These acts of Worship have been prepared for use while we are physically unable to gather to worship.

If you are well enough, we invite you to spend a few moments with God, knowing that other people are also sharing this act of worship with you.

You can also join **Worship on the Phone**, 10am Sundays.

### How to connect to Worship on the Phone

1. Call **0333 011 0616** from a mobile or landline.
2. Enter unique PIN: **9805080** and press # (it will ask for £, but press #)
3. You will be invited to speak your name, then press # again.
4. You will be connected to the call.

### Love Feast – Sunday 2nd August

On Sun 2nd August, as part of our *Worshiping Together* resources is the inclusion of a Love Feast. See p2 of this booklet for more info on what a Love Feast is.

Dan will lead this as part of our *Worship on the Phone* service that day, but this resource can also be used if you are using *Worshipping Together* on your own, knowing that you will be participating as part of our scattered community who are held together through our belonging to the body of Christ.

As part of the love Feast we will have opportunity to eat or drink together, so before the worship begins please have some ready – you could have a biscuit, cake, a piece of fruit, a glass of water, cup of tea, (as we’re Methodists, it may be best to leave the Gin for later!).

There is also a space for sharing testimony, so I invite you, if you are willing, to be ready to share a few short sentences of testimony that express where you have encountered God recently.

*Rev Dan*
The love feast or Agape, is a Christian fellowship meal recalling the meals Jesus shared with disciples during his ministry. The service expresses the ‘koinonia’ or sharing, belonging and fellowship enjoyed within the body of Christ.

The Love Feast, in common with other acts of worship includes prayer, praise, scripture, preaching and mutual fellowship, but in addition the Love Feast contains a time of Testimony and the sharing of food/drink.

GATHERING
As we come to worship, you may like to have a time of silence and light a candle. Let us remember that wherever we are, God is with us.

Gathering Words
Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters.
Everyone who hungers, come to the feast.
Turn your ear to the one who satisfies,
Listen carefully, to the source of all life.

The everlasting, steadfast covenant I made centuries ago continues to stand,
For you, my steadfast love and faithfulness endures.

So, gather with joy in your hearts, hear the song of creation breaking into praise,
And discover the satisfying peace and everlasting love of God.

Praise and Prayer
As the deer pants for the water, so my soul longs after you.
You alone are my heart’s desire and I long to worship you.

You alone are my strength, my shield, to you alone may my spirit yield.
You alone are my heart’s desire and I long to worship you.

I want you more than gold or silver, only you can satisfy.
You alone are the real joy-giver and the apple of my eye.

You're my friend and you are my brother, even though you are a king.
I love you more than any other, so much more than anything.

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1 Preparation and original material by Dan Balsdon
2 Adaptation of extracts from Isaiah 55
3 As the deer, a song by Marin J Nystrom © 1983 Restoration Music, StF544
Testimony
A time to share: Where have you encountered God in your life recently?

Reading: Matthew 14:13-21

Reflection:
While I was a college student, I had a part-time job at a fish and chip takeaway and restaurant. I recall one of our busiest shifts. We already knew we only just had enough staff on shift, but then one called in sick and another had an emergency at home they had to deal with. There was little option but to buckle down and work together to do the best we could. 6 of us were covering what would on other busy shifts would have about 10 staff. And that night saw one of the highest day’s takings of the year. The customers kept coming, at one point we weren’t even sure we had enough chips to go around! But we pulled together, and despite the scarcity of team (and chips!) we managed to complete the night and collapsed in a heap afterwards.

I’m not sure how we’d have coped if 5000 men, plus women and children, turned up that night. But that experience does give me a glimpse of just how vast a problem the hunger of the crowd was, and how bewildered the disciples must have been when Jesus said ‘you give them something to eat’.

It hardly seems fair of Jesus to expect that of the disciples! How on earth were they meant to meet the need! Jesus could easily be said to be setting them up to fail. But perhaps that’s just it - on earth they could do little. Food for 5000+ can’t be produced by earthly power just like that. It takes time. The empty shelves in March remind us just how fragile, even the most developed economies are when demand outstrips supply.

But in the power of God’s kingdom, scarcity can be turned to abundance before our very eyes. Jesus takes these five loaves and two fish, barely enough to feed Jesus and his disciples, let alone 5000+. He looks to heaven, blesses, breaks, and there is an abundance of food to eat, and an abundance left over.

