

# **North Staffordshire Circuit (11/22)**

## **Service Sheets For the Month of July 2025**

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## **Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2025 – 14<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time**

*This service has been compiled by Rev'd Joy Ventom*

### **Call To Worship:**

Lead us, Lord, to the good green grass and the life-giving water.

Lead us, Lord, to the promises of your word.

Lead us, Lord, to the gathering of your people.

Lead us, Lord, to your kingdom of joy.

**Amen.**

### **Hymn: Lead Us Heavenly Father Lead Us (StF 238)**

Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us  
o'er the world's tempestuous sea;  
guard us, guide us, keep us, feed us,  
for we have no help but thee;  
yet possessing every blessing,  
if our God our Father be.

Saviour, breathe forgiveness o'er us:  
all our weakness thou dost know;  
thou didst tread this earth before us,  
thou didst feel its keenest woe;  
lone and dreary, faint and weary,  
through the desert thou didst go.

Spirit of our God, descending,  
fill our hearts with heavenly joy,  
love with every passion blending,  
pleasure that can never cloy:  
thus provided, pardoned, guided,  
nothing can our peace destroy.

### **Prayers:**

Father, you are the king of heaven,  
above all forms of earthly kingship;  
Jesus, you are the king of love incarnate,  
our Saviour, lover of souls;

Holy Spirit, you are the spirit of divine kingship,  
surging among us in power and glory.  
We adore you, not with gold and jewels  
or the symbols of earthly rulers,  
but with hearts and minds open  
to the love and wisdom of your divine leadership.

Father, we confess that we are often divided;  
although united in proclaiming you our king,  
we disagree on what that means, and what you are like.  
We think you favour our church over others,  
and even fight among ourselves, claiming greater knowledge,  
greater understanding, than any of us can possibly have.  
Today, we put our differences aside and come before you as one,  
to acclaim and worship you as king over all.

**Amen.**

We join our prayers together as we say 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 and the power, and the glory,  
forever and ever.

**Amen.**

### **Hymn: All Praise To Our Redeeming Lord (StF 608)**

All praise to our redeeming Lord,  
who joins us by his grace,  
and bids us, each to each restored,  
together seek his face.

He bids us build each other up;  
and, gathered into one,  
to our high calling's glorious hope  
we hand in hand go on.

The gift which he on one bestows,  
we all delight to prove;  
the grace through every vessel flows,  
in purest streams of love.

Ev'n now we think and speak the same,  
and cordially agree;  
concentred all, through Jesus' name,  
in perfect harmony.

We all partake the joy of one,  
the common peace we feel,  
a peace to sensual minds unknown,  
a joy unspeakable.

And if our fellowship below  
in Jesus be so sweet,  
what heights of rapture shall we know  
when round his throne we meet!

### **Reading: 2 Samuel 5:1-5 & 9-10**

All the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and said, "We are your own flesh and blood. <sup>2</sup> In the past, while Saul was king over us, you were the one who led Israel on their military campaigns. And the Lord said to you, 'You will shepherd my people Israel, and you will become their ruler.'"

<sup>3</sup> When all the elders of Israel had come to King David at Hebron, the king made a covenant with them at Hebron before the Lord, and they anointed David king over Israel.

<sup>4</sup> David was thirty years old when he became king, and he reigned forty years. <sup>5</sup> In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months, and in Jerusalem he reigned over all Israel and Judah thirty-three years.

<sup>9</sup> David then took up residence in the fortress and called it the City of David. He built up the area around it, from the terraces<sup>[b]</sup> inward. <sup>10</sup> And he became more and more powerful, because the Lord God Almighty was with him.

### **Reading: Mark 6:1-13**

Jesus left there and went to his hometown, accompanied by his disciples. <sup>2</sup> When the Sabbath came, he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were amazed.

“Where did this man get these things?” they asked. “What’s this wisdom that has been given him? What are these remarkable miracles he is performing?” <sup>3</sup> Isn’t this the carpenter? Isn’t this Mary’s son and the brother of James, Joseph,<sup>[a]</sup> Judas and Simon? Aren’t his sisters here with us?” And they took offense at him.

<sup>4</sup> Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his own town, among his relatives and in his own home.” <sup>5</sup> He could not do any miracles there, except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them. <sup>6</sup> He was amazed at their lack of faith.

Then Jesus went around teaching from village to village. <sup>7</sup> Calling the Twelve to him, he began to send them out two by two and gave them authority over impure spirits.

<sup>8</sup> These were his instructions: “Take nothing for the journey except a staff—no bread, no bag, no money in your belts. <sup>9</sup> Wear sandals but not an extra shirt. <sup>10</sup> Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you leave that town. <sup>11</sup> And if any place will not welcome you or listen to you, leave that place and shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them.”

<sup>12</sup> They went out and preached that people should repent. <sup>13</sup> They drove out many demons and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them.

### **Sermon:**

What do we expect a leader to look like? What are our expectations formed by? - our culture?, our personal history? Sometimes we make assumptions about people – they cannot possibly be leaders because they are too young, the wrong gender or from a different ethnicity. It’s known as ‘unconscious bias’ and many organisations are now recognising that it

exists and are training managers and recruiters to be aware of their own unconscious assumptions about others.

If we look around our own world, we see that it is sometimes the leaders we don't expect who are shaking things up. Think of Greta Thunberg and the many young climate activists she has inspired. They are challenging the complacency and inaction of governments and refusing to be silenced. King David, despite his personal failings, was regarded as the 'model king' of Israel. In today's reading from 2 Samuel, we see him fulfil his God-given destiny as he is anointed and makes the city of Jerusalem his own. Yet we remember that as a young shepherd boy, he did not seem a very likely future king. But God saw beyond external appearances to the heart (1 Samuel 16.7b).

