

Worship Ideas for 22nd March 2020

Trinity and Kessingland Methodist Churches send everyone God's blessing and love today especially as today is celebrated as Mothering Sunday when we recall and acknowledge all who offer us care and act as mothers to us.

Settling Prayer: Thank you God for the gift of love, for those who care for us and all who act as mothers to us, whomever they may be. We give thanks that we can show care for each other at all times and are able give that attention back into our community, especially at this time. Amen

Living God, As we come together, each in our own places we confess our sins, and pray for forgiveness for what we have said, done or thought that has hurt others, hurt ourselves or saddened you. Help us to be forgiving in our dealings with anyone who has sinned against us and to remember that everyone is your child and deserving of your care and our respect. Amen.

Readings:

These readings have been suggested for today, please take time to look through them and think on what God is saying to you through them. It would be lovely to hear your thoughts.

1 Samuel 1: 20-28

²⁰ In due time Hannah conceived and bore a son. She named him Samuel, for she said, "I have asked him of the LORD."

²¹ The man Elkanah and all his household went up to offer to the LORD the yearly sacrifice, and to pay his vow. ²² But Hannah did not go up, for she said to her husband, "As soon as the child is weaned, I will

bring him, that he may appear in the presence of the LORD, and remain there forever; I will offer him as a nazirite^[a] for all time."^[b]
23 Her husband Elkanah said to her, "Do what seems best to you, wait until you have weaned him; only—may the LORD establish his word."^[c]
So the woman remained and nursed her son, until she weaned him.
24 When she had weaned him, she took him up with her, along with a three-year-old bull,^[d] an ephah of flour, and a skin of wine. She brought him to the house of the LORD at Shiloh; and the child was young.
25 Then they slaughtered the bull, and they brought the child to Eli.
26 And she said, "Oh, my lord! As you live, my lord, I am the woman who was standing here in your presence, praying to the LORD.
27 For this child I prayed; and the LORD has granted me the petition that I made to him.
28 Therefore I have lent him to the LORD; as long as he lives, he is given to the LORD." She left him there for^[e] the LORD.

It is difficult to imagine a mother giving a child to God in this way but was an acceptable practise up until the 12th Century in this country and others. What does this response say of Hannah's devotion and thankfulness for conceiving Samuel? How does this act of open-handedness on her part help us reflect on what we can offer God now? Help us Lord, to be generous in our responses to your gifts to us and not be afraid when we are asked to take a leap of faith in you, or ourselves.

The Gospel reading is the whole of John Chapter 9.

How can help heal each other? What is God asking us to do to show empathy and respect to people in need of healing? What can we do to enable all people, regardless of their ability or wellness to take part in our church communities and our society? Why do we let jealousy stop us seeing the good in what people do? Can we be afraid to acknowledge God's love in action? How can we overcome this? We give thanks for the faith shown by the man in this story. Help us God to see you in the actions of people, especially people we wouldn't normally expect to see acting for you.

Ephesians 5: 8-14

For once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light— for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly; but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,

'Sleeper, awake!
Rise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.'

We give thanks that there is so much reassurance in the Bible that we are not alone, and that Jesus sacrifice has brought us into God's light. Help us to stay focussed on the good we can do and to be the best we can.

Prayer: Living God; in times of darkness and fear, of confusion and chaos it can be hard to keep faith, guide us in these times, help us to turn to each other and to keep bringing ourselves and all of our worries, thoughts and cares to you. Help us to keep looking for and recognising light in dark times and forgive us when we take out our feelings on others. Help us Living God to be lights in our communities and to remember that you are always with us. Strengthen us to be lights wherever this is needed. Amen.

Hymns chosen for this week include:

The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want (StF 481)

Just as I am, without one plea (StF 556)

Breathe on me, Breath of God (StF 370)

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord! (StF 186)

O Christ, the healer, we have come (StF 653)

Love divine, all loves excelling (StF 503)

The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want (StF 481)

Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart (StF 545)

Please sing these or read through the words. It would be lovely to know we are singing together! Many hymns are on Youtube and there are some delightful versions around, please

let us know your favourite version so we can include a link to this.

For Mothering Sunday

Living, loving God, we thank you for the gift of life, given to us through the bodies of our parents and the care and succour of our mothers as they brought us into this world. We give you thanks for the gift of life given to us in Jesus who helps us be born again and is with us today through the Holy Spirit.

We pray for our mums, and all who have mothered us, for those people we still see on this earth and for those gone to be with you. We give thanks for the love they gave us, and their presence that offers healing, their love that guides and shields us and the sense of place their relationship with us gives.

We pray for those who have fractured relationships with their mothers, and especially for those who have been abused within that relationship. We pray for those who need to ask for or offer forgiveness and we hold up to you all who have never felt cared for by their mothers, that they may find peace. Guide us to be a Christian community that we may mother them.

We pray for those who have never had the chance to be a parent, help them deal with that loss of potential in their lives and show them how to bring the love within themselves to their community.

We pray for all who have lost a child or a mother, for whom this day is a time of loss and pain, a time not of celebration but of regret and sadness and precious memories. Heal them and help us stand with them, respectfully and sensitively to show them they are never alone.

Hold them in your arms, loving God and give them peace.

We bring these prayers to you, Living God through Jesus name, Amen.

We remember and say the Lord's Prayer together as well.

God be with you all this week. Amen.