



Dore Methodist Church

Weekly Update

8th January 2021.



Message from Gail.



Dear Friends,

As we started this New Year there was a great feeling of relief that 2020 was past. But when the country went into lockdown again this week, and we were all urged once again to stay at home, we became aware of reality that just flipping our calendar did not mean the pandemic was over and all our troubles behind us.

Abandoning plans and being resigned to restrictions has been our experience for a few months now. However, through these exceptional times we have learnt that it is possible to continue to worship and serve God, even when we are not able to leave our homes. Access to online services; conversations and prayer by phone; giving to the food bank, and ministry through our weekly update and printed services are all ways that we have been able to continue to be Church. We were blessed to be given a window of opportunity to come together during Advent for small acts of worship in Church.

Now with the country under tighter restrictions, the Circuit strongly advises that churches do not hold face to face worship until the numbers of covid cases fall again. This is a particularly highly contagious strain and the leadership team agreed it is not appropriate to proceed with any planned worship in church. This decision is based on government advice to further limit our contact with other households as this will help bring the pandemic back under control while the vaccination programme is rolled out

The experience of disappointment is not one that we would ever seek, and some of you I know will be saddened that plans for worship in church have been postponed, but through our disappointments we have hope. The writer of Hebrews writes: "Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful (10:3)

This hope is lived out each time words of comfort and encouragement are expressed; it is found in phone and face time calls up and down the country; it is realised in a vital food parcel; embraced in a thoughtful card, and hope is evident every time we wear our masks.

This crisis has shown us how fragile we are. It has also shown us how to face this fragility with love and hope which offer us ways to be a blessing to others.

I know many of you are missing the interaction of being with family and friends and so while it is not possible to be together physically, we want to try something new and have a "Zoom" covenant service on Sunday 17th January at 11am (starting at 11am means I can spend a short time with Totle's on line worship at 10:30) This online platform gives us the means through video or phone link to interact with one another and worship together.

If you have not used zoom before and need some help, please contact me and I can talk you through it. If you don't have access to a computer you can join with the phone link.

Blessings

Gail

Gail Hunt is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Dore morning worship

Time: Jan 17, 2021 11:00 AM London

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81188645948?pwd=b0RwR0VldXlDQnd3THJ5TVNSbHluQT09>

Meeting ID: 811 8864 5948

Passcode: 474601

Dial by your location 0203 481 5237 (United Kingdom)

Pause for thought and prayer.



“I am the Lord your God who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not fear: I will help you.” (Isaiah 41:13)

We may not be feeling the happiness at this time which we would wish to choose, but we have been reminded through the Christmas story that *God is with us*, and Psalm 16 reminds us, “apart from Him we have nothing.”

Apart from the secure, faithful, protective, all knowing, eternal, loving presence of Jesus, nothing in this life can compare – not money, work, dreams nor even our precious relationships. At the start of this fragile New Year, we remember that it is in Christ alone we find our wholeness and purpose in life. Sometimes it will glow with the pleasure of happy, fulfilling, comforting circumstances; but sometimes it will take us through difficult and dark valleys, knowing only that - the Lord is with us. But he who takes hold of our hand says “Do not fear I will help you.”

Prayer: Loving God, in our fear, in our grief, in our disappointment, may we know that you are with us, and as we heed the call to remain in our homes, help us there to serve you faithfully, that others might know of your love and grace. **Amen.**

Worship for Sunday 10th January.

Our worship material for this coming Sunday has again been prepared by “Twelvebaskets”. The reflection included in the service has been written by Rev Carla Quenet. Carla is the Learning and Development Officer for the Yorkshire Plus region of the Methodist Church and lives in Millhouses. Over the last couple of years she has led a number of services for us at Dore.

Grace Food Bank.

Thanks to everyone who contributed to last week’s collection for the Food Bank. The next collection will be on **Monday 18th January**. If you would like me to collect from you please phone me on (0114) 473 1998 (or email me at peter.ann.smith@gmail.com) and then leave a bag outside your front door for collection by **9-00 a.m. on 18th January**. **Although food donations are important and very much appreciated please do not put yourselves at risk of catching Covid by shopping for the food bank. Stay safe.** Thanks. *Peter.*

Church Magazine.

The January/February edition of our magazine is now being prepared. We do welcome contributions from our members for this publication, especially good news stories, new activities or skills that you are developing during this strange period of our lives, books that you have read and can recommend to others, etc., etc. Please send your contributions to John Bailey as soon as possible.

Joan Thorpe.

As many will know already, Joan sadly died on Christmas Day. Details of funeral arrangements have not yet been finalised, but as usual at this time numbers will be strictly limited.

WEEKLY UPDATE – Please send contributions to *the Baileys by Tuesday evening.*
(Tel 2351085 or email john.bailey23a@btinternet.com)

Sunday 10th January 2021 - The Vine at Home. First Sunday in Ordinary Time.