In today's Gospel reading, we see Jesus visiting his hometown of Nazareth, and teaching in the synagogue. But his hearers remember him when he was a boy, the child of Mary, the carpenter's son, and reject his teaching. They cannot see beyond their own 'unconscious bias' about what a leader and teacher should look like.

Think about the people around you. Are there people with gifts that could be nurtured and encouraged? Are there potential leaders in our midst? Ask God to show how you might be an encouragement to that person and resolve to do something about it.

### **Hymn: The Kingdom Of God Is Justice And Joy (StF 255)**

The kingdom of God is justice and joy;  
For Jesus restores what sin would destroy.  
God's power and glory in Jesus we know;  
And here and hereafter the kingdom shall grow.

The kingdom of God is mercy and grace;  
The captives are freed, the sinners find place,  
The outcast are welcomed God's banquet to share;  
And hope is awakened in place of despair.

The kingdom of God is challenge and choice:  
Believe the good news, repent and rejoice!

God's love for us sinners brought Christ to his cross:  
Our crisis of judgement for gain or for loss.

God's kingdom is come, the gift and the goal;  
In Jesus begun, in heaven made whole.  
The heirs of the kingdom shall answer his call;  
And all things cry "Glory!" to God all in all.

**Intercessions:**

Lord, just as you sent out your disciples of old to share the Gospel, we pray today for all people who serve in the field of mission, at home or abroad. For all those in ministry and leadership within the church. For all those making themselves vulnerable by sharing of you.

**Merciful God sufficient, we lift our prayers before you.  
Strengthen and protect your people sharing the Gospel.**

We pray for the conflicts and tensions raging throughout the world – hatred, bombings, corruption. We pray for all those caught up in such situations. And for the people working to bring about reconciliation.

**Merciful God sufficient, we lift our prayers before you.  
Diffuse hatred and bring peace to the world.**

We pray for all countries struggling to cope due to lack of resources, vaccines and clean water. For those everywhere who are sick; be it in mind or body. For those who put their own lives at risk to help save others. For the bereaved.

**Merciful God sufficient, we lift our prayers before you.  
Restore health, comfort and console.**

When the disciples were sent out, they were instructed to take no food with them. We pray for all people who live each day not knowing where their next meal is coming from. For all those who rely on aid or food banks to put a meal on the table.

**Merciful God sufficient, we lift our prayers before you.  
Feed and nourish those in need.  
Amen.**

## **Hymn: Hear The Call Of The Kingdom (StF 407)**

Hear the call of the kingdom  
Lift your eyes to the King  
Let His song rise within you  
As a fragrant offering  
Of how God rich in mercy  
Came in Christ to redeem  
All who trust in His unfailing grace

Hear the call of the Kingdom  
To be children of light  
With the mercy of heaven  
The humility of Christ  
Walking justly before Him  
Loving all that is right  
That the life of Christ may shine through us

*King of Heaven we will answer the call  
We will follow bringing hope to the world  
Filled with passion, filled with power to proclaim  
Salvation in Jesus' name*

Hear the call of the Kingdom  
To reach out to the lost  
With the Father's compassion  
In the wonder of the cross  
Bringing peace and forgiveness  
And a hope yet to come  
Let the nations put their trust in Him

### **Blessing:**

Lead us, Lord, when we lose sight of you.  
Lead us, good Lord, through darkness to your light.  
Lead us through disappointment and failure  
to a place of new calling.  
Lead us though we often struggle  
and sometimes do not listen to your voice.



Lead us, good Lord, deeper into your love for us.

**Amen.**

# Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2025 – 15<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

## Action For Children Sunday



*This service has been compiled by Mrs Sheila Heap*

**Wherever you are, welcome to this time of worship.  
May you find it to be a time of blessing.**

### **Call To Worship:**

With ears ready to hear, eyes ready to see,  
hearts open to God's love, let us draw near to Him. **Amen.**

### **Hymn: God Is Love: Let Heaven Adore Him (StF 103)**

God is Love: let heaven adore Him;  
God is Love: let earth rejoice;  
let creation sing before Him,  
and exalt Him with one voice.  
He who laid the earth's foundation,  
He who spread the heavens above  
He who breathes through all creation,  
He is Love, eternal Love.

God is Love: and He, enfolding  
all the world in one embrace,  
with unfailing grasp is holding  
every child of every race.  
And when human hearts are breaking  
under sorrow's iron rod,  
then they find that self-same aching  
deep within the heart of God.

God is Love: and though with blindness  
sin afflicts each human soul,  
God's eternal loving-kindness  
holds and guides and keeps them whole.  
Sin and death and hell shall never  
O'er us final triumph gain;  
God is Love, so Love for ever  
O'er the universe must reign.

Timothy Rees (1897 – 1939)

### **Prayer of Praise and Adoration:**

God of encouragement,  
You bless us by calling us by name:  
we are encouraged by Your living Word.  
You bless us by inviting us to serve You,  
and we are encouraged by Your living Word.  
You bless us through the lives of others,  
and we are encouraged by Your living Word.  
You entrust to us the ministry of blessing others,  
that they may be encouraged by Your living Word.  
Loving God,  
when we are hesitant, encourage us;  
when we are afraid, reassure us;  
when we are struggling, bless us;  
when we are complacent, challenge us;  
when we are divided, unite us  
and wherever we are, use us to encourage,  
reassure, bless, challenge and unite others,  
in Jesus' name, and to Your glory. **Amen.**

### **Prayer of Confession and Assurance of Forgiveness**

Living God, we want to be better. We want to be our best, for You and for Your world.