I wonder how those disciples felt that evening. Worn out after all that distributing and collecting leftovers? Guilty, on realising they lacked faith?
Amazed at what Jesus had done?
Inspired by their teacher who had once more brought a glimpse of heaven to earth?

As we worship, praise, pray, call to mind times we have encountered God in our lives, and live our lives as disciples we make space for God to give us a glimpse of heaven. Let us each, in our own way, pray we continue to experience the abundance of God, and glimpses of heaven breaking into earth day by day.

RESPONDING

Sharing the Love feast
We come, as one, distanced yet gathered, locked-down but not locked out, to remember the fellowship Christ shared with his friends, the abundance of bread and fish to over 5000, the love and laughter of eating together as friends, the intimacy of breakfast on the beach, and in that remembering, know that same abundance, love, laughter, and intimacy is present in our relationship with Christ as Christ’s body.

Prayer
Loving God we gather, despite distance and uncertainty, to share as one, as your people, for being your people is what holds us together.

In this gathering and sharing, our being with one another, may you draw us ever closer to you and to one another, and let this moment of our life on earth, be yet another glimpse of heaven breaking in, as we eat and drink together, in thankfulness to you. Amen

Eat and Drink

Prayers of Intercession
We pray for others, in thankfulness for the blessings we know.

We share prayers of thanks and of intercession for others.

The leader concludes the prayer, and we pray together…

The Lord’s Prayer: Our Father ......
**Song: Longing for Light**

*Sing, read, pray or proclaim –*

Longing for light, we wait in darkness.  
Longing for truth, we turn to you.  
Make us your own, your holy people,  
light for the world to see.

*Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts, shine through the darkness.*  
*Christ, be our light! Shine in your Church gathered today.*

Longing for peace, our world is troubled.  
Longing for hope, many despair.  
Your word alone has power to save us.  
Make us your living voice.

Longing for food, many are hungry.  
Longing for water, many still thirst.  
Make us your bread, broken for others,  
shared until all are fed.

Longing for shelter, many are homeless.  
Longing for warmth, many are cold.  
Make us your building, sheltering others,  
walls made of living stone.

Many the gifts, many the people,  
many the hearts that yearn to belong.  
Let us be servants to one another,  
making your kingdom come.

**Sending**

Christ, may the abundance of your light shine in us,  
The sustaining power of your Spirit strengthen us,  
The hope of creator God fill us.  
As we live as your disciples on earth. Amen.

**The Grace**

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,  
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all forever more. Amen

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4 Longing for Light by Bernadette Farrell, © 1993 Bernadette Farrell, StF706
As we come to worship, you may like to have a time of silence and light a candle. Let us remember that wherever we are, God is with us.

Gathering Prayer
As we gather together, let’s just take a moment to remind ourselves we are in God’s presence, in the presence of our King and our Saviour...
...let these words fall onto you, seep into you and rest within you.

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
Amen.

Philippians 4:6-7

Song: When we were in the darkest night

When we were in the darkest night, and wondered if our eyes would ever see the light, you were there, Lord. When we were in the stormy gale, and wondered if we’d ever live in peace again, you were there, Lord. You were there in the struggle, you were there in the fight, you were there all the time.

We praise you, the God of our yesterdays.
We praise you, the God who is here today.
We praise you, our God, as tomorrow comes.

So, whatever lies ahead, whatever roads our grateful hearts will come to tread, you’ll be there, Lord. We will fix our eyes on you, and know that there is grace enough to see us through. You’ll be there, Lord. You’ll be there in the struggle. You’ll be there in the fight. You’ll be there all the time.

5 Preparation and original material by Debbie Dean
6 When we were in the darkness night by Matt Redman, © 2008 Thankyou Music, StF241
We praise you, the God of our yesterdays.
We praise you, the God who is here today.
We praise you, our God, as tomorrow comes.
We thank you — for grace in our yesterdays.
We thank you — for peace in our hearts today.
We thank you — our joy as tomorrow comes. We will trust you God.

You’re always closer than we know, always more involved and in control.
We will trust our lives to you — the One who was and is and is to come.
We praise you, the God of our yesterdays ...

Let us come together in prayer
Father, we love you, we worship and adore you:
glorify your name in all the earth.
Glorify your name, glorify your name, glorify your name, in all the earth.

Jesus, we love you, we worship and adore you:
glorify your name in all the earth.
Glorify your name, glorify your name, glorify your name, in all the earth.

