



Sunday 18th October 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.

Our prayers are with you all,

Isle of Man Methodist Staff Team

Opening Prayer

Heart-stirring God,
You know each of us by name
and day by day we discover your favour afresh.
Your love is new every morning.
Your Presence remains with us,
whether we are called to travel or need to stay put.
You are our rest-giver and the source of our peace.

We marvel that you choose to be gracious to us.
We are touched and humbled by the mercy You extend.

We ask You to stir our hearts and teach us Your ways
so that we who belong to You may know more of You.
Show us Your glory.

Open our eyes to it, stretching in beauty over the face
of the earth,

shining in the face of Christ Jesus and smiling in the
faces of every life lighted by Your Spirit,
so that we and all Your people may give You glory and
worship You in Spirit and in Truth.

Amen (prayer inspired by Exodus 33 vv. 12-23)

Hymn: May the mind of Christ my Saviour

Sing/ Read /pray / the words below

- 1 May the mind of Christ my Saviour
live in me from day to day,
by his love and power controlling
all I do or say.
- 2 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.
- 3 May the peace of God my Father
rule my life in everything,
that I may be calm to comfort
sick and sorrowing.
- 4 May the love of Jesus fill me,
as the waters fill the sea;
him exalting, self forgetting --
this is victory.
- 5 May I run the race before me,
strong and brave to face the foe,
looking only unto Jesus
as I onward go.

Katie Barclay Wilkinson (1859-1928)

Reproduced from Singing the Faith Electronic Words Edition, number 504

Let us pray together

Giving and forgiving God, You are rich in mercy and
generous to all.

Help us to see clearly the priorities, prejudices and
anxieties in our lives.

Help us to face honestly the injustice, greed and
exploitation of the society in which we live.

Forgive us when our concerns have been limited and
we have behaved as if our lives and resources were
ours to use as we wished.

Forgive us when we have failed to let Your big-
heartedness open our hearts and hands.

Merciful God, give us the grace and courage to open
our hearts and hands.

Shape our lives and use us for we belong to You.

Amen

Today's Readings:

1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

Matthew 22:15-22

A time of reflection

Have you done your tax return yet?

I remember very nearly getting caught out shortly
after moving to the Isle of Man as we had been used
to submitted our returns for January each year -
suddenly the October deadline was upon us and I
frantically managed to fill out the necessary forms
and get them through the drop-box in Douglas just
before the closing point!

How much easier it would be for us, if Jesus had
answered the question 'no, you shouldn't pay taxes!'
But really, at it's heart, that's not what this reading is
about at all. Neither is it a justification for dividing
reality neatly in two: God's sphere (which we usually
take to be "private") and the public sphere (which we
assume is, well, public). The private sphere being
where we live out our "spiritual life"—personal
devotion to God, believing the right things, trying to
live by "religious values." The public sphere being the
realm of politics and economics, of 'real life'...

When Jesus says "give to God the things that are
God's," we know that he can't possibly be endorsing
such a distinction—for everything is God's! The whole
conversation with the Pharisees is another one of

Jesus' dead-serious jokes. We have to see the subversive smile on his face, hear the irony (and impatience) in his voice. Jesus is talking about coins and taxes but he's really talking about power and ultimate loyalty, about pledging allegiance not to Caesar's economy but to God's alone. He's offering a tutorial on the economics of the Kingdom of God.

And here lies the challenge: Paying our taxes is simple. However distasteful, you hold your nose and write a check, or you can even Pay As You Earn, we barely even notice that it's happened. Rendering relative honour to that Caesar is the easy part.

But absolute allegiance to an ultimate God, rendering our entire selves to Him without preconditions or limits, without hedging our bets, without being afraid to upset the status quo, demands a higher order of magnitude.

The coin might have the emperor's image on it, but God's people bear His image. And like an invisible tattoo, we wear the mark of baptism that identifies us as Christ's own, as citizens of the Kingdom of God.

All we have is God's. All we are is God's.

We offer all back to God in grateful thanksgiving and fervent praise.

Hymn: Lord of Creation, to You be all praise

- 1 Lord of creation, to you be all praise!
Most mighty your working, most wondrous your ways!
Your glory and might are beyond us to tell,
and yet in the heart of the humble you dwell.
- 2 Lord of all power, I give you my will,
in joyful obedience your tasks to fulfil.
Your bondage is freedom; your service is song;
and, held in your keeping, my weakness is strong.
- 3 Lord of all wisdom, I give you my mind,
rich truth that surpasses my knowledge to find;
what eye has not seen and what ear has not heard
is taught by your Spirit and shines from your word.

4 Lord of all bounty, I give you my heart;
I praise and adore you for all you impart,
your love to inspire me, your counsel to guide,
your presence to shield me, whatever betide.

5 Lord of all being, I give you my all;
if I should disown you, I stumble and fall;
but, led in your service your word to obey,
I'll walk in your freedom to the end of the way.

Jack Copley Winslow (1882-1974)

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Words: (c) Mrs J. Tyrrell

Prayers of Intercession

Holy and gracious God, we pray for this world which you made and which you love.

We pray for Your church, that we may always align our priorities with the work of building Your Kingdom. That we may grow in holiness and outreach.
Spirit of God,
Guide us and strengthen us.

We pray for all who hunger for goodness and righteousness, for all who serve you by serving others.

We pray for world leaders and all who influence our future.
Spirit of God,
Guide us and strengthen us.

We pray for all who have lost their way and are caught up in darkness.
we remember the depressed, the despairing, and all who have lost vision or hope.
we pray for all in sickness, especially for those affected directly by the Covid pandemic, and those affected indirectly as other health services are put on hold.
Spirit of God,
guide us and strengthen us.

We pray for ourselves, that we may set a good example for others by the way we serve you.
May our homes be places of grace and goodness, of hospitality and holiness.

we pray for good relationships and honest dealings with others.

we pray that in all we do, your love may shine through.

Spirit of God,
guide us and strengthen us.

This we ask in the name of Christ.

Amen.

Adapted from David Adam "Radiance of His Glory", 2009 SPCK Ltd

The Lord's Prayer

A prayer of blessing

The peace of the All-powerful One be with you.
The peace of the Saviour be with you.
The peace of the Strengthener be with you.
The peace of the Lord be always with you.

The Lord shield you and protect you,
the Lord look upon you and be gracious to you,
the Lord fill you with joy and peace.
Amen.

Adapted from David Adam "Radiance of His Glory", 2009 SPCK Ltd



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