Move within us, transform us, change us. Challenge and inspire us, by Your Spirit, to fulfil Your desires for our lives. We are sorry, for all the times we've turned away from that desire, all the times we've let You and others down.

And even as we say sorry, we know that You forgive and accept us; You accept us just as we are. We see in You the love we wish to reflect into the world – a love that always accepts, and always hopes for better. May we be reservoirs of that love, overflowing out into a world in need. So may we know Your Grace and hear Your words of love - that our sins are forgiven. In Jesus' name. **Amen.**

**You may like to join in the words of the Lord's Prayer: Our Father, who art in heaven ... Amen**

The theme of our worship today is: **LOVE**. God's unconditional love for all people; Jesus' desire that we should love as He loves and the Spirit working through us to spread that love.

As we come to read our Bible passages for today, perhaps the words of the Hymn from **Singing the Faith 700** might help us to reflect on the world as God sees it and yet still loves unconditionally:

God weeps

at love withheld,  
at strength misused,  
at children's innocence abused,  
and till we change the way we love,  
God weeps.

God bleeds

at anger's fist,  
at trust betrayed,  
at women battered and afraid,  
and till we change the way we win,  
God bleeds.

God cries

at hungry mouths,  
at running sores,  
at creatures dying without cause,  
and till we change the way we care,  
God cries.

God waits

for stones to melt,  
for peace to seed,  
for hearts to hold each other's need,  
and till we understand the Christ,  
God waits.

Shirley Erena Murray (b. 1931)

## **Reading: Luke 10:25 – 37 NIV**

### **Introduction:**

This is probably Jesus' most famous Parable and its very familiarity often prevents us from feeling its impact. A lawyer asks a religious question expecting a religious answer and gets one, but then seeks clarification. And in that he treads on dangerous ground! In elaborating on His answer, Jesus turns the question inside out and skewers the lawyer's self-serving hypocrisy. Everyone is our neighbour, says Jesus, especially those who need our help.

### **The Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37)**

<sup>25</sup> On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

<sup>26</sup> "What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?"

<sup>27</sup> He answered: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' "

<sup>28</sup> "You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live."

<sup>29</sup> But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbour?"

<sup>30</sup> In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. <sup>31</sup> A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. <sup>32</sup> So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. <sup>33</sup> But a Samaritan, as he travelled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. <sup>34</sup> He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. <sup>35</sup> The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'

<sup>36</sup> "Which of these three do you think was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?"

<sup>37</sup> The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."

## **Hymn: Gracious Spirit, Holy Ghost (StF 379)**

Gracious Spirit, Holy Ghost,  
taught by You, we covet most,  
of Your gifts at Pentecost,  
holy, heavenly love.

Faith that mountains could remove,  
tongues of earth or heaven above,  
knowledge, all things, empty prove  
without heavenly love.

Prophecy will fade away,  
melting in the light of day;  
love will ever with us stay:  
therefore give us love.

Love is kind, and suffers long,  
love is meek, and thinks no wrong,  
love than death itself more strong:  
therefore give us love.

Faith, and hope, and love we see,  
joining hand in hand, agree;  
but the greatest of the three,  
and the best, is love.

## **Reading: Colossians 1:1–14 NIV**

### **Introduction:**

At the start of his letter to the Christians at Colossae, Paul commends them for their faith in Jesus, which is bearing good fruit. He prays that they may continue to build up a community of love and mutual encouragement where everyone's needs are met. Today, we read some of the encouraging words Paul said to the Church in Colossae and think of how they may also encourage us today.

### **Thanksgiving and Prayer:**

<sup>1</sup> Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,

<sup>2</sup>To the holy and faithful brothers in Christ at Colosse: Grace and peace to you from God our Father.

<sup>3</sup>We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, <sup>4</sup>because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all the saints-- <sup>5</sup>the faith and love that spring from the hope that is stored up for you in heaven and that you have already heard about in the word of truth, the gospel <sup>6</sup>that has come to you. All over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing, just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood God's grace in all its truth. <sup>7</sup>You learned it from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on our behalf, <sup>8</sup>and who also told us of your love in the Spirit.

<sup>9</sup>For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. <sup>10</sup>And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, <sup>11</sup>being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully <sup>12</sup>giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light. <sup>13</sup>For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, <sup>14</sup>in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

### **Hymn: Jesus, Jesu (StF 249)**

*Jesu, Jesu,  
fill us with Your love,  
show us how to serve  
the neighbours we have from You.*

Kneels at the feet of His friends,  
silently washes their feet,  
Master who acts as a slave to them.

Neighbours are rich folk and poor,  
neighbours are black folk and white,  
neighbours are nearby and far away.

These are the ones we should serve,  
these are the ones we should love.  
All these are neighbours to us and You.

Kneel at the feet of our friends,  
silently washing their feet,  
this is the way we should live with You.

North Ghanaian Song adapted by Tom Colvin (1925 – 2000)

### **Reflection: 'FIND ME SOMEBODY TO LOVE'**

A popular current T.V. advert is for a bed company advertising singing mattresses, using the words of a well-known

Queen song: "Find me somebody to love." The words of the song say:

'Can anybody find me somebody to love?

Each morning I get up I die a little

can barely stand on my feet

take a look in the mirror and cry and cry

"Lord, what are you doing to me.

I have spent all my years in believing You

but I just can't get no relief, Lord.

