



The Methodist Church

Bury St Edmunds Circuit.

WORSHIP SHEET FOR 22ND NOVEMBER LOCAL PREACHERS SUNDAY AND THE SUNDAY BEFORE ADVENT

Welcome to worship

Be still, you may like to light a candle as we gather together to worship God. We remember preachers throughout the world and all people who will be worshipping today.

Call to Worship (based on Psalm 34: 3, 8)

Magnify the Lord with me;

let us lift up God's name together.

Taste and see that the Lord is good;

happy are all who trust in God.

Hymn StF 317 At the name of Jesus

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r4d4UXSjXig>

1 At the name of Jesus
every knee shall bow,
every tongue confess him
King of Glory now.
'Tis the Father's pleasure
we should call him Lord,
who from the beginning
was the mighty Word.

2 Mighty and mysterious
in the highest height
God from everlasting
very light of light
in the Father's bosom
with the Spirit blest
love, in love eternal
rest, in perfect rest.

3 Humbled for a season,
to receive a name
from the lips of sinners
unto whom he came,
faithfully he bore it
spotless to the last,
brought it back victorious
when from death he passed :

3 Bore it up triumphant
with its human light,
through all ranks of creatures
to the central height,
to the throne of Godhead,
to the Father's breast ;
filled it with the glory
of that perfect rest.

4 In your hearts enthrone him ;
there let him subdue
all that is not holy,
all that is not true ;

crown him as your captain
in temptation's hour :
let his will enfold you
in its light and power.

5 For this same Lord Jesus
shall return again,
with his Father's glory,
with his angel train;
all the wreaths of empire
meet upon his brow,
and our hearts confess him
King of Glory now. Caroline Maria Noel (1817-1877)

Prayer of Adoration

Loving God, you draw light out of darkness and coax beauty from chaos.

You spread rainbow promise across time and space.

You make music and song in the sounds of creation.

You paint pictures of glory in the stars and the clouds.

You scatter the sparks of creative initiative.

You penetrate madness with wisdom and truth.

You weave patterns of hope in the traumas of history.

You lavish your love-gifts in boundless excess.

You grace us with peace and with warm hospitality.

You welcome each person regardless of race.

You invite us to dine at the table of plenty.

You fill us with faith, with hope and with joy.

You come to us, believe in us, embrace us, and stay with us,

for you are our God, our redeemer and friend.

Amen

Prayer of Confession

Creator of all, you call us into relationship with you and each other, we recognise our need to confess the things that cause our hearts to be heavy.

When we hear your word and fail to let it speak to us...When we have listened and yet not heard: **Forgive us Lord.**

When we have ignored the teachings of Jesus and gone our own way...When we have heard and yet not acted: **Forgive us Lord.**

When we behave as if you are completely beyond us, not standing beside us...When we act on the prompting of your Spirit but fail to share love: **Forgive us Lord.**

Help us to know your forgiveness and share it with others. Encourage us to listen, hear, act and share you with all people, as you call us into your glorious future. **Amen**

Assurance of Pardon

May the living God,
raise us from despair,
give us victory over sin
and set us free in Christ. **Amen**

Hymn 10,000 reasons for my heart to sing Bless the Lord Oh my Soul Oh my soul

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o2M58JuV-FU>
chorus:

*Bless the Lord Oh my soul, Oh my soul,
Worship His Holy name!
Sing like never before, Oh my soul,
I worship your Holy name.*

The sun comes up it's a new day dawning,
it's time to sing your song again.
Whatever may pass and whatever lies
before me,
let me be singing when the evening comes.

Chorus

You're rich in love and you're slow to anger,
your name is great and your heart is kind.
For all your goodness I will keep on singing,
ten thousand reasons for my heart to find!

Chorus

And on that day when my strength is failing,
the end draws near and my time has come,
still my soul will sing your praise unending,
ten thousand years and then for evermore!

