



Dore Methodist Church

Weekly Update

28th August 2020.



Message from David

The President and the Vice-President of the Methodist Conference have taken as their theme for the year, *“The best of all is, God is with us”*. These were John Wesley's final words. The words are found in Singing the Faith, Hymn Number 610, and serve as a reminder of the ever-present reality that God is with us *“in our joy and through our pain”* (verse 4). The hymn is a good devotional aid as it affirms that *“God remains though faith is frail”*



(verse 1). We are living through times of great uncertainty. Schools have returned in Scotland and Northern Ireland and are expected to return next week in England and Wales. Is it safe to do so? What happens if...? We can understand why some teachers, parents and children are rather apprehensive and nervous. Churches are considering re-opening for worship but, as we were reminded last week, there are very strict criteria to be met before that becomes possible. We have discovered new ways of being church and supporting people during the pandemic. There are challenging times ahead as we ease out of lockdown in a safe way. No doubt some people will be very reluctant to attend worship unless they can be sure that it will be safe to do so. What is safe? How do we decide?

The Bible speaks to us of people of faith. In the Book of Genesis, we read of God's call to Abraham to get up and go: *“Leave your native land, your relatives, and your father's home, and go to a country that I am going to show you.”* (Genesis 12.1). The Book of Jonah tells of the prophet's call and his disobedience. He eventually obeyed the call to *“Go to Nineveh”*. The first followers of Jesus faced an uncertain future as they responded to his call: *“Go, then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples.....And I will be with you always, to the end of the age.”* (Matthew 28.19-20). The Bible has so many stories of God challenging people of faith to go out in his name and to share their faith. However, they are assured that they will never be alone. He will be with them. As God calls us to exercise our faith in these uncertain days we can have that same assurance: *“The best of all is, God is with us.”*

It is said that the great German theologian, Karl Barth, once summed up his faith in the Sunday School song: *“Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so.”* He also had the notion that the Gospel should be preached with the Bible in one hand and the newspaper in another. In this way we can inform our prayers and inspire our actions.

David.

Pause for thought and prayer August 27th

I can do all things through Him who strengthens me (Philippians 4:13)



In this verse from Paul's letter to the Philippians we can hear a contentment in Paul's voice which he seems to get from seeing life from God's point of view. His focus is on what he should *do*, not on what he should *have*, and he seems grateful for everything God has given him. God doesn't grant us superhuman ability to accomplish anything we want to, rather he invites us to draw upon His strength, working together for good. To what or whom are you drawn to when you feel empty inside?

Start each day this week by praying *"Christ be with me, Christ within me, Christ behind and before; Christ beside me, Christ to win me, Christ to comfort and restore."*
(Prayer of St Patrick)

Worship for Sunday 30th August.

Our worship material for this coming Sunday, produced by "Twelvebaskets", follows. We hope that folk find these services helpful and feel some connectivity with others when using it in their own homes, as opposed to us all being together in church.

Beryl Barnard.

As most people may know already, Beryl died on Friday 21st August. Her funeral service will be at Hutcliffe Wood Crematorium on Friday 4th September at 2-30 p.m. Due to the current situation there can only be a limited number of people attending a service at the crematorium, so, sadly, friends from our fellowship will be unable to attend. Please remember Bill and his family in your prayers, especially at the time of the service.

Shoebbox Appeal.

I have been asked if we as a church would be supporting Operation Christmas Child Shoe Box Appeal this year. I have received information about the appeal, but details about collecting boxes are not yet available. You can, however, fill a box online by going to Samaritans Purse Operation Christmas Child Pack a Box. Quite a lot of information will come up, but you need the middle box "*pack online*". The cost is £20, which includes the £5 transport costs. I realise that this is not helpful if you do not have access to a computer.

Daphne Willie.