Spirit, we love you, we worship and adore you:
glorify your name in all the earth.
Glorify your name, glorify your name, glorify your name, in all the earth.

Forgiving Jesus, we come to you with the things that we have done wrong.
Lord, we mess up so easily, sometimes with words, sometimes with thoughts, but we know you see all that we do and think, and so here we are to say we are sorry.
Lord, each one of us will now speak to you quietly to ask you to forgive our sins.......... We thank you that as we have said we are sorry, you have washed us clean. Thank you Jesus. Amen.

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7 Excerpts from Father we love you by Donna Adkins, © 1976 CCCM Music / Maranatha! Music, StF6
Reflection
We’ve just read about the disciples’ fear as they found themselves far from the shore in their fishing boat. It was dark, they were in a powerful storm and Jesus wasn’t with them. It reminds me of how we probably all felt at the beginning of lockdown, when we found ourselves in the dreadful storm of Covid-19, separated from everyone we love, and it all seemed so very dark and frightening.

When we are faced with that sort of uncertainty and fear, it is all too easy to focus on our own circumstances and what’s going on around us, and let our eyes slip away from Jesus. In the midst of the disciples’ storm Peter says “tell me to come to you on the water.” And Jesus says “come”.

This part of the story really resonates with me. I can start my day happily talking to Jesus, feeling He has everything in His Hands, and then I put the news on and hear something dreadful about Covid-19, perhaps the dreaded second spike, and there I go.....I can start focusing on the horror of what I’ve just seen or heard and my eyes begin to slip away from Jesus. And just like Peter when he realised that the storm was still happening and called out “Lord, save me!” I find I have to run to Him and do the same.

We read that when Peter called out to Jesus, He immediately reached out his hand and caught him. “You of little faith,” he said, “why did you doubt?” I ask myself the same question.....why did I doubt? But I know He has reached out His hand and drawn me back to Him, and I have set my eyes back on Him.

This miracle of Jesus walking on the water, towards His disciples, shows His power over the elements, over all events in this world. We don’t have to be afraid of the chaos in the world, if we can just put all our trust and faith in our Lord Jesus.

The wonderful thing is, we run out on that water, like Peter, and if or when(!) we begin to sink, Jesus always extends His hand immediately and saves us.
Prayers of Intercession

Loving Jesus, we bring you our prayers for our world.
Our world in turmoil, with this awful virus,
a world where countries are in disagreement with each other.
A world which has so much beauty yet so much greed and pain.
We pray for healing:
for an end to conflict and division, between nations and individuals.

Healing Jesus, during lockdown,
so many in this world learned to be less selfish, less wasteful,
more caring, more loving,
treating the world and one another with more love and respect.

We pray that as we ease ourselves out of lockdown
and the world slowly begins to find a normal,
we will remember our behaviour during lockdown
and that across your beautiful world,
we will choose to continue living a life of loving and caring.

Listening Jesus, we bring you our families and friends.
We pray for those who are unwell,
those who are afraid, lonely, worried, exhausted.
We will speak the names to you Lord, of those in need.

......silence......
(you might like to name names here)

We bring our prayers in Jesus’ precious Name. Amen.

The Lord’s Prayer: Our Father ......
Song: Father I place into your hands
Sing, read, pray or proclaim

1) Father, I place into your hands
the things I cannot do.
Father, I place into your hands
the times that I’ve been through.
Father, I place into your hands
the way that I should go,
for I know I always can trust you.

2) Father, I place into your hands
my friends and family.
Father, I place into your hands
the things that trouble me.
Father, I place into your hands
the person I would be,
for I know I always can trust you.

3) Father, we love to see your face,
we love to hear your voice.
Father, we love to sing your praise
and in your name rejoice.
Father, we love to walk with you
and in your presence rest,
for we know we always can trust you.

A Sending Out Prayer
Father God, as we say goodbye to one another until next week, we thank you for
the good time we have had together, in your presence. We ask you to go ahead of
us, walk beside us and follow us, as we enter a new week. Amen

The Grace
May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the
Holy Spirit be with us all now and evermore. Amen

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8 Father I place by Jenny Hewer, © 1975 Thankyou music, StF519
GATHERING

As we come to worship, you may like to have a time of silence and light a candle. Let us remember that wherever we are, God is with us.

Call to Worship
Come, let us join together in the presence of our living God, Knowing that He welcomes us all with open arms. Let us worship and praise his name.

