

Mickleover and Dean Street Methodist Churches Service Sheet

Sunday 20th June 2021

Worship in Mickleover MC is at 10am and on Zoom, with preacher Revd Gill Sharp

Worship in Dean St MC is at 10.30am, with preacher Mr Terry Root

We come to you, God, just as we are today.
Some may be at ease.
Some may be in the midst of life's storms.
Some may be unsure about decisions they have to make.
God of our ups and downs,
we come with concerns in our hearts and questions in our minds, with troubles in our lives and fears for our world.
We come trusting that you share our concerns and hear our questions,
embrace our troubles and know our fears.
We come trusting that you never give up on us, that you never abandon us, never dismiss us.
For you are a God of love, of peace, of power – you are our God. **Amen.**

Hymn StF 471 Lord, I come to you

Prayers of Adoration and Confession

Eternal God,
we praise and adore you for all that you are:
for being bigger than even our biggest questions;
for caring more than we can fully comprehend.
We praise and adore you
for your strength and your silence;
for your power and your peace.
We praise and adore you
for being in control and yet not controlling;
for being in the storms and beyond them.
We praise and adore you,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
we praise you for ever.

God of our questions and our struggles,
when we too quickly mistake silence for indifference: **forgive and help us.**
When the voice of our own needs silences the voices of others: **forgive and help us.**
When we abandon others in their storm and watch safely from the shore: **forgive and help us.**
When we lose faith because things get tough: **forgive and help us.**
Jesus, who knows us better than we know ourselves, hears our pray, and forgives us and will help us. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

Readings: Job 38:1-11

Mark 4:35-41

Reflection

If you were about to embark on a journey by boat across the sea and knew a storm was coming, would you go?

Probably not if the journey was not essential or if there was the possibility of delaying the journey until the storm had passed. Many refugees who have made the hazardous journey in small boats across the Mediterranean Sea in recent years may not have had those choices. To them that journey was essential for them to have the opportunity to start a new life, a journey that could not be delayed because it was then or maybe not at all.

Sometimes we embark on a journey by boat across a sea and are suddenly caught in a storm, with little warning and we may have no choice but to carry on as best we can, and perhaps seek the nearest place of safety.

Life can be like a journey in a boat, sometimes we can see a storm coming, we may have time to prepare but often we have no choice except to endure the storm. Postponing may not make the storm any easier to handle when we have to face it. Sometimes our life's journey will be like being in calm waters when suddenly a storm arises we had not foreseen, we can only do our best to cope in the circumstances we find ourselves in.

Job's storm was sudden and unexpected, he was a good man, living a godly life, but disaster came, his family died, he lost all his possessions and his health. Job could not understand why this had happened, he complained that God seemed to have gone from his life, that God did not hear him, that there was just silence but he wanted God to hear him and he longed to hear from God again. The words in this passage from Job 38 are the start of God's response to all that Job's friends and Job himself have said. God asks questions which take the focus off Job and his situation and place the focus on God and his power and control over all creation and bring Job peace. For God did hear him and spoke again.

The disciples got into the boat with Jesus to cross to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, a trip they had made before, a sea several of them had sailed on many times when they worked as fishermen. Those fishermen would have known the signs of a coming storm but on this occasion presumably saw none. As the sailed a furious squall came up and nearly swamped them, and they feared they would all drown, so high were the waves.

And Jesus slept in the boat through it all.

When you are in the midst of a storm in your life, do you feel as though Jesus is sleeping? He isn't doing anything to help, he seems unconcerned, indifferent almost? Not there for you! Yet Jesus is there, just as he was in the boat with the disciples. His presence makes all the difference. The disciples physically woke Jesus, shaking him and crying out to him 'don't you care if we drown?' We may feel we want to do that too, to shake God, to wake him up, and cry 'don't you care?', so he will do as Jesus did and calm the storm with his words 'Be still'.

We will have difficult questions to ask of God when the storms come in our lives. Like Job we may shout and protest, be in denial. Like the disciples we may cry 'Don't you care?' If our faith is true, we will want assurance that God cares for us in our troubles, that God has heard us. Knowing we have been heard can make all the difference. It can give us strength for the challenges. It can help us know the really important things in life. It can bring us to a new and deeper life.

Maybe you need to hear those words of Jesus 'be still' right now, and to know by faith the peace and calm that Jesus had in the midst of the storm. This is Jesus' promise to us who believe, that he is with us always and will never leave us.

Take time to reflect and then pray:

God of power and peace,

when the storm is raging: **You are there.**

When our boats are sinking: **You are there.**

When faith slips through our fingers: **You are there.**

When our hearts sink and our courage fails:

You are there.

In the roar of the waves, in the sound of the wind, and in the silence: **You are there.**

Hymn StF 156 From the breaking of the dawn

Prayers of intercession

Jesus, your words calmed the storm.

Your words calmed the hearts of your friends.

Be still. Be still and believe. Be still and know.

Jesus, calm the storms in the hearts of your people:

In the hearts of those who do not feel safe in the place they should call home,

In the hearts of those who live in war-torn nations, fearing for their families,

In the hearts of those whose loved ones are far away, fighting in the midst of conflict.

Jesus, calm the storms in the hearts of your people:

In the hearts of those whose lives have been torn apart by grief,

In the hearts of those who live with regret,

In the hearts of those who feel helpless in the face of impossible circumstances,

In the hearts of those who worry about someone they love.

Jesus, calm the storms in our hearts:

Help us to calm the storms in the hearts of your people,

Compel us to speak peace, embody peace, make peace, in all we say, in all we do, in all we are.

In your gracious and powerful name, we pray.

Amen.

For those present in Mickleover Methodist Church this service will include Holy Communion.

For those at home or on Zoom you are invited to join in spiritual communion. Spiritual Communion can be a means of grace. In prayer, we are in fellowship and communion with Christians in every time and place. Spend a few moments reflecting on Jesus' life, death and resurrection.

Silence

Prayer: Jesus, may we each know your presence with us in this moment. Though we are apart may we all grow together in love and in richer, fuller Communion. Make us one with you and with all who love you in every time and place. Help us to feel and to know that we are united as members of your body. Amen.

Hymn StF 67 This, this is the God we adore

The Blessing

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