Chorus

Bible Reading Matthew 25 v 31- 46

(amalgamation of two versions)

When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at his left. Then the King will say to those at his right hand "Come you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you

welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me" Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?" And the King will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me (*The Message*) Then he will turn to the 'goats', the ones on his left and say "Get out worthless goats! You're fit for nothing but the fires of hell. And why? Because, I was hungry and you gave me no meal, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was homeless and you gave me no bed, I was shivering and you gave me no clothes, sick and in prison, and you never visited. Then those 'goats' are going to say "Master what are you talking about? When did we ever see you hungry or thirsty or homeless or shivering or sick or in prison, and didn't help?" "He will answer them, 'I'm telling you the solemn truth; Whenever you failed to do one of these things to someone who was being overlooked or ignored, that was me - you failed to do it to me' Then those 'goats' will be herded to their eternal doom, but the 'sheep' to their eternal reward.

As you reflect on this reading listen to the sung version of the Psalm or read through the words.

Psalm 46

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0x9IX4LuoGU>

The God of Jacob is our strength,
our help in times of trouble.
Though mountains fall into the depths,
though seas do rage and roar,
though earth and hills be shaken
we will not be afraid.
The Lord Almighty is with us,
our refuge evermore!
There is a river bringing joy to the City of our God;
a sacred house of God most high it shall not be destroyed!
Though nations tremble, kingdoms fall,
God thunders, earth dissolves –
the Lord Almighty is with us,
our refuge evermore!
Oh come and see what has God done -
amazing things on earth!
God breaks the bow, destroys the spear
and sets the shield on fire.

Be still and know that I am God;
I rule o'er all the earth.
The Lord Almighty is with us,
our refuge evermore!

Reflection by Stella Davis

First of all, on this Local Preachers Sunday, how great to be "with" you doing this. One of the privileges of preaching is getting to know congregations around the circuit and I'm sure I speak for all our preachers when I say that we miss seeing you and worshipping with you. As I speak then you are all in my mind's eye.

Two contradictory qualities spring from today's Gospel - **Humility and Boldness**. This is a service for Local Preachers Sunday - preachers strive to balance Boldness with Humility but we are all called to do this. I am recording this on the day America votes for its President – Biden or Trump? Both men are bold, one has learned humility. I'm speaking as we begin the second national lockdown with all the emotional and economic uncertainty that brings, Covid teaches us humility, how can we be bold? In these days we need the great truths that outlast the ebb and flow of daily, yearly, century to century events. Our God holds a bigger picture and we are secure in His Love. Humility and boldness are his trademarks. Humility annoyed me when I was young. I wasn't good at sticking up for myself so anyone who deliberately humbled themselves was irritating. When we properly understand God's love for us, that he humbled himself, taking on the form of a servant, and dying for us so that we could be reconciled to God for ever, we are humbled by His love. God calls us; that is humbling. Throughout history we see people chosen by God to participate in His work in the world. I doubt that anyone who ever said "Yes" to God ever felt up to the task, "not me, I can't, I don't know how". Jesus prayed all night before choosing his disciples, and then chose people who were flawed and fearful. As God calls, so He also equips and sustains. Whatever the role to which we are called, we must maintain our own lively relationship with God – being open in confession of our shortcomings (he knows them anyway), searching honestly for deeper understanding through reading, prayer, conversation and reflection. Humility is learning to let go of ourselves and allow God to fill us with himself. Humility is admitting that time and again we fail in that! Boldness is knowing that even in our imperfect and unfinished state – we

are still called to show and speak of Love. In our Gospel passage the righteous were mystified about their service but they had boldly gone where not everyone fears to tread. They had fed, clothed, visited, invited and sheltered friend and stranger and their boldness – their confidence and courage - was noticed. In artistic terms "Bold" is colour or form that stands out clearly. In these times, millions are hungry for God's Love to stand out clearly, to be visible, a beacon and a refuge. As God's people we are severely challenged. Our human nature is concerned at loss of the familiar and comforting, by having to let go of the work we have been used to doing. Our God-nature is challenged by the need to listen and reach out differently in ways that suit the days in which we find ourselves. Humility and Boldness do seem like direct opposites, but not when they are connected by the Love of God. Love provides the humility to let go of what we desire and learn from God. Love supplies the boldness to go out (or rather, stay in!) and do what He desires. *Then the righteous will say to him "when was it we saw you anxious, newly unemployed, unable to feed your children, missing your education, threatened with losing your home, lonely and isolated in lockdown, bereaved and waiting for closure, missing family celebrations of birth and marriage, so hopeless that you put your Christmas decorations up in October, a burnt out Key worker, mentally ill, a refugee, a planet activist, fearful of your future?" and He will say to them "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me"*

Amen, and God Bless You.