Hymn: Alleluia, Alleluia, give thanks to the risen Lord

Sing, read, pray or proclaim

Alleluia, Alleluia,
give thanks to the risen Lord,
Alleluia, alleluia, give praise to His name.

1) Jesus is Lord of all the earth. He is the King of creation.
   Alleluia...

2) Spread the Good News o’er all the earth. Jesus has died and has risen.
   Alleluia...

3) We have been crucified with Christ. Now we shall live forever.
   Alleluia...

4) God has proclaimed the just reward: Life for all men, alleluia!
   Alleluia...

5) Come, let us praise the living God, Joyfully sing to our Saviour.
   Alleluia...

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9 Preparation and original material by Malcolm Lindo
10 Alleluia, Alleluia by Donald Fisher, © The Word of God, Ann Arbor, StF295
Let us come together in prayer
Loving, caring Lord,
what a joy it is to gather from wherever we are
to be your family singing Alleluia and praising Your Name.

We thank you for the countless blessings we have and are receiving,
for the innumerable good things that surround us every moment of each day.

We thank you for your great faithfulness,
your wonderful, constant love and your care that is never exhausted.

We thank you for your guidance during the past week,
for leading us safely through times when we have needed you,
and for leading us to help those who were themselves in need.

We thank you for the support you have given us,
when we have felt disheartened,
when we have been tempted to doubt,
and when we have needed your strength to carry on.

Lord, we thank you for being there,
but we know that we have come to you having failed you.
We have turned away from your love and failed to follow your teachings.
Forgive us Lord.

......silence......

Let us recognise the redeeming actions of Christ and that he said,
“Your sins are forgiven, go in peace and follow me”. Amen

Scripture Reading: Matthew 15 v 29-32
Additional Readings: Isaiah 56:1, 6-8; Psalm 67; Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32

Time to Reflect
When I first looked at our reading, I was surprised, amazed at the way that Jesus
had treated the Canaanite woman. I even wondered whether this was the same
Jesus who told us the parable of the Good Samaritan and the way to love our
neighbours. I just could not understand why Jesus had treated her that way, as if
she were someone who was different to him. Someone, who was not only unworthy
of receiving his Blessing, but also, was someone who he could simply ignore.
I remember that, when I was young, one of my aunts always had the habit of explaining other people’s actions, by reference to whether they were or were not, like her. “Did you see what that person did? I am disgusted at their behaviour but it is not surprising as they are not like us” or “They are very nice neighbours which isn’t surprising because they are just like us”. My aunt never ever accepted or approved of anything which, in her opinion, was not normal.

But the trouble with “normal” is that it is a very personal thing, the reality for many is that being “normal” is simply being “the same as me”. So, for a community in Africa or China, being “normal” is being African or Chinese. Being a white Anglo-Saxon in those communities would be strange, different, and certainly not the norm. A young white woman who lived in India for several years remembered that “I mostly stopped noticing that I was subject of insistent curious staring”.

We face difficult and challenging times, and undoubtedly, we also face a changing world. We are immediately facing the challenge that our church services may not be “normal”, they may and possibly will feel, sound and be different.

We may also need to face the challenge that the way that we worship could be different in other ways, as we reach out to others, people not necessarily like us. People, who like the Canaanite woman in our reading, are in need and want the reassuring love and care of God in their lives.

I do not for one moment believe that Jesus was being prejudiced in any way. Nor was he hiding behind some religious dogma, the modern equivalent of some guidance from the Methodist Connection. I think he was simply testing the faith of the woman. Just, as he challenges our faith at times. Have you felt that your belief in God has or is being challenged? Have you remained steadfast to your faith, have you, in the face of adversity, questioned what you believe?

The woman did not lose her faith, she knew that Jesus was the Messiah, and she believed that Jesus could remove the evil spirit from her daughter. So however Jesus acted, whatever Jesus said, whatever obstacle He put in her path, she knew that He could and would reach out to her. She knew that, through the love of God the daughter would become well again.

As we face the difficult times ahead, we need to be resolute, determined and strengthened by our faith. A faith with the certain knowledge that God is there with us, a faith that knows that we can move mountains, and a faith that, with the
A time of prayer
Just as Jesus came into our world, to help, to heal, and to save, so we now pray for all those in any kind of need.

We pray for all who are suffering, the poor and hungry, the oppressed and exploited, the lonely and unloved, the aged and the infirm, the frightened and anxious, the helpless and the homeless.

