



Sunday 3rd October 2021

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 & The Breakthrough Prayer

Eternal God, hallowed be your name.

Early in the morning, before we begin our work, we praise your glory. Renew our bodies as fresh as the morning flowers. Open our inner eyes, as the sun casts new light upon the darkness.

Deliver us from all captivity. Like the birds of the sky, give us wings of freedom to begin a new journey. As a mighty stream running continuously, restore justice and freedom day by day. We thank you for the gift of this morning, and a new day to work with you.

Masao Tanaka, alt.

As printed in *The United Methodist Book of Worship*, 1992, 569-570.

God of love, God for all,
your purposes are more beautiful
than we can possibly imagine.
Fill us with your Holy Spirit.
Help us let go of all that holds us back.
Open our lives and our churches
to new seasons of humility and faith,
of change and growth.
Shake us up
with the Good News of Jesus
and show us the way.
Amen.

Hymn: A safe stronghold our God is still

1. A safe stronghold our God is still,
a trusty shield and weapon;
he'll help us clear from all the ill
that hath us now o'ertaken.
The ancient prince of hell
hath risen with purpose fell;
strong mail of craft and power
he weareth in this hour;
on earth is not his fellow.

2. With force of arms we nothing can,
full soon were we down-ridden;
but for us fights the proper Man
whom God himself hath bidden.
Ask ye: 'Who is the same?'
Christ Jesus is his name,
the Lord Sabaoth's Son;
he, and no other one,
shall conquer in the battle.
3. And were this world all devils o'er,
and watching to devour us,
we lay it not to heart so sore;
not they can overpower us.
And let the prince of ill
look grim as e'er he will,
he harms us not a whit;
for why? His doom is writ;
a word shall quickly slay him.
4. God's word, for all their craft and force,
one moment will not linger,
but, spite of hell, shall have its course;
'tis written by his finger.
And though before our eyes
all that we dearly prize
they seize beyond recall,
yet is their profit small:
God's kingdom our remaineth.

Martin Luther (1483-1546)
Translated by Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881)
v.4 altered by Rupert Davies (1909-1994)
Reproduced from *Singing the Faith*, number 623

Prayers

O, Lord, when we are lost, what words are there?

A voice says, Cry out! And we wonder...what shall we cry?

Sometimes, our groanings are indeed too deep for words. Sometimes, it is so good that you know our prayers before we even ask them. Because sometimes, we don't even know where to begin.

The bills pile up. The job becomes too much. We do the best we can...and still it's not enough. The pressure valve inside us only seems to turn one way – up!

Lord, in these times, we look for...we long for...we beg for...your peace. When the simplest things seem beyond us, carry us. When the straw is about to break not the camel's back but us, enfold us. When the pain becomes all-consuming, help us to find that there is a balm in Gilead.

Lord, forgive us for taking your life abundant and making it life busy. Forgive us for taking Sabbath rest and turning it into just another day. And forgive us for relying more on our own strength and bank balances than the wellspring of your love.

Like Job, we often look for answers that don't seem to come. Remind us that you never abandon us, no matter how deep the valley nor how dark the shadow. Help us to look with faith beyond sight and know that when we are in pain you are in pain. Surround us with

your love and help us to live in love for you and love for one another.

Like those watchmen, we long for the morning. Be with us until morning comes, and then walk with us into the dawn of a new day. Enfold us in your arms and protect us until that Day comes when you shall be our Light forever.

Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Today's Readings:

Psalm 26
Job 1.1, 2.1-10

A time of reflection

Why, God?

Hymn: When, O God, our faith is tested

- 1 When, O Lord, our faith is tested
and our hope is undermined,
when our love of living shrivels
and we feel bereft and drained,
then we turn to you and cry
for your answer to our 'why?'

- 2 With emotions taut to breaking,
hearts with hurt and havoc frayed,
reason by remorse diminished,
souls distraught as if betrayed,
God of bleakness and abyss,
why have you forsaken us?
- 3 As we question and accuse you
out of depths of being tried,
could it be, God! that in weakness
you yourself are crucified?
Are you with us in our grief?
Help us in our unbelief!

Fred Kaan (1929-2009)
Reproduced from Singing the Faith, number 643

Blessing

May the God of Light drive away all darkness.
And may we walk in that Light until every valley is
raised up and every mountain made low and we can
once again walk in the garden with our Lord and our
God.
Amen