Somebody, somebody, ooh somebody,

can anybody find me somebody to love?

I work hard every day of my life

I work till I ache in my bones

at the end of the day

I take home my hard earned pay all on my own.

I get down on my knees

and I start to pray [praise the Lord]

till the tears run down from my eyes, Lord.

Somebody, ooh somebody, please

can anybody find me

somebody to love?

Copyright Freddie Mercury 1976

This song is a soul searching piece that questions life without love and a cause for deep, mental despair at the time he wrote it. It drives him to question God as to why, despite his praying and praising, something is



standing in the way. Perhaps it seems a strange concept for someone who holds worldly acclaim as well as unusual setting for a pop song; but it does underline an issue - not just important to life today - but something that lay at the heart of Jesus' ministry and teaching. Everyone needs to know that they are loved and that the love is expressed in practical ways.

The term 'Good Samaritan' carries a great moral meaning. It is a story which is so familiar that in some ways, it has masked the radical message of Jesus' Parable. Choosing a Samaritan as the one who shows 'love' not only surprises the confident lawyer questioning Jesus but also shocks the disciples. A little earlier in Luke's gospel, they had been turned away from spending the night in a Samaritan village and are rejected because they are on their way to Jerusalem. The hatred between Jews and Samaritans flowed in both directions. Historically, Samaritans were a remnant of Israel's northern tribes who were left when Israel fell to Assyria in 722BC. The remaining Israelites inter-married with the Assyrians, diluting their Jewishness, which is why Samaritans were viewed as a mixed race, causing hostility that had never been resolved. Hence, the rejection.

Here we have Jesus being tested by an expert in Jewish Law. He answers with a question of His own, testing the knowledge of the expert. He answers well: First, love God with all your heart, soul, strength and mind, and second, love one's neighbour as oneself. In one sense, he has answered his own question, but now Jesus directs the challenge - the question is not 'who' but 'how' should I love my neighbour? Jesus' reply in a Parable confronts the lawyer, disciples and all those listening with an unthinkable challenge. Jesus chooses His words deliberately. The road between Jerusalem and Jericho was about 20 miles and a haven for highway robbers. Bands of outlaws took advantage of the steep terrain and the constant trickle of travellers gave them a good living. Jesus describes the plight of the injured man. It may have been that the Priest and the Levite cross the road so that they did not break Jewish observance and obedience to the Law, despite the fact that love for the neighbour should have motivated care and attention. Yet the one person who had every reason not to stop was the one who did - putting himself in a very vulnerable position. He tends to the injured man, offered help, showed compassion and did what he could at the roadside; he administered first

aid and attended to his injuries before moving him to the safety of a nearby inn.

Then Jesus confronts the lawyer with another question: 'Who was the real neighbour?' There was only one answer, the one who showed him love. That must have hit hard! And even harder – "Go and do likewise." [v.37] The lawyer wouldn't have been the only one that day who left feeling very uncomfortable, literally, with their 'tail between their legs'.

A top priority for Jesus: LOVE. Not a noun but a verb; not a feeling but an action, and one which was to be an essential element after Pentecost as groups of Christians begun to form and organise a pattern for daily living.

Paul wrote one of his theologically and philosophically well-informed letters to a place that so few people knew about – Colossae - but the people mattered to God and Paul writes encouraging the new Jesus' followers in the city to stand firm in their faith and support one another in love. Inner peace and a personal relationship with God is different for each one of us. It is a gift from God which can so often be nurtured by others - a crucial part of belonging to a Church community. That was an essential role for Epaphras, who founded the Colossian Church. Colossae was a diverse population providing a melting pot of religious and philosophical ideas. Epaphras committed his life to serving the needs of others - his love shining through. Writing to Paul, who was that time in prison, he seeks advice on the best way to help this new community grow. Paul's advice mirrors what we read in Jesus' Parable - to show love and do good at every opportunity and as we do, we get to know God better. He meets and blesses us, and so we grow - not by living in isolation, but for God and others in a community of love and mutual encouragement.

We recognise, of course that it's a tough challenge by the standards of the world today which continually needs more 'Good Samaritans' and it is so tempting to 'walk on the other side'. There are many who have never experienced the love of a Church community. I wonder how that challenges us? I wonder how well we know our neighbours - the people who live around us, the people we meet, people in our communities? Then there are the people we only read about or see on television. How do we show our love to them? Like the song - do they need someone to

love them? The challenge for us is how we rise to our calling. The message for today has been written in love. **Amen.**

### **Prayers of Love and Concern:**

After each line of our prayer, you may like to think of 'neighbours' that you have heard or seen of who are facing these situations and name them before God.

Open our hearts, Lord, to our neighbours everywhere and our responsibilities towards them:

In the hunger of the poor:

In the misery of the homeless:

In the plight of the refugee:

In the despair of the oppressed:

In the anger of the exploited:

In the victims of natural disaster, terrorism, violence and war:

In the cry of the unheard, unseen child:

In the pain of bereavement or loneliness:

In the suffering of body, mind or spirit:

Help us to recognise Your call, Your need, and our summons to loving responses. **Amen.**

### **Safe and Happy Childhood**

Action for Children is driven by love. We take action so children don't miss out on a safe and happy childhood. We have thousands of people working on the ground, giving children and young people the protection and practical help they urgently need. And we campaign tirelessly for lasting change.

