

Worship for 29th Sunday in Ordinary Time (complete text. A video version is also online)
Keep safe. Keep caring. Keep praying.

Hello and welcome to the South Warwickshire Circuit Service. This service has been put together by the Wednesday Evening Youth Group which meets twice a month at Kenilworth Methodist Church, although since March we've been meeting via Zoom!

We hope that you will be blessed by the worship offered today.

If you would like to take part, then please get in touch with the Circuit Office on swc.katetennyson@gmail.com

THE PREPARATION

Call to worship

Let us prepare ourselves for worship:

(quietly light a candle)

This is the day that the Lord has made.

This is the day when he can be found.

God of all, breath of life,

Living water, Saviour, friend.

Come as the hungry, feed on his Word

Come as the thirsty, drink of his Love

Come as the faithful, worship the Lord.

Hymn: Waymaker – Sinach

You are here

Moving in our midst

I worship you

I worship you

You are here

Working in this place

I worship you

I worship you

You are here

Moving in our midst

I worship you

I worship you

You are here

Working in this place

I worship you

I worship you

Way maker

Miracle worker

Promise keeper

Light in the darkness

My God

That is who you are

Way maker

Miracle worker

Promise keeper

Light in the darkness

My God

That is who you are

You are here

Touching every heart

I worship you

I worship you

You are here

Healing every heart

I worship you

I worship you

You are here

Turning lives around

I worship you

I worship you

You are here

Mending every heart

I worship you

I worship you

Way maker

Miracle worker

Promise keeper

Light in the darkness

That is who you are

Way maker

Miracle worker
Promise keeper
Light in the darkness
My God
That is who you are

You wipe away all tears
You mend the broken heart
You're the answer to it all
Jesus
You wipe away all tears
You mend the broken heart
You're the answer to it all (to it all)
Jesus

Way maker
Miracle worker
Promise keeper
Light in the darkness
My God
That is who you are

Way maker
Miracle worker
Promise keeper
Light in the darkness
My God
That is who you are

You are here
Touching every life
I worship you
I worship you
You are here
Meeting every need
I worship you
I worship you

Opening Prayers

Father God, you are awesome and majestic and powerful, a king, yet you are also tender and loving and generous, just like a parent or a friend. You always want the best for us. You want to be our friend and we long for your friendship.

Father God, we are sorry for all the times when we have let you down.
We have let you down by ignoring you;
we have let you down by hurting our friends with our words or our actions.
We have let you down by our inaction – when we have not stood up for injustice;
- when we have not helped give a voice to those struggling and in need of a helping hand.
We are sorry for all those times when we shut you out because we just wanted to do our own thing.
We are truly sorry and we ask you to forgive us.

Father God, we ask you to help us, each and everyday. Show us how you want us to live.
Nudge us to read the Bible, remind us to come to you, talk to you and hang out with you.

Amen

INTRODUCTION

Our Wednesday Evening Group moved to zoom during lockdown and that is how we're still currently meeting.

Our last few meetings have been centred on preparing for this service of worship. We all congregate, one by one, and chat about our day and week. When they're all in the same room the leaders find it hard to get a word in edgeways or keep the conversation on track but online, the group is much quieter. Here goes!

BEGIN ZOOM MEETING:

TIM: Hey Guys, how are you all? It's great to hang out with you all. Let's figure out some ways in which we can also hang out with God! The service we're preparing is all about hungering and thirsting to be with God – let's have some of your ideas!

SARAH: We could go somewhere to eat – or try out one of the coffee shops in town! There're loads of places where we can go to stop being hungry or thirsty.

TIM: Not that kind of hunger or thirst! How do we want to spend more time with God?

SILENCE

Rebekah: OK! Let's look at the Bible. What does that tell us about spending time with God?

JOSH: Well, Jesus went into the desert for 40 days and 40 nights to spend time talking to God but he was tempted by the Devil.

TIM: Yes! We want to spend time with God but some things get in the way? What things prevent us from spending time with God?