Hymn StF 404 vv 1,3,4

https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=65ZY_AkVGPA

God's Spirit is in my heart,
he has called me and set me apart,
this is what I have to do,
what I have to do

*He has sent me to give the good news to the poor,
tell prisoners that they are prisoners no more;
tell blind people that they can see,
and set the downtrodden free
and go tell everyone
the news that the kingdom of God has come,
and Go tell everyone,
the news that God's kingdom has come.*

Don't carry a load in your pack;
Don't carry a load on your back
you don't need two shirts on your back.
A workman can earn his own keep,
can earn his own keep. *Chorus*

Don't worry what you have to say,
Don't worry because on that day,
God's spirit will speak in your heart,
will speak in your heart. *Chorus*

Prayers of Intercession

Loving God, we thank you that your Son, Jesus, came to bring us life in all its fullness. We bring our concerns and needs before you now: reach out and touch your troubled world. We think particularly today of ...

Silence

Lord, help us to listen to your voice and respond to your call to bring hope to this troubled world

Loving God, reach out and bless our community: those we worship with, live with and work with, and especially those known to us who are ill or in need of comfort.

Silence

Lord, help us to listen to your voice and respond to your call to speak out for the voiceless and support those who are troubled.

Loving God, reach out and inspire those who hold positions of leadership, in government and business, churches and charities, education and health. Encourage in all leaders a spirit of integrity and generosity and enable them to see the way ahead clearly.

Silence

Lord, help us to listen to your voice and respond to your call to lead or to serve wherever you need us.

Loving God, reach out and revitalise Local Preachers who lead worship in challenging places, that they will be able to speak of grace where there is despair or hopelessness; that they will be empowered to speak of love in a world which finds love hard to find; that they will find quiet words of truth to challenge the noisy opinions shouted by the world at large.

Silence

Lord, help us each to listen to your voice and respond to your call to share the story of our own faith journey with others.

Loving God, reach out to each one of us: fill us with your Spirit as we carefully consider those aspects of our lives that need your healing presence.

Silence

Lord, help us to listen to your voice and learn to trust your loving grace at work in our lives.

Loving God, help us to follow the example of Jesus and live out your will with every fibre of our being. **Amen**

We say together The Lord's Prayer

Blessing of our Gifts

Loving God,
Whatever we give to you
it can never match your offering to us in Christ.
Teach us, as we offer our gifts,
to bring also our lives in joyful response,
ready for you to use us as you will,
for your kingdom's sake **Amen**

This being the last Sunday before Advent we also reflect on Christ the King – we do that as we sing our final hymn

Hymn StF 335 Rejoice the Lord is King

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aDFAv0eh-s8>

- 1 Rejoice, the Lord is King!
Your Lord and King adore;
mortals, give thanks, and sing,
and triumph evermore:
*Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
rejoice! Again I say: rejoice!*
- 2 Jesus the Saviour reigns,
the God of truth and love;
when he had purged our stains,
he took his seat above:
- 3 His kingdom cannot fail,
he rules both earth and heaven;
the keys of death and hell
are to our Jesus given:
- 4 Rejoice in glorious hope;
Jesus the Judge shall come,
and take his servants up
to their eternal home:
*We soon shall hear the archangel's voice;
God's trumpet-call shall sound: rejoice!*

Charles Wesley (1707–1788)

THE GRACE

We say together...

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.

some prayers from:

A suggested Order of Service for Local Preachers' Sunday, 'Come and See'