Caring Lord, there is so much need around us, in our world, our country, our neighbourhood, and in our churches. So many people crying out for help.

So, in a moment of silence, we remember all those places and people who are today in conflict, in need and suffering in some way.

......silence......

We pray that you will reach out to them in Your Love. Loving God, we pray for our families, our friends, and for the members of our Churches.

......silence......
(you might like to name names here)

Give them peace, hope, and strength this day. Amen

We share in the prayer that Jesus taught us.

The Lord’s Prayer: Our Father ......
Hymn: Let us build a house where love can dwell

Sing, read, pray or proclaim

Let us build a house where love can dwell
and all can safely live,
a place where saints and children tell
how hearts learn to forgive.
Built of hopes and dreams and visions,
rock of faith and vault of grace.
here the love of Christ shall end divisions:

All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.

Let us build a house where prophets speak,
and words are strong and true,
where all God's children dare to seek
to dream God's reign anew.
Here the cross shall stand as witness
and as symbol of God's grace;
here as one we claim the faith of Jesus:

All are welcome...

Let us build a house where hands will reach
beyond the wood and stone
to heal and strengthen, serve, and teach,
and live the Word they've known.
Here the outcast and the stranger
bear the image of God's face.
let us bring an end to fear and danger:

All are welcome...

A prayer of blessing
Lord, your spirit has been with us. As we end our worship, help us remember your message with our ears and hearts, help us to be useful to you and to do your will.

Grace
May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen

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11 Let us build a house by Marty Haugen, © 1994 GIA Publications, StF409 (v1-3)
As we come to worship, you may like to have a time of silence and light a candle. Let us remember that wherever we are, God is with us.

God has now revealed to us his mysterious will regarding Christ – which is to fulfil his own good plan. And this is the plan: at the right time he will bring everything together under the authority of Christ – everything in heaven and on earth.

*Ephesians 1:9-10*

**Prayer of Thanks**

Lord, you are the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.
May we never forget that whatever is happening in our lives, you are always there for us, always the rock on which we can safely stand.

We give you our thanks and praise
for your constant love and unceasing care for us.
You have shown yourself to us through our Saviour Jesus Christ and given us the right to call upon you when we are in need.

You place your strong arms around us and protect us in times of trouble.
With our feet on the rock of your love we have nothing to fear.
All praise and thanks is yours. Amen.

*Sing, read, pray or proclaim* - **Song: Thank you Jesus, Thank you Jesus**

THANK YOU, JESUS, thank You, Jesus,
Thank You, Lord, for loving me. X 2

You went to Calvary, and there You died for me,
Thank You, Lord, for loving me. X2

You rose up from the grave, to me new life You gave,
Thank You, Lord, for loving me. X2

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12 preparation and Original material by Lynne James
13 Thank You Jesus by Alison Huntley, © 1978 Kingsway’s Thankyou Music, SoF523
Prayer of confession
Lord, we have so often failed you and yet each time you are there for us, willing to forgive and to give us another chance.
We have often despaired and not remembered your great power over the universe.
We have often failed to speak out about your love to others, and not remembered those many who have spoken out to us and brought us to know you.

Help us now Lord, to do better in the future and to speak your name out loud to all those in need.
In the name of Jesus, we ask your forgiveness. Amen.

We share in the prayer that Jesus taught us.

Our Father in Heaven, hallowed be your name;
Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in Heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,
Now and for ever. Amen.

RECEIVING

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 1: 15-23

Reflection
Whenever I feel confused I read part of Paul’s letters, because he wrote them for confused people like me. In this part of chapter one, he actually prays for me and for you, for all of those who believe in the God of our Lord Jesus Christ. At this difficult time in all our lives, Paul reminds us to turn to God, who gives us hope and he reminds us of God’s great power, which he has passed on to us through Jesus himself. I don’t suppose many of us feel very full of hope or power after 6 months of a life we never anticipated, looking over our shoulder all the time in case we become another Covid victim. We creep out into the wider world, feeling just a bit scared at the very least. Our confidence is shaken and we waver in our belief. Friends may ask us the perennial question: ‘Where is God in this pandemic?’

