

Circuit Worship for the 17th January 2021 offered by Zena Zakis

When the song of angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flock,
The work of Christmas begins:

... To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among brothers,
To make music in the heart.

Howard Thurman

Songs of Fellowship 40 / Singing the Faith 20

1. Be still, for the presence of the Lord,
the Holy One is here;
Come bow before him now with
reverence and fear.

In him no sin is found, we stand on
holy ground;
Be still, for the presence of the Lord,
the Holy One is here.

2. Be still, for the glory of the Lord is
shining all around;
He burns with holy fire, with
splendour he is crowned.

How awesome is the sight, our
radiant King of light!
Be still, for the glory of the Lord is
shining all around.

3. Be still, for the power of the Lord is
moving in this place;
He comes to cleanse and heal, to
minister His grace.
No work too hard for him, in faith
receive from Him;
Be still, for the power of the Lord is
moving in this place.

David J Evans

Although we cannot worship in our churches it is well to remember the whole world is of God's creation so as we worship together today, we are on Holy ground and the Holy one is here.

Reading: 1 Samuel 3:1-10

The LORD Calls Samuel

3 The boy Samuel ministered before the LORD under Eli. In those days the word of the LORD was rare; there were not many visions.

2 One night Eli, whose eyes were becoming so weak that he could barely see, was lying down in his usual place. 3 The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the house of the LORD, where the ark of God was. 4 Then the LORD called Samuel.

Samuel answered, "Here I am." 5 And he ran to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me."

But Eli said, "I did not call; go back and lie down." So he went and lay down.

6 Again the LORD called, "Samuel!" And Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me."

"My son," Eli said, "I did not call; go back and lie down."

7 Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD: The word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him.

8 A third time the LORD called, "Samuel!" And Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me."

Then Eli realized that the LORD was calling the boy. 9 So Eli told Samuel, "Go and lie down, and if he calls you, say, 'Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

10 The LORD came and stood there, calling as at the other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" Then Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening."

Songs of Fellowship 42 / Singing the Faith 545

1. Be though my vision, O Lord of my heart,
Be all else but naught to me, save that Thou art;
Be Thou my best thought in the day and the night,
Both waking and sleeping, Thy presence my light.
2. Be Thou my wisdom, be Thou my true word,
Be Thou ever with me, and I with Thee, Lord;
Be Thou my great Father, and I Thy true son;
Be Thou in me dwelling, and I with Thee one.
3. Be Thou my breastplate, the sword for the fight;
Be thou my whole armour, be Thou my true might;
Be Thou my soul's shelter, be Thou my strong tower:
O raise me Thou heavenward, great Power of my power.
4. Riches I need not, nor man's empty praise:
Be Thou inheritance now and always;
Be You and Thou only the first in my heart:
O Sovereign of heaven, my treasure Thou art.
5. High King of heaven, Thy heaven's bright Sun,
O grant me it's joys after victory is won;
Great Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
Still be Thou my vision, O Ruler of all.
Irish, 8th century translated by Mary Elizabeth Byrne (1880–1931)
versified by Eleanor Henrietta Hull (1860–1935) (alt.)

Reading Psalm 139: 13-16 (From The Message)

13–16 Oh yes, you shaped me first inside, then out;
you formed me in my mother's womb.
I thank you, High God—you're breathtaking!
Body and soul, I am marvellously made!
I worship in adoration—what a creation!
You know me inside and out,
you know every bone in my body;
You know exactly how I was made, bit by bit,
how I was sculpted from nothing into something.
Like an open book, you watched me grow from conception to birth;
all the stages of my life were spread out before you,
The days of my life all prepared
before I'd even lived one day.

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Confession

Dear Lord

Your word says we will seek you and find you when we seek you with all our heart. We long to hear your voice, Lord. But we know in order to hear you, we need to spend with you. Help us to desire your presence more than anything else. Your presence is a gift and we will show gratitude for that gift by making time to seek you in prayer each day. We know you will meet us there and we will listen to what you want us to do

Father, forgive us for letting our lives get so busy that we have forgotten to prioritise our time together. Thank you for the second chance. Thank you for also reminding us of the danger of trying to face life's challenges in our own strength. Time in your presence brings peace, comfort and renewed hope.