Prayer Handbook 2020/2021

Each year The Methodist Church publishes a Prayer Handbook. The 2020/2021 edition, *The Earth is the Lord's*, includes prayers and a lectionary of Bible Readings and Psalms for every day of the year, starting on Sunday 30th August 2020. If anyone is interested, copies are available on the Methodist Publishing website (www.methodistpublishing.org.uk) at £4.50 each (£4.10 for 10 or more) plus postage. David Willie is willing to order copies if you contact him.

Please send items for next week's "Update" to the Baileys by Tuesday evening.

Phone 2351085 or email john.bailey23a@btinternet.com

Sunday 30th August 2020 - The Vine at Home - 22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Call to worship

Gracious God, we are your people, seeking to know you more.

Gracious God, come amongst us, by your Spirit, that we might be transformed by our encounter with you.

Gracious God, may we go from this place, recognising you in every place and every moment. **Amen.**¹

Hymn:157 STF – God has spoken – by his prophets (Tune Hyfrydol)

- 1 God has spoken -- by his prophets, spoken his unchanging word;
each from age to age proclaiming God, the one, the righteous Lord.
'Mid the world's despair and turmoil one firm anchor holding fast:
God eternal reigns forever, God the first, and God the last.
- 2 God has spoken -- by Christ Jesus, Christ, the everlasting Son,
brightness of the Father's glory, with the Father ever one;
spoken by the Word incarnate, God from God, ere time was born;
Light from Light, to earth descending, Christ, revealing God to all.
- 3 God is speaking -- by the Spirit, speaking to our hearts again,
in the age-long word expounding God's own message, now as then.
Through the rise and fall of nations one sure faith is standing fast;
God still speaks, the Word unchanging, God the first, and God the last.

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Prayers

As followers of the Jesus way we come to this time of worship. However we gather, be it in our homes, be it online, be it by ourselves or with others, we call upon Jesus to meet with us.

We will sing our praises, we will open our hearts and minds to the spirit of God, we will listen for God's still small voice to speak to us.

Today we offer our thanks for all that God has made and shared with us. Today we rejoice for the God of all creation knows us, cares for us and forgives us.

So in a moment of silence we say sorry. We call to mind all the times we have been less than we could or should have been.

[Pause]

Through God's grace we are loved.

Through God's grace we are forgiven. Through God's grace we are called to pick up our cross and follow Jesus. **Amen**²

¹ Additional prayers by Tim Baker

² Prayers by Wayne Grewcock

We say together the Lord's Prayer

Readings: Romans 12:9-21 - Marks of the True Christian

⁹ Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; ¹⁰ love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honour. ¹¹ Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord.^[a] ¹² Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. ¹³ Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.

¹⁴ Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. ¹⁵ Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. ¹⁶ Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly;^[b] do not claim to be wiser than you are. ¹⁷ Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. ¹⁸ If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. ¹⁹ Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God;^[c] for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." ²⁰ No, "if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads." ²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.³

Matthew 16:21-28 - Jesus Foretells His Death and Resurrection

21 From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. **22** And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, "God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you." **23** But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

The Cross and Self-Denial

24 Then Jesus told his disciples, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. **25** For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. **26** For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life?"

27 "For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay everyone for what has been done. **28** Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."⁴

Reflection

Emma Dobson shares some thoughts on this week's readings.

In our reading from the book of Matthew, chapter 16, we come across a phrase you might have heard before. Jesus says that anyone who wants to be his disciple must, "take up their cross and follow me". It's a very tricky phrase, and it's hard to know exactly what it means. The truth is, it can mean lots of different things. If we imagine the Easter story, we can find some connections. Some of our Gospel accounts say that, before Jesus was crucified, he was forced to carry his cross a long way to the hill. Now, we've all seen pictures drawn to represent the crucifixion. They all show that the cross was bigger than Jesus himself. Imagine having to carry something so big and heavy. He was already in pain from the horrible things the soldiers had done

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to him, and then he had to carry that heavy cross a long way. It sounds so, so hard, doesn't it? So, when Jesus says we must take up our cross and follow him, do you think that will always be an easy thing to do?

I don't believe Jesus is saying that every step of being a disciple will be hard and painful - there will be moments of joy and celebration, for sure - but he is saying that it won't always be easy. There will be challenges. There will be things we are called to do that may be heavy on our hearts or minds.