George: Homework

George: Sport

Hannah: Watching TV

Anna: Meeting up with friends

Josh: Playing a game on my phone

TIM: None of these things are bad things, in fact, some of them are really good, worthwhile things. They're things we need to do or like to do to relax. However, sometimes they prevent us from spending time with God.

Jo: Firstly we need to desire to seek out God. Are we hungry or thirsty enough to want to spend time with Him? What stands out to you about hunger and thirst?

George: We all get hungry and thirsty!

Jo: Exactly! We can't go very long without food and drink. I've noticed that I get grumpy and tired if I don't have regular meals and I begin not feeling very well at all if I don't drink enough. What does that tell you?

Sarah: That food and water is necessary.

Josh: Yes, and that getting to know God is necessary too.

Rebekah: Exactly! Sometimes people make a decision to pray more, or read the Bible

everyday. This can be a hard decision to make but even harder to follow through on.

Tim: However, it's worth it!

God wants to be in a relationship with us. He already knows all about us but he wants us to know all about him. He wants to be the one we chat to about our day, good or bad! He wants to hear about the latest crazy idea we've had, the funniest thing that happened to you today. He wants to be the one we talk to you when we're feeling sad and upset and He also wants to be the one we talk to when we've got great news.

Jo: Who would you tell if your football team won a match you weren't expecting to win?

Josh: I don't play football.

George: My friends!

Jo: Who would you talk to if you had an argument with a friend at school?

Hannah: Another friend – or you or Dad.

Rebekah: God would like you to tell him too!

God wants to hang out with you in your everyday life. He doesn't want to be reserved for very special occasions when you think you should involve him!!

Tim: But you've got to want to hang out with Him and I think you all do. You all turn up and hang out with us and Him on a Wednesday night. It's no different to that!

Let's start off by just telling God something about our day every day for a week. Next week we'll come back together and share how we got on.

All: OK

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

1st Reading Exodus 33:12-23 (NRSVA)

Moses' Intercession

¹²Moses said to the Lord, 'See, you have said to me, "Bring up this people"; but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. Yet you have said, "I know you by name, and you have also found favour in my sight." ¹³Now if I have found favour in your sight, show me your ways, so that I may know you and find favour in your sight. Consider too that this nation is your people.' ¹⁴He said, 'My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.' ¹⁵And he said to him, 'If your presence will not go, do not carry us up from here. ¹⁶For how shall it be known that I have found favour in your sight, I and your people, unless you go with us? In this way, we shall be distinct, I and your people, from every people on the face of the earth.'

¹⁷The Lord said to Moses, 'I will do the very thing that you have asked; for you have found favour in my sight, and I know you by name.' ¹⁸Moses said, 'Show me your glory, I pray.' ¹⁹And he said, 'I will make all my goodness pass before you, and will proclaim before you the name, "The Lord"; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. ²⁰But', he said, 'you cannot see my face; for no one shall see me and live.' ²¹And the Lord continued, 'See, there is a place by me where you shall stand on the rock; ²²and while my glory passes by I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by; ²³then I will take away my hand, and you shall see my back; but my face shall not be seen.'

2nd Reading Revelation 2:1-7 (NRSVA)

The Message to Ephesus

¹To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: These are the words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks among the

seven golden lampstands:

²I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance. I know that you cannot tolerate evildoers; you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them to be false. ³I also know that you are enduring patiently and bearing up for the sake of my name, and that you have not grown weary. ⁴But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. ⁵Remember then from what you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent. ⁶Yet this is to your credit: you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. ⁷Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches. To everyone who conquers, I will give permission to eat from the tree of life that is in the paradise of God.

3rd Reading

1 John 4:7-11

God Is Love

⁷Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ⁸Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. ⁹God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. ¹⁰In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. ¹¹Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another.

