

Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2020

MP. Hymns 241 Holy Spirit we welcome you.  
MP 295 I serve a Risen Saviour  
MP 59 Blessed Assurance

### OT Reading Psalm 96

<sup>1</sup> Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth. <sup>2</sup> Sing to the LORD, praise his name; proclaim his salvation day after day. <sup>3</sup> Declare his glory among the nations, his marvellous deeds among all peoples. <sup>4</sup> For great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; he is to be feared above all gods. <sup>5</sup> For all the gods of the nations are idols, but the LORD made the heavens. <sup>6</sup> Splendour and majesty are before him; strength and glory are in his sanctuary. <sup>7</sup> Ascribe to the LORD, all you families of nations, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. <sup>8</sup> Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering and come into his courts.

<sup>9</sup> Worship the LORD in the splendour of his holiness; tremble before him, all the earth. <sup>10</sup> Say among the nations, "The LORD reigns." The world is firmly established, it cannot be moved; He will judge the peoples with equity.<sup>11</sup> Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad; let the sea resound, and all that is in it. <sup>12</sup> Let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them; let all the trees of the forest sing for joy. <sup>13</sup> Let all creation rejoice before the LORD, for he comes, he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples in his faithfulness.

### Call to worship

Loving Lord, we come today to worship and praise you. Be with us as we live as you would want us to do. We know that all our good gifts come from your hands. Give us the strength to give you the honour you deserve with all our inner being. Assist us to let the light shine in your image to all around us, to know that we are a living imitation of you. Forgive us when we do not see the needs of others, the hungry, homeless, people who have nobody to turn to at their lowest ebb worrying over the pandemic which is rearing its head once again. Heavenly Father your love never ends, but we sometimes forget your commandments to always love one another as you have loved us. We must remember that all that we have is given the power of your grace. Yet we sometimes we let self-preservation take hold. We ask forgiveness and let you to enter into our hearts the truth to see the needs around us. We thank you Father that you do not condemn us, even when we fail you, you turn us around and forgive our failings. Let us then thank and praise you that in your forgiveness and love we may do likewise. May your eternal love be shared throughout the world. Amen.

### NT Reading 1 Thessalonians Ch. 1 verses 1-10

Thanksgiving for the Thessalonians' Faith. <sup>1</sup> Paul, Silas and Timothy, to the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace and peace to you.<sup>2</sup> We always thank God for all of you and continually mention you in our prayers. <sup>3</sup> We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labour prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>4</sup> For we know, brothers and sisters loved by God, that he has chosen you, <sup>5</sup> because our gospel came to you not simply with words but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake. <sup>6</sup> You became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you welcomed the message in the midst of severe suffering with the joy given by the Holy Spirit. <sup>7</sup> And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. <sup>8</sup> The Lord's message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia—your faith in God has become known everywhere. Therefore, we do not need to say anything about it, <sup>9</sup> for they themselves report what kind of reception you gave us. They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, <sup>10</sup> and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.

### **Intercession**

Loving Lord, we heard the words in which Paul spoke of the difficulties for the people of Thessalonica. We thank you that we have the freedom to join together in worship without fear of reprisals. We pray for Christians around the world who do not have that freedom to worship you, we pray for their safety. We also pray for the day when they can worship without fear and be able to praise your Holy name. We pray the Holy Spirit will guide us in a deep and meaningful faith and enable us to be the light of the world at home in church and to all who we come in contact with. We must be a mirror of you in all we do. Loving Father equip us to go out into the everyday world give us a brave heart to be a witness to you and your love for all. We pray for peace where there is conflict, healing for the sick and the easing of the pandemic worries enfold them in your arms to bring comfort Lord. We pray for any who are grieving may they feel your presence carrying them as they travel the path of grief. And help us to walk beside them. We pray for all the children on holiday and John and Elizabeth and family keep them safe

### **Benediction**

Go now as those loved by God and prepare to be as a mirror of Christ in the world May the grace and peace of Jesus Christ be deep in you; And may the Holy Spirit fill you with joy. Let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord, Amen

### **Sermon**

Well did you know that our Reading today is one of the first books of the New Testament. It has been dated to have been written about 50-51 AD which is roughly 18 years after Jesus lived and died. It is also a very short book. It only has 79 verses. Which you can read very quickly. It is a letter to a church which is just beginning their walk in faith, and Paul writes his letter in a straightforward distinct and precise manner to the Thessalonians. Yet as easy as it was for them Paul covered many things such as proper conversion, honesty, tenderness, God's word, torment, devotion, ethical behaviour, working hard. And a few others besides. For new people coming to faith it is one of the easier books to read.

Can we be copies of God? When you go to museum do you wonder if all the displays are the real thing or are they copies? I was thinking along these lines when I was standing outside the museum in Edinburgh the other day. I was unable to go in as you had to book a slot. And as I was only waiting for my son who had had to go into his office I really didn't have the time to wait. I really wanted to see the big clock but there will be another time. I do remember the times when I have been in museums that the little cards displayed alongside the artefact give the information on whether it is a replica or the real thing. Understanding of course that for the safety and security it is better to have a replica and be able to keep and preserve the real thing. But that is not what we want when it comes to buying clothing or jewellery if it has a name then we expect it to be the real deal. I know the inspectors in the council are kept busy with fake items doing the rounds. Therefore, are we the real deal when it comes to our faith are we real or just pretending would we stand up for inspection? Just a thought. –

<sup>6</sup> You became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you welcomed the message in the midst of severe suffering with the joy given by the Holy Spirit. <sup>7</sup> And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. <sup>8</sup> The Lord's message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia—your faith in God has become known everywhere. Therefore, we do not need to say anything about it, <sup>9</sup> for they themselves report what kind of reception you gave us. They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, <sup>10</sup> and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead.

Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath. The church was recorded in Acts 17 1-9 to 15 and upon reading this portion that it was a hard start Paul and Silas had been teaching and had a following of Jews and many more Greeks, but soon after they had to go away in the night as the persecution was too severe. The city was a major seaport on a significant Roman road. This was a great opportunity to be able to bring many groups of people who had not yet heard and had many difficulties within the city, enticing them to do wrong and live a life that was not good. Just like the cities of today. Paul had only been with the new church for a little while but he wanted to make sure that they were to be stimulated and taught how to live their life of faith inside a city with all its ways of turning them away from leading the life God wanted them to live. At the very start of the letter Paul

informs them where his own faith comes from. The power of God which keeps him going. He gives thanks and praise to the church for their staying power whilst being put down by others. It is their faith which has upheld them in this persecution. It is God who has kept them in his grace through this and they have responded by working well together. When we have the love of God in our hearts then our lives take on a different way to the world's way. We work at our faith whenever the trial of life jump in to turn us upside down. But we know that God is working and walking alongside us and in this we can show to others that it is God who sustains us. When we are living the life we should and doing the wee and big things for others we are doing it with the love of Jesus in our hearts. It comes from the very start from God himself imprinting his Holy Spirit within us we do not do it on our own. It has passed down from the generations of long ago. When God chose them he chose us also. This comes with a way to live we must live as good imitations of God we do not want the men or women from the council trading inspectors to be able to identify us as cheap imitations we have to be the Real thing. We need to really live as Christians because if we don't then the people around us will just say well they don't live the life they preach. So how can God be in their hearts. Please let us be like the new church the young church of Thessalonica and be beside them to receive the praise and honour given to them by Paul. Let's thank God for his love for us let us rejoice and be glad in him and praise his name above all names and keep the idols of this world where they belong far away from us and keep our heart and minds pure for God. Let us love one another as he has loved us. He will sustain in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.