

## **Morning Worship for Bible Sunday October 25th**

### **Preparation**

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts:  
**the whole earth is full of his glory.**

Ascribe to the Lord glory and strength;  
ascribe to the Lord the honour due to his name.

**The whole earth is full of his glory.**

The Lord shall give strength to his people;  
**the Lord shall give his people the blessing of peace.**

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts:  
**the whole earth is full of his glory.**

### *Opening Prayer*

**Holy God,**

**faithful and unchanging:**

**enlarge our minds with the knowledge of your truth,  
and draw us more deeply into the mystery of your love,**

**that we may truly worship you,**

**Father, Son and Holy Spirit,**

**one God, now and for ever.**

**Amen.**

Cast your burden upon the Lord:

**And he will sustain you.**

Create in us clean hearts O God:

**And renew a right spirit within us.**

Cast us not away from your presence:

**And take not your Holy Spirit from us.**

Give us the joy of your saving help:

**And sustain us with your life-giving Spirit.**

Blessed be the Lord day by day:

**The God of our salvation who bears our burdens.**

### *We confess our sins.*

God the Father forgives us in Christ

and heals us by the Holy Spirit.

Let us therefore put away all anger and bitterness,

all slander and malice,

and confess our sins to God our redeemer.

*(cf Ephesians 4.30,32)*

Come, let us return to the Lord and say:

**Lord our God,**

**in our sin we have avoided your call.**

**Our love for you is like a morning cloud,**

**like the dew that goes away early.**

**Have mercy on us;**

**deliver us from judgement;**

**bind up our wounds and revive us;**

**in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

May almighty God,

who sent his Son into the world to save sinners,

bring you his pardon and peace,

now and for ever. **Amen.**

### *Praise*

O Lord, open our lips:

**And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.**

Let us worship the Lord:

**All praise to his name.**

### *Gloria in Excelsis*

**Glory to God in the highest,**

**and peace to his people on earth.**

**Lord God, heavenly King,**

**almighty God and Father,**

**we worship you, we give you thanks,**

**we praise you for your glory.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,**

**Lord God, Lamb of God,**

**you take away the sin of the world:**

**have mercy on us;**

**you are seated at the right hand of the Father:**

**receive our prayer.**

**For you alone are the Holy One,**

**you alone are the Lord,**

**you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,**

**with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

### ***The word of God***

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Colossians.

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

This is the word of the Lord: **Thanks be to God (Colossians 3:12-17)**

*Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew:*

### **Glory to you, O Lord**

Jesus said to his disciples: 'The sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see "the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven" with power and great glory. And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see all these things, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord: **Praise to you, O Christ (Matthew 24:30-35)**

*A reflection by Rev'd Joy Cousans*

Today is Bible Sunday and we are thinking about the importance of the Scriptures to our Christian life and faith. How many of you have a Bible in your home? How many of you read it regularly- every week? Every day? It was St Paul who compared the Scriptures to God's meat and drink for his people. He outlined how reading or hearing the Bible helps Christians grow stronger in faith and enables them to follow Christ more closely.

In rural Malawi Bibles are scarce. At Nsungwi Church Sunday school they split into classes with about 100 kids in each class. This is church on a big scale ... until it comes to their resources. There may be a thousand

children in the church, but there are just 40 children's Bibles. In one class, five children each week are allowed to take a Bible home. They read a story every night and learn one by heart. One child loved the Bible so much he read 10 stories a night. Bibles are brought back to church the following Sunday. Children's hands shoot up as they offer to retell stories they've read and know inside out. Stories such as David and Goliath, Noah's Ark, Jacob and Joseph are told with pride, clarity and accuracy. Then the Bibles are passed to another child. Children can wait around six months for their turn to take one home. One child said, 'The Bible tells me about God's love.' Another said, 'We love the pictures, and the stories teach us good behaviour. A very little boy added, 'We know these stories off by heart and they help us trust in God.'

The children in Malawi have discovered the treasure that is present in the Bible. Because they have not always had the ability to access God's word easily, they value it all the more. The writer of Colossians encourages his readers to 'Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs to God.' (Colossians 3:16) How can we let God's word dwell richly in us? We can do so by reading and studying the Bible and by sharing with other Christians in prayer and worship.

How do we read the Bible? If we think of the Bible as our spiritual food we need to have a balanced diet. One approach to Bible reading is to read the same bits over and over. Perhaps we only ever look at the New Testament, or perhaps we stick to our favourite verses. That's a bit like only ever eating cake. You can have too much of a good thing. Favourite Bible verses are all very well in moderation, but they shouldn't form the whole of our Biblical diet.

