

Worship at Home – Sunday 17 July 2022

This short act of worship has been prepared for you to use at home. We invite you to spend a few moments with God, knowing that other people across the Methodist Connexion are sharing this act of worship with you.

Opening Prayer

May we sit in your presence this day Lord, as we open our hearts to your word and our minds to your will may we hear you speaking to us and feel you ever near us. Amen.

Hymn: StF254 Seek ye first the kingdom of God

Sing/ Read /pray /proclaim the words or listen to it here <https://youtu.be/MAqSD7XIkPc>

Seek ye first the kingdom of God,
and his righteousness,
and all these things shall be added unto you;
Allelu-, alleluia:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia,
allelu-, alleluia!

Ask, and it shall be given unto you;
seek and ye shall find;
knock, and the door shall be opened unto to you;
Allelu-, alleluia:

We shall not live by bread alone,
but by every word
that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord;
Allelu-, alleluia:

Karen Lafferty (b. 1948)

Let us pray together

Almighty God the wonders of your creation surround us and we are reminded everyday of your power and your presence.
We thank you for all you have given us, this world and its inhabitants, for all who love or

care for us and all those we have been given to love and care for.

But beyond wonder and thanks lies love, we love you Lord, we love you with all our hearts, minds and souls and we want you to know that love, to feel that love just as we know and feel your love for us everyday.
Amen.

Today's Gospel Reading: Luke 10:38-42

Time to Reflect

To live with your sister as an adult is a complicated dynamic, (believe me I know), division of labour never seems fair to either sister and of course you both have your own set of priorities. So, I feel for these two sisters, Mary who wants nothing more than to sit at the feet of her Lord and learn and Martha who is desperately trying to be the good hostess and care for her guest.

Martha is clearly frustrated by the lack of help from her sister and I have no doubt like all good sisterly living arrangements she made her feelings clear. Not of course by walking over and asking for Mary's help because she really shouldn't have to ask, Mary after all knows she should be helping. No, the sisterly way to deal with this is to ensure your sister knows you are annoyed by her failure to play her part as you expect. You ensure she is aware that you are working hard by being obvious in your work. You put dishes down firmly so you can be heard working, you make sure your sister can see you rushing back and forth and of course you grunt, groan and sigh so she can hear your pain at the situation. It

takes a lot of time and effort to do it right and not only be noticed but guilt your sister into performing her share of the duties but it usually works.

Mary however ignores Martha's efforts and so Martha breaks a rule of both sisterhood and Jewish hospitality, she tries to get her guest to take sides in their dispute and I'm sure she's disappointed when he does so by taking Mary's side. Martha is told she is "distracted by many things" while Mary is described as having "chosen the better part".

It's not that Jesus thinks Martha shouldn't welcome or care for her guest it's that she's become so distracted by the duties, her annoyance at Mary and her search for attention, she has forgotten to actually pay her guest the attention he deserves and listen to his words.

The need for others to see how poor Martha must do it all while her sister does nothing has eclipsed Martha's need to see and hear Jesus, she's so busy trying to get everyone to notice how hard she is working to welcome the Lord she isn't paying him any real attention at all.

So, what happens, does Martha choose the better part as well, drop her duties and sit at the feet of the Lord or return to her hostess duties and try to concentrate on her tasks rather than Mary's lack of involvement. We'll never know, Luke doesn't feel the need to conclude the story.

I like to think the sisters sat together at the feet of their Lord and listened before both getting up and doing the washing up but I'll never know.

What I do know is that all of us have a little of Mary and a little of Martha in us, we have so much to do with the demands of family, world and church and we sometimes wish others would notice just how much we do and maybe appreciate it or even help us with it. But what we need, what we really need and

sometimes allow ourselves is to stop, sit in the presence of our Lord and listen to his voice.

The washing up is going nowhere, the dust will not grow legs and walk, the lawn will still need mowing tomorrow so when Jesus comes close and speaks to you stop, listen, be with him, it is the better choice.

Take a time to sit quietly

A time of prayer

Loving Lord, speak your words of love and peace into our world we pray.

Speak where violence rules and wars destroy
(Pause to pray)

Speak where homes are torn from families
(Pause to pray)

Speak where children die
(Pause to pray)

Speak where people flee for their lives or struggle to build new ones
(Pause to pray)

Speak where sickness or suffering of mind, body or soul bring pain
(Pause to pray)

Speak as your church works for a better world
(Pause to pray)

Speak Lord, your words of love and peace into our world. That our world may be changed.
Amen.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father

Hymn: Listen to Word of God speak

https://youtu.be/4JK_6osCH74

A prayer of blessing

May we sit in your presence this day and always Lord. Hearing your voice, held in your love and guided by you in all we do.

Original Materials by Liz Wood

All

Hymns reproduced under CCLI 1144191.

We are grateful to all the Ministers and Local Preachers from around the Connexion who have contributed to Worship at

Home. This resource is administrated by Ministries: Vocations and Worship in the Connexional Team.

For more worship resources see

[The Bible \(methodist.org.uk\)](http://methodist.org.uk)

[Singing the Faith Plus \(methodist.org.uk\)](http://methodist.org.uk)

Luke 10:38-42

Jesus Visits Martha and Mary

³⁸ Now as they went on their way, he entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. ³⁹ She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to what he was saying. ⁴⁰ But Martha was distracted by her many tasks; so, she came to him and asked, 'Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me.' ⁴¹ But the Lord answered her, 'Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; ⁴² there is need of only one thing.^[a] Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her.'