In the name of our Lord Jesus, our Saviour, we pray
Amen

Reading John 1: 43-51

Jesus Calls Philip and Nathanael

43 The next day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. Finding Philip, he said to him, "Follow me."

44 Philip, like Andrew and Peter, was from the town of Bethsaida. 45 Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

46 "Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?" Nathanael asked.

"Come and see," said Philip.

47 When Jesus saw Nathanael approaching, he said of him, "Here truly is an Israelite in whom there is no deceit."

48 "How do you know me?" Nathanael asked.

Jesus answered, "I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip called you."

49 Then Nathanael declared, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the king of Israel."

50 Jesus said, "You believe because I told you I saw you under the fig tree. You will see greater things than that." 51 He then added, "Very truly I tell you, you will see 'heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on' the Son of Man."

Songs of Fellowship 851 / Singing the Faith 446

1. I will offer up my life
in spirit and truth,
Pouring out the oil of love
As my worship to You.
In surrender I must give my every
part;
Lord receive the sacrifice
Of a broken heart.

*Jesus, what can I give, what can I
bring
To so faithful a friend, to so loving a
King?
Saviour, what can be said, what can
be sung
As a praise of your name
For the things you have done?*

*Oh, my words could not tell, not even
in part,
Of the debt of love, that is owned by
this grateful heart.*

2. You deserve my every breath
For You've paid the great cost;
Giving up your life to death,
Even death on a cross.
You took all my shame away,
There defeated my sin,
Opened up the gates of heaven,
And have beckoned me in.

*Jesus, what can I give, what can I
bring
Matt Redman (b. 1974)*

Reflection

"Jesus found Phillip". Phillip didn't find Christ, Christ found Phillip. This is really important. We hear and probably say ourselves that we have found Jesus, but what they and we often forget is that they and we are the found ones. God constantly seeks out his people. Throughout the Bible he looks for his created ones. In the Garden of Eden God calls out for Adam and Eve who are hiding after having eaten the apple. In our Old Testament reading God calls out to Daniel who doesn't at that point understand. In Ephesians Paul tells us that he has always sought us out "For he chose us in him before the creation of the world." Does that mean we don't have any free will? Of course we do, God seeks all of us and calls out to all of us, we choose whether to listen and, more importantly to hear what he has to say and what he wants us to do. It is then a further choice if we actually do what he has told us his wishes.

To 'Follow Him' is not to give him a bit of thought when we have time, after the housework, cleaning the hamster, the accounts, washing the car, our relationships or whatever else fills our lives. We are asked to follow him by putting him at the centre of our lives, we mustn't hold anything back, "He is Lord of all or not at all". So how do we do that?

The first rule of being a disciple is that we must tell other people about Jesus. After all the first thing Phillip did was go and tell Nathaniel. Phillip was not a man of great learning but he went on to be a great evangelist. He might have struggled to give in depth arguments but he was passionate, "Come and see". We don't need to be great Theologians to be a disciple, we just need to be passionate about our beliefs and say "Come and see". Only when others can see what we believe can they be persuaded that they have been found by God.

Sometimes, it can be disheartening and depressing when we don't get the response we hope for. Like the disciples and later evangelists, we have to keep on going and that may be all that is needed. The second rule of being a disciple is to be determined.

And thirdly, very importantly, being a disciple means receiving the Peace and Grace from God. He knows us in all ways before we come to him. In Psalm 139 we are told "all the stages of my life are laid out before you". He knows Nathaniel, who is sceptical, "I saw you while you were under the fig-tree before Philip called you." Jesus knows Nathaniel spiritually and recognises his lack of deceit and knows that Nathaniel would see and do great things. God knows every hair on our head, he can see what we can do if we put him at the centre of our lives. The more we do this, the greater the peace we will have in our hearts.