Becoming familiar with the whole of Scripture gives us the fullest possible picture of God and his Son, Jesus. Our hope becomes more than just wishful thinking: it is based on God's promises to his people. As we read our Bibles, we discover what God is like: a God who never changes; a God who keeps his promises. What God thinks of us: he always loves us; he created us in his image and we are precious to him; he listens to us and cares for us. What God's desires are for his world: that Jesus came to save human kind and bring us back into relationship with him; that the way to true fulfilment is to live life God's way; that God longs for human beings to care not only for one another, but also for him and for his creation.

Scripture is an essential part of our growth as Christians. It is one of the main ways in which God communicates his message which needs to be proclaimed afresh in each generation. Can I encourage you this week to make time to read your Bible? Perhaps you might like to read one of the gospels all the way through, rather than in small chunks as we get in church week by week. And there is plenty of help available with both reading and understanding the Scriptures. Bible reading notes are a good aid, as they reflect on different Biblical passages, with a portion for each day. Do get in touch if you would like to get some Bible study notes. The Church of England produces online resources for regular worship and Bible reading. Above all, the Bible is there to bring us God's message of hope and encouragement for our day to day lives as his people.

### ***Our faith***

*Let us declare our faith in God Father, Son and Holy Spirit*

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.  
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

*Prayers of Intercession led by Chriss Hewitt*

We come into your presence Lord praising you and thanking you for all your goodness towards us and those we pray for. Please continue to uphold us and let our praises join the heavenly throng worshipping you. Lord in your mercy **hear our prayer**

Dear Lord, we lift ourselves and all our Christian friends throughout the

world. Help us to find joy in all areas of our lives, especially during the difficult times

we are in. Let us seek out good news and share these stories with each other to encourage one another.

Lord in your mercy **hear our prayer**

We pray dear Lord for all those suffering in the world where there is famine, war, starvation disease and persecution, please come alongside those who can help alter these things and help in anyway to get positive change.

Lord in your mercy **hear our prayer**

Bless all people everywhere with the gift of your loving embrace, encouragement and Joy. May your face shine upon us and our churches and leaders at this time. Help us to deepen our faith by reading your word and sharing with others the joy of having you in our lives.

Lord in your mercy **hear our prayer**

We lift before you all those suffering in mind, body, and spirit give them hope in their troubles and bring them the joy of your salvation.

Lord in your mercy **hear our prayer**

We thank you for our farmers and all those working in this beautiful world you have entrusted us with to provide all we have taken for granted, please give us fresh eyes to see the beauty that surrounds us.

Lord in your mercy **hear our prayer**

Let us take a few moments of silence as we lift before you all those on our prayer list and in our hearts  
SILENCE KEPT

Lord in your mercy **hear our prayer**

We pray for all those who have died recently, we ask you to comfort their families and friends

Lord in your mercy **hear our prayer**

Merciful Father, **accept these prayers for the sake of your son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen**

*A prayer for the coronavirus pandemic*

Keep us, good Lord,  
under the shadow of your mercy

in this time of uncertainty and distress.  
Sustain and support the anxious and fearful,  
and lift up all who are brought low;  
that we may rejoice in your comfort  
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love  
in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

*We join together with Christians throughout the world in the prayer that Jesus taught us.*

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory,  
for ever and ever. Amen.**

### **Conclusion**

*The Collect for the day*

Blessed Lord, who caused all holy scriptures to be written for our learning:  
help us so to hear them, to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them that,  
through patience, and the comfort of your holy word, we may embrace and  
for ever hold fast the hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in  
our Saviour Jesus Christ, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of  
the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

You are worthy, our Lord and God,  
**to receive glory and honour and power.**  
For you have created all things,  
**and by your will they have their being.**  
You are worthy, O Lamb, for you were slain,  
**and by your blood you ransomed us for God.**  
From every tribe and language and nation,  
**you have made us to be a kingdom and priests  
serving our God.**  
To the One who sits on the throne and to the Lamb

**be blessing and honour and glory and might  
for ever and ever. Amen. (Revelation 4.11;5.9b,10,11)**

*We end with the words of the Grace, an ancient Christian prayer of fellowship, remembering that although we are not together in person, nothing can separate us from the love of God found in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

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

*Please let us know if you want us to pray for you either individually or if you would like to be included on the Prayer Chain.*

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