Hymn: He Came Down to my Level – Gaither Vocal Band

**He came down to my level
When I couldn't get up to His
With a strong arm He lifted me up
To show me what livin' is**

**He'll come down to your level
If you'll open up the door**

He wants to make your life worth livin'
That's what He came down for

He came down to my level
When I couldn't get up to His
With a strong arm He lifted me up
To show me what livin' is

He'll come down to your level
If you'll open up the door
He wants to make your life worth livin'
That's what He came down for

If you're lookin' for contentment
In the things that you can see
You're gonna have some disappointment
So won't you listen to me, please

'Cause I know about a Savior
He came down to be a man
And when He left, He sent His Spirit
He made me everything I am

He came down to my level
When I couldn't get up to His
With a strong arm He lifted me up
To show me what livin' is

He'll come down to your level
If you'll open up the door
He wants to make your life worth livin'
That's what He came down for

Sometimes I make decisions
That later I regret
But the Lord keeps on assuring me
He's not finished with me yet

I don't worry about tomorrow
I don't worry about yesterday
I don't worry about this crazy world
'Cause I found a better way

He came down to my level
When I couldn't get up to His
With a strong arm He lifted me up
To show me what livin' is

He'll come down to your level
If you'll open up the door
He wants to make your life worth livin'
That's what He came down for

He came down to my level
When I couldn't get up to His
With a strong arm He lifted me up
To show me what livin' is

He'll come down to your level
If you'll open up the door
He wants to make your life worth livin'
That's what He came down for

He came down to my level
When I couldn't get up to His
With a strong arm He lifted me up
To show me what livin' is

He'll come down to your level
If you'll open up the door
He wants to make your life worth livin'
That's what He came down for

He wants to make your life worth livin'
That's what He came down for
That's what He came down for

Songwriters: Dwight Liles

He Came Down To My Level Words © Warner
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Sermon

Hello Church,

If you've not met me before, my name's Tim and I have the privilege of, not just being one of the leaders of Konect4, but also one of the youth leaders who gets to work with our amazing young people at Kenilworth Methodist Church. And they've all been involved with this morning's service whether they've in front or behind of the camera or behind the scenes – they've all put something into this morning's service; so we hope you've enjoyed it.

This morning, I want to talk to you about something that has really been on my heart over the last couple of weeks, which is that – in this world where everything seems very chaotic at the moment – there is one thing that is sure and steadfast, which is that God loves us. And wants to spend time with us. And while that might seem like something that we know, it is something that we feel and something that we're desperate for.

In the first reading this morning in Exodus, it talked about how Moses was desperate to see God and God was so overcome by this that he said that he would move past Moses because he couldn't see his face and live. And God was moved by the hunger and the desperation in Moses to an extent that he did something about it and God hasn't changed. God is moved by how much we are desperate to be with him.

I've come to realise over the last couple of weeks, that one of the things that we hunger and thirst for at the moment is knowing what's going on. And the thing is that because we can't achieve that very easily at the minute, it's very easy for it to overcome other things that we should be longing or hungering and thirsting after. And it's important to realise that actually we are human beings that are easily distracted and human beings that it takes a while for things to sink into. And actually this is something that is important that we realise, because it happens really easily.

In the second reading in Revelation, God's dismay at the fact that people have forgotten their first love is so obvious. And that really hit a chord with me because I find that it comes back to me – that every time I let life get in the way and I forget how important God is to me and how I love to sit in his presence, and how I love to spend time with him, and how I love to worship him, that verse ends up coming back to me. It's a verse that I really have tried to build

large chunks of my life around because I don't want to ever forget what God's done for me. I don't want to ever forget how much I love him and how amazing it feels to be close to him. And sometimes I think we are guilty of that.

Sometimes I think we get caught up in a world and a church that's in an ever existing state of evolution. The world is not the same as it was two weeks ago, it seems at the minute, it changes hour on hour, day on day. And I think that sometimes we can get really caught up in that.

