



**Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2021 – Easter 6**

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.

## Welcome

## Call to Worship

Jesus said: 'No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends.'

So, let us join together as friends, Jesus' friends, to worship and serve the one who, because of his great love, gave his all for us.

## Hymn (StF 103): God is Love: let heaven adore him

*Sing/ Read /pray / the words below*

- 1 God is Love: let heaven adore him;  
God is Love: let earth rejoice;  
let creation sing before him,  
and exalt him with one voice.  
He who laid the earth's foundation,  
he who spread the heavens above  
he who breathes through all creation,  
he is Love, eternal Love.

- 2 God is Love: and he, enfolding  
all the world in one embrace,  
with unfailing grasp is holding  
every child of every race.  
And when human hearts are breaking  
under sorrow's iron rod,  
then they find that selfsame aching  
deep within the heart of God.

- 3 God is Love: and though with blindness  
sin afflicts each human soul,  
God's eternal loving-kindness  
holds and guides and keeps them whole.  
Sin and death and hell shall never  
o'er us final triumph gain;  
God is Love, so Love for ever  
o'er the universe must reign.

*Timothy Rees (1874-1939) (alt.)*

## Prayer of Adoration

Loving God,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit, together and as one,  
you draw us into a relationship with you,  
that we may draw others.  
You command us to love as you have loved,  
that we might inspire others.  
You fill our hearts with the passion of your heart,  
that we might serve others.  
You are the truest of friends,  
the most faithful friend,  
the most enduring –  
and we praise you for all you are and more.

**Amen.**

## Readings: John 15:9-17 & 1 John 4:7-21

## A time of reflection

One day a little boy in school was drawing a picture.  
His teacher came over to see his artwork and she

asked him, "What are you drawing?" The young lad answered right away, "I'm drawing a picture of God."

"A picture of God?" she said. "You can't draw a picture of God. No one knows what God looks like." To which the little boy replied, "Well, they will do when I've finished!"

Well, it's true that no one knows what God looks like. None of us would be able to accurately represent who God truly is from a drawing, work of art or words of description either. Some would say that the word 'God' is harder to define than any other word in the dictionary - and in a sense that is true, for you could probably find as many interpretations as there are people. Yet, in our reading from 1 John 4, we see another approach that is truly remarkable. According to John, one word says it all: God is love! For some, such a definition is far too loose - so vague that it ends up saying nothing. Yet, the fact is that, when it comes to God, no other word will do, for God is love! It's as simple and straightforward as that - the one description that says it all - and if we lose that one simple truth, then we lose everything.

When we read the Bible, the story of God's love unfolds. From the very first page of Genesis to the last page of Revelation we read of God's unconditional Love for all - how he longs to save and heal - and draw us into a loving relationship. This is central to the Christian faith. And in our Gospel reading from John 15 we see how God's unconditional love works in our lives. Jesus encourages the disciples to keep his commandments and, above all, to love one another as he loved them. Then, did you notice that John describes it in this way:

*'...if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.' (1 John 4:12)*

Profound words. It's as though John is saying that it is you and I that hold the final jigsaw piece to God's love in our own hands. And God doesn't force us into fitting that piece into the puzzle of life. But if we let go and put that jigsaw piece into its rightful place, then the picture of God's love is made complete in us. It is as if love is with us 'in embryo', 'in seed'. If we practice Christian love, the love of God within us becomes full-grown. God's love in our lives is brought to its full measure when it flows from God to us, and then through us and out to others.

And, if we are born anew then we have the seed of love within us already. So, if you like, we hold the final jigsaw piece to the puzzle of life. Let us not hold back that piece, let us not hold back our love; let us give it freely, and let us use it - to complete the picture of God's love in us.

*Rev Bryan Yardy*

### **Hymn (StF 707): Make me a channel of your peace**

*Sing/ Read /pray / the words below*

#### 1 Make me a channel of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let me bring your love;  
where there is injury, your pardon, Lord;  
and where there's doubt, true faith in you:

*O Master, grant that I may never seek  
so much to be consoled as to console;  
to be understood as to understand;  
to be loved, as to love with all my soul.*

#### 2 Make me a channel of your peace.

Where there's despair in life, let me bring hope;  
where there is darkness, only light;  
and where there's sadness, ever joy:

*Refrain*

#### 3 Make me a channel of your peace.

It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,  
in giving unto all that we receive,  
and in dying that we're born to eternal life.

*Sebastian Temple (1928-1997)  
from the Prayer of St Francis*

### **Prayers of Intercession**

*'This is my commandment, that you love one another.'*

*Let's pray...*

Loving God, teach us, your children,  
how to love your world:

how to be careful stewards of your creation  
how to be responsible for fellow human beings;  
how to show concern for justice and human rights.

Loving God, teach us how to love your world.

Loving God, teach us, your children,  
how to love humankind:

how to share with those who have not;  
how to show respect to each individual;  
how to pray and how to serve.

Loving God, teach us how to love humankind.

Loving God, teach us, your children in Christ,  
how to love one another:

how to be united in our trust in you;  
how to bear one another's burdens;  
how to help one another to grow in faith.

Loving God, teach us how to love one another.

Loving God, teach us, your children,  
how to love our neighbours:

how to listen and show acceptance;  
how to be with them in times of trouble;  
how to let you speak and act through us.

Loving God, teach us how to love our neighbours.

Loving God, teach us, your children,  
how to love ourselves:

how to accept your forgiveness;  
how to seek the good things you offer us;  
how to enjoy the love we receive.

Loving God, teach us how to love ourselves.

In the name of him who lay down his life for his  
friends, Jesus Christ, our Teacher, Saviour and Lord.

**Amen.**

### **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.**

### **Blessing (2 Cor 13:14)**

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
and the love of God,  
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit  
be with us all, now and evermore. **Amen.**