Call to worship

As we settle into the rhythm of 2021, we gather in your presence. As a new week begins, we come to worship you. As a new service starts, we seek to encounter your grace. As we enter into this moment, we pray for transformation by your Spirit, O Lord. **Amen.**¹

¹ Call to Worship written by Tim Baker

Hymn: 152 STF This is the day

1 This is the day,
this is the day that the Lord has made,
that the Lord has made.
We will rejoice,
we will rejoice and be glad in it,
and be glad in it.
This is the day that the Lord has made;
we will rejoice and be glad in it.
This is the day,
this is the day that the Lord has made.

2 This is the day,
this is the day when he rose again,
when he rose again.
We will rejoice,
we will rejoice and be glad in it,
and be glad in it.
This is the day when he rose again;
we will rejoice and be glad in it.
This is the day,
this is the day when he rose again.

3 This is the day,
this is the day when the Spirit came,
when the Spirit came.
We will rejoice,
we will rejoice and be glad in it,
and be glad in it.
This is the day when the Spirit came;
we will rejoice and be glad in it.
This is the day,
this is the day when the Spirit came.

Anonymous
Reproduced from Singing the Faith Electronic
Words Edition, number 152

Opening Prayers

Lord, as we prepare for worship, let your presence come in Jesus name. We meet as a family, welcoming each other with open hearts and minds.

We ask that your Holy Spirit work within us and make yourself known to us today through our worship, prayers and the reading of your word.

Bless our worship today.

May we hear you speaking.

[Pause]

Help us to have you as the focus of all that we are. **Amen.**²

We say the Lord's Prayer

Readings: Genesis 1:1-5 - Six Days of Creation and the Sabbath

1 In the beginning when God created^[a] the heavens and the earth, ²the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God^[b] swept over the face of the waters. ³Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. ⁴And God saw that the light was

² Opening prayers written by Ruth Hall

good; and God separated the light from the darkness. ⁵ God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.³

Acts 19:1-17 Paul in Ephesus

19 While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul passed through the interior regions and came to Ephesus, where he found some disciples. ² He said to them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?” They replied, “No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.” ³ Then he said, “Into what then were you baptized?” They answered, “Into John’s baptism.” ⁴ Paul said, “John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus.” ⁵ On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶ When Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied— ⁷ altogether there were about twelve of them.

⁸ He entered the synagogue and for three months spoke out boldly, and argued persuasively about the kingdom of God. ⁹ When some stubbornly refused to believe and spoke evil of the Way before the congregation, he left them, taking the disciples with him, and argued daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus.^[a] ¹⁰ This continued for two years, so that all the residents of Asia, both Jews and Greeks, heard the word of the Lord.

The Sons of Sceva

¹¹ God did extraordinary miracles through Paul, ¹² so that when the handkerchiefs or aprons that had touched his skin were brought to the sick, their diseases left them, and the evil spirits came out of them. ¹³ Then some itinerant Jewish exorcists tried to use the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, “I adjure you by the Jesus whom Paul proclaims.” ¹⁴ Seven sons of a Jewish high priest named Sceva were doing this. ¹⁵ But the evil spirit said to them in reply, “Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?” ¹⁶ Then the man with the evil spirit leaped on them, mastered them all, and so overpowered them that they fled out of the house naked and wounded. ¹⁷ When this became known to all residents of Ephesus, both Jews and Greeks, everyone was awestruck; and the name of the Lord Jesus was praised.⁴

Mark 1:4-11 ⁴ John the baptizer appeared^[a] in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵ And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶ Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷ He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. ⁸ I have baptized you with^[b] water; but he will baptize you with^[c] the Holy Spirit.”

The Baptism of Jesus

³ Bible Text is from New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989 National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved

The Vine at Home is compiled and produced by **Twelvebaskets** copyright © **Twelvebaskets 2021**

^{4,5} Bible Text is from New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989 National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved

⁹In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. ¹¹And a voice came from heaven, “You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.”⁵

Reflections on the readings

Today’s reflection comes from Revd Carla Quenet.

[You may choose to create a moment when you come to one of Carla’s questions to reflect on that. Perhaps in quiet on your own, or with others by phone later.]

Have you ever noticed how some people’s voices simply seem to be able to command a situation instantly? It is not necessarily the person with the loudest, strongest, most booming voice that does this. Rather, it is often the softly and gently spoken individual whose voice demands greatest attention.

It seems counterintuitive to many but adding a raised voice to an already fractious situation seldom brings resolution.

Have you ever heard people of peace speak? What words did they use? How did their physical voice sound? How did you/others respond?

Today’s readings remind us of the power of the voice and speech (but not necessarily just that of humans):

In Genesis 1:1-4 we hear how God begins to speak creation into being, first separating light and dark. In verse 3 we read: “*Then God **said**, “Let there be light”, and there was light.*”

Notice the creative power of God displayed in the seemingly simple yet profound act of speech. We are then told that God goes on to name the light day, and the dark, night. Fundamental rhythms that we continue to experience as humans and could be defined as the basis of life.

Read Genesis 1:1-4 again and as you do, encourage yourself (and others) to reflect on the passage by asking ‘I wonder’ questions. For example, ‘I wonder if God’s voice was audible?’ or ‘I wonder why God spoke when no other living thing was present?’

