



Birstall & Rothley Methodist Churches



October 25th, 2020

This act of worship has been prepared for use both at home and in the church.

Call to worship:

For some of us the flame of faith is burning steadily.
For others it gutters in the winds of the world;
some of us are struggling to rekindle it at all this day,
while for others it leaps and burns brightly.
In whichever state we are today, we gather in faithfulness
to worship the one who is ever faithful to us,
to worship the one whose love endures forever.

Amen

(www.rootsontheweb.com).

Hymn

StF 503

Love divine, all loves excelling,
joy of heaven to earth come down,
fix in us thy humble dwelling,
all thy faithful mercies crown.
Jesu, thou art all compassion
pure, unbounded love thou art;
visit us with thy salvation,
enter every trembling heart.

Come almighty to deliver
Let us all thy life receive;
suddenly return, and never,
never more thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing,
serve thee as thy hosts above,
pray, and praise thee, without ceasing,
glory in Thy perfect love.

Finish then thy new creation,
pure and spotless let us be;
let us see thy great salvation
perfectly restored in thee:
changed from glory into glory,
'til in heaven we take our place,
'til we cast our crowns before thee,
lost in wonder, love and praise!

Words: Charles Wesley (1707-88)

Prayers

We pray together:
Heavenly Father, we thank you for your love;
we thank you for the things that you have done for us,
we thank you for the things that you are yet to do for us.
We thank you for showing us your love through your Son Jesus Christ.

We thank you for teaching us to love one another
in these uncertain times of Covid 19.
We come before you with thanks
for all the blessings we have
and for your enduring love.
God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit
accept our praise and adoration.

Amen.

Holy God

**We confess that we have rebelled against you
and broken your law of love.**

**We have not loved our neighbours,
nor heard the cry of the needy.**

**Forgive us, we pray and free us for joyful obedience,
through Jesus Christ Our Lord.**

Amen

Silence

The Good news is,
“Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ came into the world
that we can be saved, and His love endures forever.”

Amen

Old Testament Reading :- Leviticus 19:1-2, 15-18

The Lord spoke to Moses, saying: “Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel, and say to them: You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy.”

You shall not render an unjust judgment; you shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great: with justice you shall judge your neighbour. You shall not go around as a slanderer among your people, and you shall not profit by the blood of your neighbour: I am the Lord.

You shall not hate in your heart anyone of your kin; you shall reprove your neighbour, or you will incur guilt yourself. You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbour as yourself: I am the Lord.”

Gospel Reading:- Matthew 22: 34-46

When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, and one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. “Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?”

He said to him, “‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them this question: “What do you think of the Messiah? Whose son is he?”

They said to him, “The son of David.”

He said to them, “How is it then that David by the Spirit calls him Lord, saying, ‘The Lord said to my Lord, ‘Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet’”? If David thus calls him Lord, how can he be his son?”

No one was able to give him an answer, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.

Reflection

The Bible is a sprawling anthology of a book that was written and edited over centuries. When Jesus was asked, "which commandment is the greatest?" he had a huge selection to choose from. Seemingly without hesitation, he chose Deuteronomy 6:5 "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind."

Of all the commandments in the Scriptures, he chose love.

And then he went a second mile, as it were, by offering a second greatest commandment. He could have offered something practical to counterbalance the first commandment, but instead chose a double portion of love when he said (from Leviticus 19:18), "you shall love your neighbour as yourself."

In these days, when everyone insists that they have the freedom to choose for themselves which way to go, and what they shall do, why not choose love?

If you ever find yourself wondering what God is asking you to do, the answer is probably "love".

Take a moment to read the following verses twice, slowly.

Open your heart.

Be attentive for any particular word or phrase that stands out to you:

You shall love God with all your heart,
and with all your soul,
and with all your mind,
and with all your strength.

You shall love your neighbour as yourself.

There is no other commandment greater than these.

*Pause for a few minutes of silence to listen for how God is speaking to you
in this present moment.*

Prayers of intercession

Let us pray:-

God of Love and Compassion, we bring our world to your feet.

We pray:-

for the Church of Christ throughout the world
for its unity in Christ
for the fulfilment of the church's mission
for all ministers of the gospel
for justice and peace though out the world
for political leaders and all those in authority
for the communities in which we live
and for those known to us.....

In Jesus Christ's Name we pray;

Amen.

Our Father, who art in heaven

Hymn

StF 436

What shall I do my God to love,
my loving God to praise?
The length, and breadth, and height to prove,
and depth of sovereign grace?

Your sovereign grace to all extends,
immense and unconfined;
from age to age it never ends,
enfolds all humankind.

Throughout the world its breadth is known,
wide as infinity;
so wide it never passed by one,
or it had passed by me.

My trespass was grown up to heav'n;
but, far above the skies,
in Christ abundantly forgiven,
I see your mercies rise.

The depth of all-redeeming love,
what angel tongue can tell?
O may I to the utmost prove
the gift unspeakable!

Come quickly, gracious Lord, and take
possession of your own;
my longing heart vouchsafe to make
your everlasting throne.

Words: Charles Wesley (1707-88)

Benediction

***May the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ
the Love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with us now and forever more
Amen.***