What to answer? Well, there is only one possible answer. God is right there in the midst of it, right alongside us, where he has always been.
Paul reminds us in verse 22-23 that God has made Jesus the head of the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all. Yet how does the church behave at this time? With closed buildings, people may think we have gone into hiding. With silent leaders, people may think we have nothing more to say. Yet we know that is not the case. We are still a worshipping, praying community. Right now we are bogged down in the petty bureaucracy of how and when to reopen our buildings, wasting our energies on long lists of conditions imposed from the hierarchy and the government.

But there is truly nothing to stop us from proclaiming the gospel as Paul and his followers did so long ago. They were not working in perfect conditions! They were travelling into far worse places and using far worse forms of transport than our modern generation would be willing to accept. It did not stop them. If we can no longer hold the type of services we have loved in the past, then we must find new ways forward, for the message is still the same, now and forever. Do we even need to worry about when and where we pray? Not at all. If you are in doubt read the rest of Ephesians for yourself. We are the heirs of God’s glorious inheritance, passed to us through Jesus. So let’s not skulk in the background or wait till the buildings can reopen. We are the people of God, his church. Nothing should stop us from acting as such. Let’s learn to shout out loud that God has it all in hand and his hand is a loving and caring hand. Amen.

RESPONDING

Sing, read, pray or proclaim - Song: What a friend we have in Jesus

1) What a friend we have in Jesus,
   All our sins and griefs to bear!
   What a privilege to carry
   Everything to God in prayer!
   O what peace we often forfeit!
   O what needless pain we bear!
   All because we do not carry
   Everything to God in prayer.

2) Have we trials and temptations?
   Is there trouble anywhere?
   We should never be discouraged;
   Take it to the Lord in prayer.
   Can we find a friend so faithful
   Who will all our sorrows share?
   Jesus knows our every weakness;
   Take it to the Lord in prayer.

14 Joseph M Scriven, SoF593
3) Are we weak and heavy-laden, Cumbered with a load of care? Precious Saviour, still our refuge, Take it to the Lord in prayer. Do thy friends despise, forsake thee? Take it to the Lord in prayer; In His arms He’ll take and shield thee, Thou wilt find a solace there.

The Covenant Prayer15:
Instead of formal prayers of intercession I want to remind us all of the Covenant Prayer. Afterwards, we can all pray our own intercessions for the world, the sick and the church, as we see fit, in the privacy of our own homes.

I am no longer my own but yours. Your will, not mine, be done in all things wherever you may place me, in all that I do and in all that I may endure:
When there is work for me and when there is none;
When I am troubled and when I am at peace.
Your will be done when I am valued and when I am disregarded;
When I find fulfilment and when it is lacking;
When I have all things and when I have nothing.
I willingly offer all I have and am to serve you as and when you choose. Glorious and blessed God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, You are mine and I am yours. May it be so for ever. Amen

Prayers for those known to us…..
we pray aloud or in our hearts for those on our heart today.

We say together the Grace:
May the grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us now and for ever. Amen

15 Source: Methodist Worship book p288 © TMCP, The Covenant prayer is part of Methodist practice and spirituality, reminding us of the commitment we make to God through Baptism, and the unwavering commitment of faithfulness God makes to us.
As we come to worship, you may like to have a time of silence and light a candle. Let us remember that wherever we are, God is with us.

**Gathering**

Loving Jesus, gentle lamb, In thy gracious hands I am 
Make me, Saviour, what thou art, live thyself within my heart.

I shall then show forth thy praise, serve thee all my happy days: 
Then the world shall always see, Christ the holy child in me.

**Song: A new commandment**

A new commandment I give unto you, 
That you love one another as I have loved you, 
That you love one another as I have loved you. 
By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, 
If you have love one for another. 
By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, 
If you have love one for another.

**Prayer of Praise**

Gracious God, you give us so much to enjoy and celebrate, 
To excite, to explore and challenge us. 
To explore your presence, through your Spirit, 
And the blessings received so freely from your hand.

We praise you for the countless joys of life, 
The beauty of our world, and the mysteries of the universe. 
For your constant guidance and concern, 
And your amazing grace that is never exhausted.

Day by day You have been by our side, 
Recognised or unrecognised, remembered or forgotten,

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16 Preparation and original material by Margaret Thompson  
17 V1 & 5 of Loving Jesus, gentle Lamb, by Charles Wesley, Hymns and Psalms No.738  
18 A new commandment, author unknown, SoF22  
19 Nick Fawcett, Prayers for All Seasons
You remain the same, ever-faithful – loving – and true
Watching over us as a Father watches over his children.