So this morning, I want to encourage you just to sit and reflect and remember the last time you just sat and spent time with God. Because, actually, sometimes it's really easy for that to all of a sudden realise it's been a while. And the sad thing is that the world is not getting any easier or any less busy. Despite the fact that we've all been locked in houses for the last nine months, it still feels as busy as ever – I don't know about you, but that's the way it feels for me. And I think that we lose sight of things. And then we come to the point where we work in a church where we live and we work and we're part of a church that has – that is evolving and changing and asking questions – which are good questions to ask – but I think sometimes we make the questions the issue. And while I'm proud to be part of a church that asks questions about the way we view things, I don't want that to come in place of the core values of the church – and the core value of the church for me is that we love God and God loves us, and we want a relationship with him.

The Bible says, seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all other things will be added unto you. And I think that sometimes, we get so stuck on the problem and on working out how to fix it, that we forget, that actually, all our wisdom and all our knowledge comes from God. And despite the fact that we work hard to obtain

it, it's all a gift and it comes from the love that God has for us.

I deliberately picked the reading from 1 John, because it talks about how we love each other only because God loved us first. And everything comes from that first love. That first encounter we have with God sets up our relationship with him and sometimes we forget about it—sometimes we forget how amazing it is to meet God for the first time. And especially at the minute when we're not in a church that's getting new people come into it, we don't see that as often which can make this an even bigger challenge. But, God is still doing amazing things and I think that us not being in a building, it doesn't mean we can't love God any more or any less. And he definitely doesn't love us any more or any less. It's impossible for him to love us more than he does.

I want to be part of a church that, yeah, tackles and looks at problems, but I also want to be part of a church that is overcome with love for God and because of that is overcome with love and compassion for other people. But also that focusses on that, and knows that that's the reason behind everything that they do. And while I work and serve with a bunch of amazing people, it's really easy for us to lose the fact that that's the reason.

So my prayer this morning is that we'd all remember how amazing it was to meet God for the first time; we'd all learn to focus on that.

I hope that in the short time I've had to share with you this morning, you've caught me heart. I know there's been a lot of me in there and I've been suffering with feeling a bit rubbish this week so this might have meandered a little but through the middle of it I'm hoping you've caught the heart of what I'm trying to say - which is that Jesus loves us so much and just wants to spend time with us. Actually the more time we spend just being with him, not sitting there and

giving him lists of requests or thinking about in passing but actually just sitting there and dwelling in his presence, the easier the problems that we face in everyday life will become to manage in our heads.

I find it really easy to lose focus on hungering after spending time with God. That's primarily because I get bored easily, cause that's just who I am but I always look for the next thing, but actually, every time I step away from that being my focus, the verse from Revelation hits me in the head. And I hope that this has challenged you to remember your first love and to gain strength from the love that God has for us so that you can better love others.

In reflecting on what we've just heard, we're going to sing together a song that talks about loving and being in a relationship with Jesus being what we really long for and how it's a core part of who we are. So we're going to sing together 'Hungry I come to you, for I know you satisfy.

THE RESPONSE

Hymn: Hungry (falling on my knees) – Crain / Hyler / Scott

**Hungry, I come to you
For I know You satisfy
I am empty but I know
Your love does not run dry**

**So I wait for You
So I wait for You**

**I'm falling on my knees
Offering all of me
Jesus, You're all this heart
Is living for**

**Broken, I run to You
For Your arms are open wide**

**I am weary but I know
Your touch restores my life**

**So I wait for You
So I wait for You**

**I'm falling on my knees
Offering all of me
Jesus, You're all this heart
Is living for**

**Hungry, I come to You
For I know You satisfy
I am empty but I know
Your love does not run dry**

Songwriters: Crain / Hyler / Scott

Hungry (Falling on My Knees) lyrics © Peermusic
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Prayers of intercession

Blessed are you, eternal God,
to be praised and glorifies for ever.

Hear us as we pray for your Church:
make us all one, that the world may believe.

Grant that every member of the Church may
truly and humbly serve you:
that the life of Christ may be revealed in us.

Strengthen all who minister in Christ's name:
give them courage to proclaim your Gospel.