Like I said, this phrase can mean different things, and we can look at it from different angles, depending on where in the year this reading falls, what's going on in the world at the time we read it, and which other readings this passage is paired up with. The reading paired up with it this week is from Romans chapter 12. When I read this, knowing that the 'partner message' is to take up my cross and follow Jesus, I believe that the words from Romans are telling me one of the ways I can do this; one of the challenges I will be faced with as a disciple of Jesus. Parts of this section from Romans say:

- V 9: Your love must be real. Hate what is evil. Hold on to what is good.

- V 14: Wish good for those who do bad things to you. Wish them well and do not curse them.

- V17-18: If someone does wrong to you, do not pay them back by doing wrong to them. Try to do what everyone thinks is right. Do your best to live in peace with everyone.

- V20-21 But you should do this:

"If your enemy is hungry, feed him;

if your enemy is thirsty, give him a drink.

Do not let evil defeat you. Defeat evil by doing good.

That sounds really hard, doesn't it? Maybe, for lots of us, enemy is a pretty strong word. However, we've all come across people we find it really hard to like. People who have hurt us, perhaps, or hurt someone we love. People who make decisions that lead to others being treated unfairly. People who make careless choices and don't say sorry. People who make us feel small, stupid or unimportant. This passage from Romans tells us we should love them. Not just put up with them, or tolerate them, or ignore them - love them. That's not an easy thing to do. So, what does it mean? What does it mean to love those who hurt us? I don't think Jesus wants us to love them like we love our families and best friends. It's not like that. We don't have to make them our best friends, or completely let them off the hook for the things they've done.

What I believe we're called to do, is to remember the people who hurt us are only human, just like us. Instead of hurting them back, we should deal fairly with the bad things they do. Jesus doesn't want us to let them get away with the hurtful things they do, but sometimes he wants us to be prepared to offer them forgiveness, another chance.⁵

But maybe for you it is something completely different.

In a moment of quiet ask God to clear your doubts, your fears and your concerns.

⁵ Reflection written by Emma Dobson

Seek the Holy spirit, and pray for strength, for clarity and for guidance.

In Jesu's name commit your lives to follow the way of Jesus.

[Pause]

Holy spirit work in us and through us we pray. **Amen**⁶

Prayers of intercession

Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we come to you as the one who created the laws and offered grace in abundance.

Lord, we pray for our Christian brothers and sisters around the world,
We lift them to you as they seek to follow the commandments of your gospel and great commission,
May they be strengthened and emboldened for the mission you have called them to,
Cleanse and mould your church into the likeness of Christ.

[Pause]

Bring peace and safety to our world, in particular to the places of the world where laws have been leveraged for revenge and gain.

Open paths of reconciliation and heal the brokenness,
Repair the war torn cities and countries and make a way for those who have been displaced to find a place to call home again.

We pray for the 65 million plus refugees around the world who are on their journey.
Lord, whose Son became a refugee and had no place to call his own; look with mercy on those who today are fleeing from danger,
Bless those who work to bring them relief.

Lord, bring healing and reconciliation to marriages and peace to those who have experienced broken relationships.
Lord, repair trust and build bridges of communication so love may flow.

[Pause]

Lord, teach us to love our neighbour,
In a moment of silence, we think of those who we would consider a neighbour and place them into your hands

[Pause]

Lord, teach us to be quick to forgive and acknowledge our own mistakes.
Above all else, inspire us to live in the likeness of your Son Jesus Christ.
In your mercy, hear our prayer,
Amen.⁷

⁶ Additional thoughts by Wayne Grewcock

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⁷ Prayers of intercession written by Matthew Forsyth

Hymn: 504 STF – May the mind of Christ my Saviour

- 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. CCLI 554990

Blessing

Go from this place inspired, Go from this place renewed,
Go from this place with the Spirit of God alongside, within and all around you,
Go from this place, a child of the Living God. **Amen.**⁸

⁸ Blessing by Tim Baker