In Psalm 29 we hear the voice of God but this time we find it within the context of a storm. The Psalmist raises their praise to God, opening the Psalm with:

Ascribe to the Lord, O heavenly beings, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.

Ascribe to the Lord the glory of his name; worship the Lord in holy splendour.

Or as The Message writes: Bravo, God, bravo! Gods and all angels shout, “Encore!” In awe before the glory, in awe before God’s visible power. Stand at attention! Dress your best to honour him!

Both versions clearly communicate the awesome nature of God and recognise what our response ought to be. Yet enveloped within this text there seems to be the feeling that the voice of God is less to be feared and more to be respected. The voice of God alone can do more than humans ever hope to do even if they used all the resources available to them. The Psalm doesn't end with a call for people to revere God, but instead we are offered the prayerful and encouraging words:

“May the Lord give strength to his people! May the Lord bless his people with peace.” (Psalm 29:11, NRSV).

We are reminded in the midst of the noise, chaos and drama of the storm that God can and does distil peace.

Have you ever experienced the peace of God within a stormy period of your life? How did it feel? How did you respond?

In Acts 19 we meet a group of disciples in Corinth. They have clearly misunderstood the message which John the Baptist proclaimed as they were living out their faith with an obscured understanding. Paul reminds them of the need to be baptised into Christ and to be filled with the Holy Spirit. When Paul lays hands upon those gathered they proceed to speak in tongues and prophesied; surely in this act they both praised and were encouraged to point people towards the triune God.

The passage continues, notice, and we are told that Paul goes and **speaks boldly** in the synagogue for three months, arguing persuasively about the Kingdom of God. Paul clearly perseveres with this congregation, before he finally leaves when people stubbornly refused to listen; but his act of proclamation, alongside these disciples continued until all of Asia had heard the good news.

Have you ever experienced a situation where people stubbornly refused to listen? What did you do? Why? What would motivate you to continue sharing the Good News?

Today's readings beautifully and profoundly remind us the wonder of a voice. We are reminded of the awesome nature of God, that he simply spoke creation into being. We are reminded of the power of God in the way his voice is heard in the midst of a mighty storm. We recognise, through the role of John the Baptist, the part we can play in proclaiming God but yet we need to be cautious that we share the message in such a way that those who hear fully comprehend.

Communication goes beyond words alone, we perhaps notice this in the very act of creation.

In what ways has God called you to communicate the Good News and point people to Jesus? How will you respond? ⁶

Prayers of intercession

Father God, we thank you for your gift of creation. We praise you for the beauty and goodness you have made.

⁶ Reflection written by Carla Quenet

We pray, that we may be filled with a spirit of concern for our environment and resources. Help us to pursue responsible stewardship, protecting and redeeming the habitats of the earth you have created. We pray for those countries in Latin America where extensive deforestation is causing decreasing biodiversity through habitat loss.

We hold in our hearts people involved in agriculture in the UK. Help us continue to provide the best standards of care for our farm animals, advocating for high welfare in our food supply chains even in an uncertain market.

Guide our governments to be key forces in addressing climate change and enabling large companies to be prioritising sustainable methods of production and distribution, leading by example.

Lead our scientists, innovating ways to help reduce our impact on your planet, give them wisdom and keep encouraging their work to restore the planet. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, **Amen.**⁷

Hymn: 351 STF In Christ alone

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1 In Christ alone my hope is found, he is my light, my strength, my song; this Cornerstone, this solid Ground, firm through the fiercest drought and storm. What heights of love, what depths of peace, when fears are stilled, when strivings cease! My Comforter, my All in All, here in the love of Christ I stand.</p> | <p>2 In Christ alone! -- who took on flesh, fullness of God in helpless babe! This gift of love and righteousness, scorned by the ones he came to save: till on that cross as Jesus died, the wrath of God was satisfied for every sin on him was laid; here in the death of Christ I live.</p> |
| <p>3 There in the ground his body lay, light of the world by darkness slain: then bursting forth in glorious Day up from the grave he rose again! And as he stands in victory, sin's curse has lost its grip on me, for I am his and he is mine -- bought with the precious blood of Christ.</p> | <p>4 No guilt in life, no fear in death, this is the power of Christ in me; from life's first cry to final breath, Jesus commands my destiny. No power of hell, no scheme of man, can ever pluck me from his hand; till he returns or calls me home, here in the power of Christ I'll stand!</p> |

Keith Getty (b. 1974) and Stuart Townend (b. 1963) Reproduced from Singing the Faith Electronic Words Edition, number 351. Words and Music: (c) 2001, Thankyou Music. Administered by worshiptogether.com Songs, excluding UK & Europe, administered by Kingswaysongs, a division of David C Cook <tym@kingsway.co.uk> Used by permission. CCLI 554990

Blessing

The God of all mysterious grace go with you. The Creator, who became human, and who lives as Spirit, go with you. From the dawning of each new day, until the setting of the sun, may God go with you. **Amen.**⁸

⁷ Prayers of intercession written by Ruth Hall ⁸ Blessing written by Tim Baker.