## **The Action for Children Covenant**

Every child has the right to live, to be safe and to be loved. Every young person has the right to be housed, to have enough money to live in dignity and to have enough support for the future. Every young person has the right to justice, to realise their potential and to be given the space to become independent. In an often cruel and imperfect world, we uphold the work of Action for Children with children and young people in danger, in need and at risk. We support the growth of this work and the pursuit of all these rights for the young, the discounted and the vulnerable. We make this covenant with Action for Children for the sake of all God's children. **Amen**

## **Hymn: Where Can We Find You, Lord Jesus Our Master (StF 672)**

Where can we find you, Lord Jesus our Master?

We want to serve you, to answer Your call.

Where do you lead us and ask us to follow?

What should we do in our service to all?

‘Go to the hungry, to those who have nothing;

go where the farm lands are empty and bare.

I broke the bread for the people around me;

out of my plenty, think what you can share.

‘Go to the homeless, to those who have nowhere;

go where my people sleep out in the rain.

I had no comforts but what others gave me;

offer them shelter, give ease to their pain.

‘Go to the outcast, to those who have no-one;

Go where my sheep are rejected and lost.

I dined with sinners and reached out to lepers;

go and do likewise, and don't count the cost.’

Where will we find You, Lord Jesus our Master?

We are your servants who answer Your call.

You go before us, and there we will follow,

Taking our cross in the service of all.

Alan Charles Dickinson (b.1954)

**Blessing:**

As we focus on the week ahead, help us to respond to the challenging words we have heard.

May our speaking be full of encouraging words for others.

Help us to look out for opportunities to share them this week. May Your grace, Your love and Your Spirit go with us.

**Amen**

*Some material is adapted from 'Roots for Churches'*

# **Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2025 – 16<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time**

*This service has been compiled by Rev'd James Pritchard*

## **Call To Worship And Prayer Of Approach**

Come worship the God made visible in Jesus. Come worship the one, who holds all things together. Come worship the one who is the beginning and end.

Loving God, open my eyes, so I can truly see you. Open my ears, to truly hear you. Calm my busy hands and mind so I don't miss a thing. Draw near to me as I seek to draw near to you, **Amen.**

## **Hymn: Now Thank We All Our God (StF 81)**

Now thank we all our God,  
with hearts and hands and voices,  
who wondrous things has done,  
in whom this world rejoices;  
who from our mothers' arms  
has blessed us on our way  
with countless gifts of love,  
and still is ours today.

O may this bounteous God  
through all our life be near us,  
with ever joyful hearts  
and blessed peace to cheer us;  
and keep us in his grace,  
and guide us when perplexed,  
and free us from all ills  
in this world and the next.

All praise and thanks to God  
the Father now be given,  
the Son, and him who reigns  
with them in highest heaven,  
the one eternal God,  
whom earth and heaven adore,

for thus it was, is now,  
and shall be evermore.

Martin Rinkart (1586–1649)  
*translated by Catherine Winkworth (1827-1878)*

### **A Prayer Of Praise And Thanksgiving:**

*Hold a few moments to give thanks and praise to God, you might find it helpful to remember a time when you felt close to God or encountered God in a way you can't forget and give thanks for that experience...*

We praise you, God of encounter and promise, for those kingdom moments in our lives that have been turning points; those encounters that have given us fresh eyes, new insights, warmed hearts; those people whose eyes have been so fixed on you that they have inspired us in our faith and in our daily lives.

We praise and thank you for all the ways you meet us in one another, and most of all we praise you for your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour.  
**Amen.**

### **Introduction To A Reading From Genesis 18:**

This is a wonderfully told story of an everyday encounter: travellers are passing by Abraham's camp and he invites them to stop for refreshments.

Nothing surprising there, except that the narrator has told us that these travellers are 'the Lord' passing on his way to Sodom. And the light refreshment Abraham offers is a full-blown banquet that they all eat together. We are left to marvel that, in this seemingly ordinary encounter, God is sitting to eat with a friend. How often have we had such encounters? The purpose of the visit is to reiterate that the next time they pass by Abraham's wife, Sarah (who is watching on from the tent and is past childbearing age) will have given birth to a child. Here, in a scene of everyday hospitality, heaven touches earth and God's purposes are moved on.

### **Genesis 18 1-10 NRSV, Anglicised Edition:**

18 The Lord appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day. <sup>2</sup> He looked up and saw three

men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent entrance to meet them, and bowed down to the ground. <sup>3</sup> He said, 'My lord, if I find favour with you, do not pass by your servant. <sup>4</sup> Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. <sup>5</sup> Let me bring a little bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on—since you have come to your servant.' So they said, 'Do as you have said.' <sup>6</sup> And Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah, and said, 'Make ready quickly three measures of choice flour, knead it, and make cakes.' <sup>7</sup> Abraham ran to the herd, and took a calf, tender and good, and gave it to the servant, who hastened to prepare it. <sup>8</sup> Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree while they ate.

<sup>9</sup> They said to him, 'Where is your wife Sarah?' And he said, 'There, in the tent.' <sup>10</sup> Then one said, 'I will surely return to you in due season, and your wife Sarah shall have a son.' And Sarah was listening at the tent entrance behind him

### **Hymn: Have Faith In God, My Heart (StF 466)**

Have faith in God, my heart,  
trust and be unafraid ;  
God will fulfil in every part  
each promise he has made.

Have faith in God, my mind,  
for when your light burns low ;  
God's mercy holds a wiser plan  
than you can fully know.

Have faith in God, my soul ;  
his cross for ever stands ;  
and neither life nor death can pluck  
his children from his hands.

Lord Jesus, make me whole ;  
grant me no resting place,  
until I rest, heart, mind, and soul,  
the captive of your grace.