Help us to love you as much as you love us,
To rejoice in your presence, not only today,
But in every moment of our lives.
Be with us now and go with us always. Amen

RECEIVING

Scripture Reading: Romans 12:9-21

Reflect
Paul wrote many letters, as Christianity spread, to Churches which were growing.
In this letter he presents to the Romans “A Christian Life in Everyday Action”

The heading of this passage is “LOVE”. A word which appears over 290 times in the
New Testament. A word constantly used by Jesus.
Love – so important to us, we all want to be loved, and we experience love in so
many ways.
Paul says to live in Harmony, with brotherly love!! As I grew up in a house with 5
children, there wasn’t always harmony, but there was plenty of LOVE.

Our Christian family has become more important to us, as we have been separated
by this Coronavirus. But we have kept in touch, through telephone conversations
and support. We have been so blessed by being able to access worship on T.V. Radio
and our telephone service, and via Zoom. We have to remember those who have
not had those experiences.

Paul advocates that we share what we have with others, to practice hospitality.
That hasn’t been easy, but those with Gardens or allotments, have shared their
bounty with others. Many have gone out of their way to do shopping, and kept in
touch with those who live alone.

A verse from Romans Ch8 v19 “Nothing in all creation will be able to separate us
from the love of God that is in Jesus Christ our Lord.” If during this time of separation
from one another, we have felt down or lonely, or distressed – remember that
nothing – even the worst that can happen will not keep us from the Love of God and our Fellow Christians.

RESPONDING

**Song: a new commandment**

A new commandment I give unto you,
That you love one another as I have loved you,
That you love one another as I have loved you.
By this shall all men know that you are My disciples,
If you have love one for another.
By this shall all men know that you are My disciples,
If you have love one for another.

Prayers of intercession

*Following the verses of Kumbaya*

KUMBAYA MY LORD.
We are here today to bring our prayers for others and ourselves.

SOMEONE’S CRYING LORD:
We pray for those who are hurting or in pain.
For those who are mourning the death of a loved one.
Those who experience hunger - abuse – loneliness.
The homeless – refugees – those seeking justice and peace.

SOMEONE’S PRAYING LORD:
For those who feel their prayers are not answered, for those in closed communities who pray for the world and it’s needs.

SOMEONE’S SINGING LORD:

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20 A new commandment, author unknown, SoF22
21 Kumbaya as found in Hymns and Psalms No.525
For those who rejoice for answers to prayer. Those with prayers of thanksgiving and joy for God’s unfailing love to them.

KUMBAYA MY LORD:
Thank you Lord that you listen to our prayers, help us to listen for your voice, and put our trust in you. AMEN

**Song: Let there be love shared among us**

_Sing, read, pray or proclaim_

1) Brother, sister, let me serve you.  
let me be as Christ to you;  
pray that I may have the grace to  
let you be my servant too.

2) We are pilgrims on a journey,  
and companions on the road;  
we are here to help each other  
walk the mile and bear the load.

3) I will hold the Christ light for you  
in the night time of your fear;  
I will hold my hand out to you,  
speak the peace you long to hear.

4) I will weep when you are weeping;  
when you laugh, I'll laugh with you;  
I will share your joy and sorrow,  
till we've seen this journey through.

5) When we sing to God in heaven,  
we shall find such harmony,  
born of all we've known together  
of Christ's love and agony.

6) Brother, sister, let me serve you;  
let me be as Christ to you;  
pray that I may have the grace to  
let you be my servant too.

_Sending Out_

We thank you Lord for this time of worship and fellowship.  
As we go into this coming week,  
help us to share your love with all that we meet day by day. AMEN

**We say together the Grace:**
May the grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ,  
the love of God  
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit  
be with us now and for ever. Amen

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22 Let there be love by Dave Bilbrough, © 1979 Kingsway Thankyou Music, SoF329
Acknowledgements

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Connect & Invite

Please invite others to worship in this way, either through Worship on the Phone, or in their own way using these Worship at Home Resources. Anyone can be added to the mailing list, please contact Rev Dan Balsdon.

These and other Worship at Home resources can also be downloaded from www.revdanbalsdon.com if you have internet access.

Rev Dan Balsdon
Tel: 01243 823895   Email: dan.balsdon@methodist.org.uk
Methodist Minister for Bognor Regis, Felpham and Westergate Methodist Churches

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.
Romans 15:13