work tirelessly and selflessly to provide medications to help us to cope with the current pandemic.

We pray for the sick, the anxious and those living with the loss of loved ones. In these times of isolation, we ask that they are assured of your love and ours.

We pray for ourselves, that we should be able to accept those talents we have been given and to use them wisely.

AMEN

Hymn – listen/sing along as you wish.

Jesu, if still the same thou art,
If all thy promises are sure,
set up a kingdom in my heart,
and make me rich for I am poor:
to me be all thy treasures given,
the kingdom of an inward heaven.

Where is the blessedness bestowed
on all that hunger after Thee?
I hunger now, I thirst for God;
see the poor fainting sinner, see,
and satisfy with endless peace,
and fill me with thy righteousness.

Shine on thy work, disperse the gloom,
light in thy light I then shall see,
say to my soul, "Thy light is come,
glory divine is risen on thee,
thy warfare's past, thy mourning's o'er;
look up for thou shalt weep no more."

Lord, I believe the promise sure,
and trust thou wilt not long delay;
hungry and sorrowful, and poor,
upon thy word myself I stay;
into thy hands my all resign,
and wait till all thou art is mine.

(Charles Wesley Tune Carey's)

BLESSING

God who calls us to his glory in Christ, make us strong to do his will.
The blessing of God, Father, Son and Spirit be with us all, now and for ever.

AMEN

*To join the Zoom service by telephone dial 0203
481 5237 and use meeting details below*