Bryn Rees (1911–1983)



### **A Prayer Of Confession:**

We recognise that sometimes we don't notice God, don't recognise God or even turn our face away.

*In silence seek God's grace and mercy in the knowledge that God is full of both!*

Forgive us, compassionate God, when we fail to see you:  
in the faces of strangers; in the tears of the desperate;  
in the anxiety of the afraid; in the silence of the broken;  
in the fragility of creation; in one another or in ourselves.  
Forgive us and help us to encounter you afresh. **Amen.**

God of wonder, though we don't always see you, you always see us. Although our eyes aren't always open to the ways of your kingdom, it is always open to us. Although we don't always recognise you in our daily encounters, you are always there. Thank you for meeting us where we are, for your grace and forgiveness, and your life-giving Spirit, which fills us day by day. **Amen.**

### **Reading Colossians 1:15-28 NRSV, Anglicised Edition:**

<sup>15</sup> He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation, <sup>16</sup> for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. <sup>17</sup> He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. <sup>18</sup> He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. <sup>19</sup> For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, <sup>20</sup> and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

<sup>21</sup> And you who were once estranged and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, <sup>22</sup> he has now reconciled in his fleshly body through death, so as to present you holy and blameless and irreproachable before him, <sup>23</sup> provided that you continue securely established and steadfast in the faith, without shifting from the hope promised by the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven. I, Paul, became a minister of this gospel.

<sup>24</sup> I am now rejoicing in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am completing what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church. <sup>25</sup> I became its minister according to God's commission that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, <sup>26</sup> the mystery that has been hidden throughout the ages and generations but has now been revealed to his saints. <sup>27</sup> To them God chose to make known how great among the gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. <sup>28</sup> It is he whom we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone in all wisdom, so that we may present everyone mature in Christ.

### **Reflection Part One:**

As with Abraham's visitors, so with Jesus – it is easy to miss the coming of God when he arrives in such an unexpected form. In one of Paul's richest theological reflections on the coming of Jesus, he talks about the crucified Christ as the invisible God made visible. Paul tells his first hearers that true authority and power are not found in the pomp and might of Caesar, but in the humility and suffering of Jesus. His point is even clearer if you read these verses backwards:

In verses 20a-19 (see also 2:13-15), Paul shows that reconciliation comes through self-giving, laying aside your interests to serve the needs of others. We see a pale reflection of this in people such as Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela; but we see it most gloriously in Jesus. Then verses 17-16 point to God making all things new. All through human history our suffering king has been holding creation together even as we try to tear it apart; his suffering is not limited to the cross! And now Jesus remakes this ruined world, creates harmony, peace, new life and reconciles cultures; he invites us to be part of it, paying our price of entry through the cross. So verse 15 tells us that if we want to see God, then we need to look not at Caesar in his pomp, but at Jesus on his cross. It is as we look at the crucified one that we see the world-making, world-reconciling God in all his glory.

Our task in turn is to be those who reflect Christ, reflect God to others... As we embody the values of Jesus, we will encounter opposition but, if we respond with a servant heart, others may see the image of the true God (vv.25-26). And so Paul points to our hope (vv.28-29), which keeps us

going because one day we will be perfect in a perfect world (v.28) – that is the glory we hope for. We will not be the true image but the more we look to Christ the more we will reflect his love in who we are and how we live.

### **Hymn: Meekness And Majesty (StF 362)**

Meekness and majesty,  
manhood and deity,  
in perfect harmony —  
the man who is God.  
Lord of eternity,  
dwells in humanity,  
kneels in humility  
and washes our feet.

*Oh, what a mystery —  
meekness and majesty :  
bow down and worship,  
for this is your God,  
this is your God !*

Father's pure radiance,  
perfect in innocence,  
yet learns obedience  
to death on a cross :  
suffering to give us life,  
conquering through sacrifice —  
and as they crucify,  
prays, 'Father forgive.'

Wisdom unsearchable,  
God the invisible,  
love indestructible  
in frailty appears :  
Lord of infinity,  
stooping so tenderly,  
lifts our humanity  
to the heights of his throne.

Graham Kendrick (b. 1950) Words and Music: © 1986, Thankyou Music.

## Reflection Part Two:

Archbishop Michael Ramsey said, '*God is Christlike and in him is no unChristlikeness at all.*' We see that in Paul's words to the Colossians. Read forwards, they tell us how all the majesty and glory of God was somehow squeezed into Jesus. But read backwards, they show us that this is how God has always been, that it is in grace and condescension (that is, his willingness to communicate with humanity in a way we can understand) and his preparedness to suffer that Creation is held together and ultimately reconciled to him. Reflect on this profound meditation on the identity of our God and marvel at what his love has done for us. The God who loves us so much, Christ who endures even the cross to demonstrate God's grace for you and for me...

Points to ponder....

- Ponder that mystery, the wonder of Christ the image of the invisible God.
- What of God does Christ reveal to you?
- Where, like Abraham, might you catch a glimpse of God being with you?

## Prayers Of Intercession:

*(If using in a Local arrangement service you may choose to use a short response is appropriate after each bidding – e.g. 'Lord in your mercy **hear our prayer us.**')*

In this moment, we bring our prayers and our concerns for others.

The world seems so full of problems way beyond our imagining and understanding. Emergencies seem to be almost daily and we move from one to another so quickly. But these emergencies are still there and people are still impacted and in need. Our prayers we bring knowing that even if we fail to listen to you, you always listen to us, you listen to our words, our silences, our yearnings and our longing.

