



**Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2020**

Dear friends,

If you have the Internet, you will find a video to accompany this sheet on YouTube from Sunday morning – search for Isle of Man Methodist Church and you will find it on our YouTube channel.

Don't forget also that Judith Ley is broadcasting "At Your Service" on Manx Radio FM at 09:30 every Sunday which includes prayers, readings, hymns, and teaching.

Our prayers are with you all,

Isle of Man Methodist Staff Team

### Welcome

### Prayer of Approach

We come with reverence to you, O God;  
we come in humility into your presence.  
For you are glorious and exalted,  
holy and righteous and good,  
and we are weak and sinful,  
unworthy to stand before you.  
Yet in your grace and mercy,  
you have bridged the gap between earth and heaven,  
stretching your hand out to us  
in Jesus Christ your Son.  
And so we come, humbly and reverently,

but also secure in your love,  
and we offer you praise and honour,  
in the saving name of Jesus. **Amen.**

*(Neil Dixon)*

### Hymn (StF 82): O Lord my God

*Sing/ Read /pray / the words below*

1 O Lord, my God, when I in awesome wonder  
consider all the works thy hand hath made,  
I see the stars, I hear the mighty thunder,  
thy power throughout the universe displayed:

*Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to thee:*

*how great thou art, how great thou art!*

*Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to thee:*

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- 2 When through the woods and forest glades I  
wander  
and hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees;  
when I look down from lofty mountain grandeur,  
and hear the brook, and feel the gentle breeze:
- 3 And when I think that God, his Son not sparing,  
sent him to die, I scarce can take it in  
that on the cross, my burden gladly bearing,  
he bled and died to take away my sin:
- 4 When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation  
and take me home -- what joy shall fill my heart;  
then shall I bow in humble adoration,  
and there proclaim: my God, how great thou art:

*Stuart K. Hine (1899-1989)*

### Prayer of Adoration and Thanksgiving

Eternal God,  
you spoke the universe into being and your word  
succeeds in the purposes for which you send it.  
It is not far from us, but very near,  
implanted deep within us.

We thank you, eternal God.  
Eternal Son,  
Word of the Father,  
you took our human flesh  
and spoke to us the word of life.  
Your Cross and resurrection  
proclaim undying love for the world  
and in you we are called to share  
in the heritage of the saints in light.  
We thank you, eternal Son.

Eternal Spirit,  
in whom is life and peace,  
your voice invites us to bear fruit in every good work  
and to grow in knowledge and grace.  
You are our guide and inspiration,  
our advocate and strength.  
We thank you, eternal Spirit.

Glory to the Father  
and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning,  
is now and shall be for ever. **Amen.**

*(Neil Dixon)*

### Readings: Isaiah 55:10-13 & Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

*Find a Bible and read the above passages.*

### A time of reflection

Our readings for this Sunday are linked with the picture language of sowing seeds. The imagery of sowing, growing, reaping and winnowing, runs through the pages of the Bible – which is unsurprising given that Israel, like other ancient societies, lived off its land. Isaiah is talking about agricultural certainties: when it rains, the seed will grow - it is a matter of simple cause and effect. But he is really saying that the word of God is just like that. When God speaks, things happen. Isaiah's message was spoken in the context of salvation, of God's promise to bring his

people back from captivity in exile. So, his point is – if God’s word is always powerful, always effective, then we can trust his promises.

Isaiah’s message is similar to the one made by Jesus in the parable of the sower in our reading from Matthew’s gospel. Here Jesus also uses the agricultural imagery of sowing seeds to make a comparison with hearing God’s word. In his parable Jesus compares the word of God to an **extravagant** sower. When it comes to sowing today, a prudent farmer is careful with the seed, making sure its only sown where there’s enough good soil to give it chance of survival. But peasant farmers in Jesus’ day knew that appearances can be deceptive. Where the soil looks sparse there may be in fact deep cracks between the stones where the seed can put down roots. Where it looks deep, it may in reality be only a thin covering over the underlying rock. Seeds would therefore be needed to be scattered far and wide. The sower knew much would not survive – but he would have to trust that enough would survive and grow to provide a harvest.

So, perhaps one way of understanding Jesus’ parable is to see that God’s word and God’s love is for all – good and bad and everyone in between. It speaks of the **extravagance** of our Creator - the generosity and grace of God that encompasses all who have ears to hear and hearts that respond to his word.

*Take time to read the gospel passage again.  
Let Jesus, the Word of God speak to you at this time.  
Let the seed of God’s Spirit take root in your heart.*

### **Hymn (StF 167): Colours of day**

*Sing/ Read /pray / the words below*

- 1 Colours of day dawn into the mind,  
the sun has come up, the night is behind.  
Go down in the city, into the street,  
and let's give the message to the people we meet.

*So light up the fire and let the flame burn,  
open the door, let Jesus return.  
Take seeds of his Spirit, let the fruit grow,  
tell the people of Jesus, let his love show.*

- 2 Go through the park, on into the town;  
the sun still shines on; it never goes down.  
The light of the world is risen again;  
the people of darkness are needing a friend.

- 3 Open your eyes, look into the sky,  
the darkness has come, the sun came to die.  
The evening draws on, the sun disappears,  
but Jesus is living, his Spirit is near.

*Sue McClellan (b. 1951),  
John Paculabo (b. 1946)  
and Keith Ryecroft (b. 1949)*

### **Prayers of Intercession**

*Let’s pray*

Generous God,  
in your overflowing care,  
you yearn for each human being  
to become whole and holy, mature and fulfilled,  
knowing themselves to be utterly and uniquely loved.

And so we pray:

- for all those who do not feel themselves to be worth anything and for those who reach out to them in their desolation,
- for those who feel isolated and for those who reach out to them in their loneliness,
- for those who feel that they have nothing to contribute and for those who reach out to them in their need,
- for all those who despair of life and for those who would love them,
- for all those who cannot accept comfort and for those who would encourage them,

- for all those who believe themselves to be beyond your saving love, and for those who would tell them the good news.

*On this day we especially pray for...*

Generous God, teach us to become bearers of your peace to those in pain, this day and forever. **Amen**

*(Michael J. Townsend)*

### **The Lord’s Prayer**

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,  
For ever and ever. **Amen.**

### **A prayer of blessing**

Go into the abundant life of God the Creator,  
the faithful compassion of God the Son,  
and the overflowing grace of God the Spirit,  
and know yourselves held in the generosity of God,  
this day and always. **Amen**

*(Michael J. Townsend)*