Inspire and lead those who hold authority in the
nations of the world:
**guide them and all people in the way of justice
and peace.**

Make us alive to the needs our community:
help us to share each other's joys and burdens.

Loos with kindness on our homes and families:
grant that your love may grow in our hearts.

Inspire us to have compassion on those who
suffer from sickness, grief or trouble:
in your presence may they find their strength.

We remember those who have died:
Father, into your hands we commend them.

We praise you for all your saints who have
entered your eternal glory
bring us all to share in your heavenly kingdom.

Silence

Heavenly Father,
you have promised to hear
what we ask in the name of your Son:
we pray you to accept and answer our prayers,
not as we ask in our ignorance,
nor as we deserve in our sinfulness,
but as you know and love us in your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

We say the Lord's prayer:

**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 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 forever
Amen**

THE DISMISSAL

Hymn: Forgiveness – David Arthur Garcia / Toby
Mckeehan / Le Crae Moore

**'Cause we all make mistakes sometimes
And we all step across the line
But nothing's sweeter than the day we find
We find**

It's hanging over him like the crowds of Seattle
And raining on his swag, falling deeper in the
saddle

It's written on his face, he don't have to make a
sound

Somebody call the 5-0, we've got a man down

Now you can go and play it like your own rock
'n' roll

It does the job on each and every man's soul
And when your head is a pillow with a nice fall
You can beat your life that it's gonna be a fight
y'all

'Cause we all make mistakes sometimes
And we've all stepped across that line
But nothing's sweeter than the day we find
Forgiveness, forgiveness

And we all stumble and we fall
Bridges burn in the heat of it all
But nothing's sweeter than the pain
Sweeter than the pain, recall

Time for forgiveness
We all need, we all need
We all need forgiveness
We all need, we all need

This the Lecrae

My mama told me what I would be in for
If I get to the sun, get inside of me pimped up
My heart's been broken and my wounds been
open

And I don't know if I can hear I'm sorry been
spoken
But those forgiving much should be quicker to
give it
And God forgave me for it all, Jesus beg
forgiveness

So when the stones fly and they aimed at you
Just say forgive them Father, they know not
what they do

Now you can go and play it like your own rock
'n' roll

It does the job on each and every man's soul
And when your head is a pillow with a nice fall
You can beat your life that it's gonna be a fight
y'all

'Cause we all make mistakes sometimes
And we've all stepped across that line
But nothing's sweeter than the day we find
Forgiveness, forgiveness

And we all stumble and we fall
Bridges burn in the heat of it all
But nothing's sweeter than the pain
Sweeter than the pain, recall

Time for forgiveness
You know we need that that that
You know we need that that that
You know we need that that that

No matter how lost you are
You're not that far, you're not too far (from
forgiveness)

No matter how hurt you are
You're not that far, you're not too far (from
forgiveness)

And no matter how wrong you are
You're not that far, you're not too far (from
forgiveness)

No matter who you are
You're not that far, you're not too far (from
forgiveness)

Ask for forgiveness

'Cause we all make mistakes sometimes
And we've all stepped across that line
But nothing's sweeter than the day we find
Forgiveness, forgiveness

And we all stumble and we fall
They just burn underneath it all
But nothing's sweeter than the pain
Sweeter than the pain, recall

Time for forgiveness
We all need, we all need

**We all need forgiveness
We all need, we all need**

**No matter how lost you are
We all need forgiveness
No matter how hurt you are
We all need forgiveness
And no matter how wrong you are
You're not that far, you're not too far (from
forgiveness)
No matter who you are
You're not that far, you're not too far**

**We all need forgiveness forgiveness
We all need forgiveness forgiveness
We all need forgiveness forgiveness
We all need forgiveness forgiveness**

Songwriters: David Arthur Garcia / Toby
Mckeehan / Le Crae Moore

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Prayer & blessing

Let the majesty of the Father
be the light by which you walk,
the compassion of the Son
be the love by which you walk,
the presence of the Spirit
be the power by which you walk

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