For those in crisis this day, we pray that someone will listen to them. (Lord in your mercy **hear our prayer us**)

For those in poverty and destitution, we pray that someone will give them a gift. (lord in your...)

For those in pain and anguish, we pray that someone will offer relief.

For those who are hungry, we pray that someone will feed them.

For those who are thirsty, we pray they may be given clean water.

For those in grief, we pray that someone will simply be with them.

For those who are near the end of life, we pray that someone will hold their hand.

For those who are lonely, we pray they may be befriended.

For those who are frightened, we pray they may be soothed and calmed.

Lord, there are so many needs of so many people in so many places, we remember now...

Lord, these are our prayers this day, we offer them and ourselves.  
knowing you hear our every word.

Lord, hear us and bless those for whom we pray.

**Amen.**

*You might wish to say the Lord's Prayer here*

**Hymn: This, This Is The God We Adore (StF 67)**

This, this is the God we adore,  
our faithful, unchangeable friend,  
whose love is as great as his power,  
and neither knows measure nor end :

'Tis Jesus, the first and the last,  
whose Spirit shall guide us safe home ;  
we'll praise him for all that is past,  
and trust him for all that's to come.

Joseph Hart (1712–1767)

**Closing Prayer:**

May we trust in Christ who shows us God's love and live in the power of the Holy Spirit one God forever and ever. Amen

*Some material adapted from © Roots for Churches.*

## Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> July 2025 – 17<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

*This service has been compiled by Rev'd Liz Singleton*

God of love and faithfulness, we praise you.  
We will give you thanks with all our hearts.

### **Hymn: O Worship The Lord In The Beauty Of Holiness (StF 34)**

O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness,  
bow down before him, his glory proclaim;  
with gold of obedience and incense of lowliness,  
kneel and adore him: the Lord is his name.

Low at his feet lay your burden of carefulness,  
high on his heart he will bear it for you,  
comfort your sorrows, and answer your prayerfulness,  
showing the pathway your feet should pursue.

Fear not to enter his courts in the slenderness  
of the poor wealth you would count as your own;  
truth in its beauty, and love in its tenderness,  
these are the offerings to bring to his throne.

These, though we bring them in trembling and fearfulness,  
he will accept for the name that is dear;  
mornings of joy give for evenings of tearfulness,  
trust for our trembling, and hope for our fear.

O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness,  
bow down before him, his glory proclaim;  
with gold of obedience and incense of lowliness,  
kneel and adore him; the Lord is his name.

### **Reading: Luke 11: 1–13 NLT**

Once Jesus was in a certain place praying. As he finished, one of his disciples came to him and said, "Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples."

Jesus said, "This is how you should pray:

“Father, may your name be kept holy.

May your Kingdom come soon.

Give us each day the food we need,  
and forgive us our sins,

as we forgive those who sin against us.

And don’t let us yield to temptation.”

Then, teaching them more about prayer, he used this story: “Suppose you went to a friend’s house at midnight, wanting to borrow three loaves of bread. You say to him, ‘A friend of mine has just arrived for a visit, and I have nothing for him to eat.’ And suppose he calls out from his bedroom, ‘Don’t bother me. The door is locked for the night, and my family and I are all in bed. I can’t help you.’ But I tell you this—though he won’t do it for friendship’s sake, if you keep knocking long enough, he will get up and give you whatever you need because of your shameless persistence.

“And so I tell you, keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened.

“You fathers—if your children ask for a fish, do you give them a snake instead? Or if they ask for an egg, do you give them a scorpion? Of course not! So if you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him.”

This service reflects on the Lord’s Prayer in the form of a discussion with God, interspersed with hymns.

### **Our Father in heaven:**

‘Here I am, God. It has been so hard to find time to stop. There was breakfast, then the children to take to school, the house to clean, the washing to hang out. Off to work, the traffic was terrible, got to work late, meetings all day, didn’t even have time for lunch. You know how it is.’

**‘Yes, my child, I know.’**

‘When I got home it just started again. I know I could have stopped and prayed instead of watching my favourite soap but, God, I was so tired.....’

**‘Yes, my child.’**

‘Now, as I fall asleep, I remember you. I know you told us to pray but, God, I have been so busy. How did the disciples find time to pray, between fishing and rushing around after Jesus?’

**‘Maybe it was because they saw how stopping and having time to chat with me helped Jesus to check things out, and the return to his busy life. They saw what a difference it made and wanted that difference for themselves. You know that difficult meeting you had today?’**

‘....Yes....’

**‘Well, I could have helped you see a way forward, if you had let me.....I am your Father. I love you, I am here for you, always, any time of the day or night. Just remember, Jesus taught his disciples to pray because he knew it would change their lives. I want the same for you.’**

‘Yes, Father.’

**Hallowed be your name:**

‘Oh, God!’

**‘Yes, I am here.’**

‘Jesus, not that again!’

**‘I am still here.’**

‘Why are you still around? I am not praying at the moment. In fact, rather the opposite. I am really cross. This computer will not do what it is meant to do.....don’t tell me you know how to work a computer as well as everything else?’

**‘It was you who called me.’**

‘No, I didn’t. You were far from my thoughts. It is the wretched computer that I am thinking about.’

**‘You said, “Oh God”, and “Jesus”. Sounded pretty clear to me that you were calling for help.’**

‘Oh God! So I did.....Oh no.....’

**Prayer:**

Faithful God, forgive us when we lose sight of what really matters;



when we get sidetracked by the trivial and the trite, the superficial and the shallow.

Thank you that you hear our prayers and our reassurance that we really matter to you.

