

St Paul's Methodist Church, Crawley

Worship at Home

**A service to follow in your own place and at your own
time
when you are unable to attend church in person**

21st August 2022

**Theme: *What are we doing to our world?*
by Deacon Jenny Parnell**



Call to worship Psalm 136: 1-3

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good,
for his steadfast love endures forever.
Give thanks to the God of gods,
for his steadfast love endures forever.
Give thanks to the Lord of lords,
for his steadfast love endures forever.

Hymn StF 51 Great is Thy faithfulness

1. Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father;
There is no shadow of turning with Thee;
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not;
As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be.

- *Refrain:*

Great is Thy faithfulness!
Great is Thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see:
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided—
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

2. Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,
Sun, moon, and stars in their courses above
Join with all nature in manifold witness
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love.
3. Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide,
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow—
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!

Thomas O Chisholm 1866-1960

A Prayer of Adoration and Confession (from 500 Prayers for All Occasions)

Lord, we praise you that though you are always beyond us,
you are never out of reach. You are greater than anything we can imagine,
but we can call you Father and Mother.

Your sovereign power and your eternal glory may make us feel small
and inadequate, but you have chosen to live in the hearts and lives of
those who love you.

We praise you for the limitless love that you have towards your
creation. It was out of love that you created. It was because you are love
that we were made. You created us to live in a loving, caring relationship
with yourself.

We praise you that even when we did not respond to your love, but used our free will to live life our own way, you did not reject us. In Christ you reached down to lift us up and to restore us, and our fellowship, with you.

Through Christ you have provided an opportunity for us to begin again, to be filled with hope and to be at peace in our relationship with you. Amen

The Lord's Prayer

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.

Jenny's message

Autumn is nearly here and we look forward once again to enjoying the colours of the season all around us, the fruit trees heavy with fruit in our orchards and gardens, the leaves and seeds falling to the ground, perhaps walks through woods with the crispness underfoot that we associate with the season, the 'seedtime and the harvest' being sung about again in our churches and schools, and all being well as we recognise the familiarity of the turning of the seasons.

But the recent heat wave and drought in parts of Britain and also in significant areas of the globe have meant that the browned dry grassland and fields, hedges and verges have been with us for quite some time, with wildfires breaking out across both field and forest. The seasons seem less defined, the wildlife less prevalent, and the lives we live just a little more precarious perhaps.

What are we doing to our world and what are we doing to mitigate disaster?

The Millennium Seed Bank at Kew's Royal Botanical Gardens at Wakehurst, suggests that two in five plant species are in danger of extinction – not just from this year's drought or fire but as a consequence of our failure to look after our world with respect and the devastating changes to the climate that are happening as a result. The Millennium Seed Project is collecting seeds from as many species across the UK and the world as it can. It will keep them at sub-zero temperatures in specially designed underground flood, bomb and radiation-proof vaults. They currently have over 2.4 billion seeds - and counting! A 'Noah's Ark' of seeds for the future, should we need it.

Seeds are the precious treasure-chests of life. They provide the food we eat as grain for bread, and crops of all kinds. They provide flowers and shrubs for our pleasure. They grow into trees for the cleansing and replenishing of the air we breathe. In so many ways they sustain life.

Julian of Norwich, the 14th Century Mystic and anchoress, in one of her many visions found herself holding a hazelnut in her hand, as miniscule in God's eye as a tiny round ball floating in space, and she asked God what it was, and the reply came *'it is all that is made.....and God loves it'*.

The seed is so important for the future of our world, so important for our survival, so important to God that we should be mindful to make sure that we do our best to protect and preserve it.

This autumn perhaps we could find the space and time to reflect on the precariousness of our ecosystems, to think about how we use the world's resources and to make the changes needed in our own lives to reserve our world. Perhaps also, we could sow, plant or grow something new for God and for the future of our world.

Prayers for others

God of the past and of the future, we bring to you in prayer those people and places on our hearts today:

We remember the parts of the world where people are being killed, oppressed, and displaced.

We pray for all people affected by natural disaster and climate change.

We pray for all those who work to bring food to our table as they struggle with the complexities of legislation and the challenges of extreme weather. And may those who exploit, or abuse leave behind cruelty and follow your call to compassion.

We pray for our church families, our communities, and our loved ones, for those who feel overwhelmed by the challenges of each day, for those adapting to new ways of living, for those who are ill, for those close to death, for those who are grieving.

Help us all to leave behind all that separates us from you and from one another and to follow your call to trust and to love.

in Jesus' name. Amen

The Blessing

May the rainbow of many colours bind you to God, may the soft winds of heaven refresh your spirit and sunshine brighten your heart. May the burdens of the day rest lightly on you and God enfold you in love. May the blessing of Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with you and remain with you now and for evermore. Amen