

Mickleover and Dean Street Methodist Churches Service Sheet for Sunday 22nd November 2020

Worship this Sunday will be on Zoom at 10am, preacher Revd Gill Sharp

This short act of worship has been prepared for you to use if you are unable to join zoom. 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.

Christ the King

Psalm 95:1-3,6-7

- ¹ Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord;
let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.
² Let us come before him with thanksgiving
and extol him with music and song.
³ For the Lord is the great God,
the great King above all gods.
⁶ Come, let us bow down in worship,
let us kneel before the Lord our Maker;
⁷ for he is our God
and we are the people of his pasture,
the flock under his care.

Hymn StF 331 King of kings, majesty

Prayer of adoration

We worship you, God of all:
You hold the world in tender embrace,
Your compassion touches the centre of our being.

You are our Maker and our Rock.

We thank you that in Jesus Christ
You showed how much you value all people
You inspire our love and trust.

You are our King and Saviour.

We praise you, the Spirit of truth:
You give us strength to be vulnerable
Your presence transforms our lives.

You are our Counsellor and our Peace. Amen

Prayer of confession

Truly, we say to you that we have seen the
broken and have not been moved to compassion.

Forgive us, Lord

Truly, we say to you that we have heard people
mourning and have not given them our time.

Forgive us, Lord

Truly, we say to you that we have witnessed
oppression and have not raised our voices.

Forgive us, Lord

Truly, we say to you that we have seen the
stranger and not said a word.

Forgive us, Lord

God, hiding in all strangers, all around us,
we are truly sorry for what we have done,
and what we have not done.

And we ask you to deepen your welcome in us,
so that we might deepen our welcome to those
around us. **Amen.**

Adapted from www.rootsontheweb.com

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Readings: Ezekiel 34:11-17, 20-24

Matthew 25:31-46

Reflection

The Lord as shepherd is a familiar theme in the Old Testament. A large flock was an important sign of wealth as well as a source of food. A flock would often be a mixture of sheep and goats. Caring for the sheep and goats was important, yet the role of shepherd was often given to the youngest brother, eg David, or a woman, eg Rachel. After his marriage to Rachel, Jacob tended his father-in-law, Laban's, flock before building his own flock of every speckled or spotted sheep, every dark-coloured lamb and every spotted or speckled goat that was in Laban's flock as payment. Jacob separated the sheep and goats according to their looks – it was easy to tell them apart. I wonder how often we separate people into different groups according to their looks, according to what we can see, and then treat each group differently?

In Ezekiel God warns that he, the shepherd of his people, will separate his sheep on what he sees - the fat sheep and the lean sheep. But this is no arbitrary separation according to outward appearance. This is a separation according to the inward character that has caused the outward appearance. Those who have got fat have done so at the expense of the others, they have pushed and shoved the weaker ones out of the way, bullying and abusing them. God's new flock will be those lean sheep and over them, to tend to them, will be a good shepherd, David. This is a warning to all God's people in how we treat each other. In the New Testament Jesus himself is the good shepherd and, in this passage from Matthew 25, he tells of the King who separates the flock according to what he sees -

the sheep and the goats. But this is no arbitrary separation according to outward appearance. This too is a separation according to the inward character. The key is compassion which leads to acts of kindness. On several occasions in the gospels we read of how Jesus had compassion on the people - before he healed those who were ill, or fed those who were hungry, or gave sight to the blind. Jesus *had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.* (Matt 9:36)
I wonder whether we have compassion on those we see who are different, those who are harassed and helpless, those who do not have a good shepherd to guide them and tend them? And does our compassion lead to acts of kindness? For this is what Jesus our Good Shepherd is looking for. For this is what Christ the King will judge each one of us on - our faith in action. For Jesus said *"whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."*

Every life matters to Jesus. Let us share the good news that Christ is King in acts of kindness, whenever and wherever we can.

Hymn StF 693 Beauty for brokenness

Poem from Women against Violence Sunday resources from Chile

THERE ARE HANDS...

There are soft and warm hands.
There are hands worn away by work.
There are hands with thousands of little wrinkles
And little hands that want to play.

There are hands which sow and which harvest.
There are hands which teach how to walk
There are strong hands that protect me
And hands open and ready to play.

But there are other hands which only do harm.
That dirty the earth, the sky and the sea.

They are ugly and selfish hands,
They are hands which make the world cry.

Raise your hands, all those who want
A new way of living together.
Let those bad hands be isolated
And let only the good ones prosper.

The hand that heals and the tired hand,
The mischievous hand and the wrinkled hand.

The trembling hand and the hand that brings comfort.
The hand that kneads and the hand that prays.
The hand that seeks justice and truth.
Your hand, my hand...hand in hand for peace.
Mónica Tirabasso

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Let us pray that we may serve Christ the King in meeting the needs of others.

God with us, we pray for the hungry and thirsty in our world, for those in this country who are dependent on food from food banks, perhaps for the first time in their lives, and for those dependent on aid relief from international charities. Show us what we should do.

Christ our King, **help us build your kingdom**

God with us, we pray for those without homes or protection from the elements, for refugees, those living on the streets and young people thrown out of their homes.

Show us what we should do.

Christ our King, **help us build your kingdom**

God with us, we pray for those who are ill, for those with coronavirus and those with chronic or life-threatening conditions, for all who are suffering mental anxiety during this lockdown.

Show us what we should do.

Christ our King, **help us build your kingdom**

God with us, we pray for those who are imprisoned, those who have committed crimes and prisoners of conscience and for those imprisoned by their own guilt and fear.

Show us what we should do.

Christ our King, **help us build your kingdom**

Lord, remove the veil from our eyes so we may see you walking amongst the hungry, the vulnerable, the displaced, the sick, the destitute, the victims of discrimination and of violence, the imprisoned, that we might serve you with our lives.

Christ our King, **help us build your kingdom**

AMEN

The Lord's Prayer

Hymn StF 317 At the name of Jesus

Sending

Go to serve Christ your King,
showing compassion and kindness
in all you do this, and every, day. **AMEN**

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