Sometimes we make assumptions about people, places and situations. Nathaniel did the same, "Nazareth, can anything good come from there?" But as he found out and we now know, the very best came out of Nazareth. So let us not assume that things can't change. If we say "Come and see", with love and passion, if we put God at the centre of our lives and accept his love and blessing, then we will have heard him and we will feel his peace and we will know that things have already changed.

For conversation

How easy or difficult is it to talk to others about your faith to non believers and say "Come and see"?

What else do you need to do to be a disciple of the Lord?

Prayer: Songs of Fellowship 423 x2

Oh Lord hear my prayer, Oh Lord hear my prayer:
When I call answer me.
Oh Lord hear my prayer, Oh Lord hear my prayer:
Come and listen to me.

Prayers of Intercession

We pray for those who feel small and insignificant;
We pray hope for those whose incomes are small;
We pray encouragement for those who feel neglected;
We pray confidence for those who feel unattractive;
We pray courage for those who feel afraid;
We pray boldness for those who feel inadequate;
We pray protection for all in minorities;
We pray trust for those who feel their faith is fragile.
We pray peace for all creation, great and small.
In Jesus' name. **Amen**

The Lord's Prayer

Traditional Form

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

Modern Form

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come;
your will be done;
on earth as in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us 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 for ever.
Amen.

Songs of Fellowship 830 / Singing The Faith 663

1. I, the Lord of sea and sky,
I have heard my people cry;
All who dwell in dark and sin
My hand will save.
I, who made the stars of night,
Will make their darkness bright.
I will speak my word to them,
Whom shall I send?

*Here I am Lord.
Is it I Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go Lord,
If you lead me;
I will hold your people in my heart.*

2. I, the Lord of snow and rain,
I have borne your people's pain;
I have left for love of them -
They turn away.

I will break their hearts of stone,
Give them hearts for love alone;
I will speak my word to them. Whom
shall I send?

Here I am, Lord...

3. I, the Lord of wind and flame,
I will tend the poor and lame,
I will set a feast for them -
My hand will save.
Finest bread I will provide
Till their hearts are satisfied;
I will give My life to them.
Whom shall I send?

Here I am, Lord...
Daniel L. Schutte (b. 1947)

Blessing

Lord, thank you for this promise for the new year – that in Jesus, you are with us. We know that you will help us to focus our lives on you today and in the year ahead. We go out as disciples with your blessing to say Come and see.

Amen

The Grace

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore.

Amen

Please be assured that we are still here if you need anything at all during this time.

Rev'd Lesley can be contacted on 01933 312778 and Rev'd Kim on 01933 622137.

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Following on from the Advent booklets the Nene Valley Circuit is looking to publish a Lent devotional series based on the Psalms.

We are therefore asking for pieces that reflect a psalm of your choice and how it sustains and helps you or even challenges you during the season of lent.

This could be in the form of a reflection, poem, picture. We will not have room to print the Psalm but if you wish to include a verse or two or use the Psalm as your title that would be helpful as we will be asking people to have their bibles to hand to aid these devotions.

The format will once again be A5 with a word count of around 280-300max.

This is open to all, and we look forward to receiving your reflections by the deadline date of 31st January, but it would be helpful if you would send your contribution as soon as you have completed it to Rachael Newman at nvmethodistypf@gmail.com

We would especially like to hear from those who missed out from submitting a piece to the Advent book and from those who creative writing might be a new skill.

With 40 days to cover we hope to have a wide selection of devotional material to share with each other around our circuit.

It would also be really helpful if you would email Rachael Newman at nvmethodistypf@gmail.com to sign up for a page at this time.

To our artistic friends we are also looking for a piece to feature as the front cover under the title 'Spending Time with The Psalms' and please contact Rev'd Kim (01933 622137 rev@theshorleys.co.uk) for further details.

With thanks
On behalf of the Nene Valley Circuit