You love us so much and long for us to be fully rooted in you, to rely on you and to reflect your forgiveness, grace and redeeming love to all the world.

Amen

### **Hymn: Father, Hear The Prayer We Offer (StF 518)**

Father, hear the prayer we offer:

not for ease that prayer shall be,  
but for strength that we may ever  
live our lives courageously.

Not for ever in green pastures  
do we ask our way to be;  
but the steep and rugged pathway  
may we tread rejoicingly.

Not for ever by still waters  
would we idly rest and stay;  
but would strike the living fountains  
from the rocks along our way.

Be our strength in hours of weakness,  
in our wanderings be our guide;  
through endeavour, failure, danger,  
Father, be there at our side.

### **Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven:**

‘Hello, it’s me again, God.’

**‘Yes, my child, I am listening.....’**

‘I was just thinking about this kingdom business. I realise it is quite scary. If I pray “your kingdom come” that implies it has not come yet, and therefore we need to change things. Well, not just things out there, but probably I need to change me.’

**‘What in particular were you thinking about?’**

'Well, if your kingdom is to come, and to do that your will needs to be done, that means not my will.'

**'Mmmmm...'**

'Well, I know that there are loads of things I do that are not what you would want me to do.....and yet I still do them. Like the other day at the garage, I was so cross with that silly little man who was so pompous and full of himself, and I had a really good go at him for not serving me straight away.....'

**'He did need to check his paper work before he served you. He isn't good if he is hurried.....he gets very flustered. He isn't great with words and numbers.....'**

'Well, I am sure he did it to annoy me.....and he did.....and.....well...'

**'A little patience and a kind word costs you nothing, and it is those tiny things that go a long way to building my kingdom. I am not asking you to change the world, just change a few things in yourself. My message to all of you is very simple: just love one another. It is a great way to build my kingdom, and it will certainly help it come, here and now, where you are.'**

'I can see how your way would make a difference, but it is so hard.'

**Give us today our daily bread:**

'God, I feel so fat. I have really stuffed my face today. I really should not have eaten that bar of chocolate. As for the cooked breakfast I had this morning.....I have pigged out all day.'

**'Why do you think that is? Don't you trust me to feed you, both today and tomorrow. There is plenty to go around if everyone shares it.'**

'Oh, I know there is always more than enough. It isn't that I don't trust there is enough. I am just greedy. I always seem to want more.'

**'What about all those people who do not have enough food? Do you know how much they would like to feel like you do tonight? All you do is complain, and yet you are so blessed, so fortunate to want for nothing. Might it be better to say "thank you" for how you feel rather than complaining? It seems my children are never happy. Some are so hungry that they die, and my heart weeps with them as they clutch their hollow, empty stomachs longing for something to put in them. And those children who have much more than they need complain they have**

**eaten too much. Do you remember the last chat we had about my kingdom coming on earth, now? Well, here is one of those things you can do yourself to help build my kingdom.....How I long for my kingdom to come here on earth, so that everyone is aware of each other's needs and shares their food.'**

**'So you mean no more chocolates, no more cooked breakfasts. No more.....'**

**'No, I do not say that. Some chocolate and cooked breakfasts are fine. But I also say be aware of yourself and others around you, and be thankful for what you have. Break bread with others, welcome them to your table – welcome them to my table. Unless bread is broken and shared, my kingdom has no chance of being built.'**

### **Hymn: Come, My Table Is A Meeting Place (StF 581)**

Come, my table is a meeting place,  
here I'm waiting ready for you,  
come and share, you are invited,  
come, beloved, I chose you.

Come, my table is a feeding place,  
bread, my body broken for you,  
wine, my blood poured out to save you,  
given eternally for you.

Come, my table is a touching place,  
hands to greet you span time and space,  
see my arms stretched out in welcome,  
this for you a holy place.

Come and meet me in this moment,  
taste and see this gift of my grace,  
here, the feast spread out before you,  
come, my child, and take your place.

**Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us:**

**'God, you are amazing!'**

**'Thank you. What's brought this on?'**

'Well, I was just wondering how you can agree to forgive me for all the things I have got wrong in my life. I get things wrong so often.....and on top of that you can also forgive everyone else! Let's face it, they do some pretty awful things sometimes.'

**'Well, it doesn't quite work like that. My forgiving needs you to forgive yourself and accept my forgiveness, and then comes an even harder bit.....if you expect me to forgive you, I expect you to forgive others.'**

'Mm, yes, I see, that does put another slant on it. So you're saying you will only forgive me if I forgive others?'

**'No, my child, my forgiveness is there for you at all times, anywhere, any place. But don't you think that, if you can know my love in that way, it would be good if you behave in the same way to those whom you need to forgive?'**

'What, even Fred at work? You know how he is, so rude and bossy and.....'

**'Do you remember that Jesus said you should "love your enemies" and "turn the other cheek" ....?'**

'Well, yes, but.....'

**'No, there is no "but". If you really want to live my way, and build my kingdom, I do want you to forgive those who are hard to love, even Fred. To really be free from sin you need to be free from lying, hatred, revenge, anger, bitterness, spitefulness.....Think of all the time you spend complaining about Fred, and getting in a state about him. All that time you could be my kingdom-builder. Try loving Fred, he won't know what's hit him!'**

'Oh, God.....!'

**'Yes, I know, I am here.....always.'**

### **Prayer:**

'Forgive us our sins', you taught us to pray.

And so, Lord, we seek your forgiveness for the sins of our hearts and minds and bodies,

for the sins of pride and selfishness and unforgiveness,

for the sins we have repeated and the sins we have regretted.

'As we forgive those who sin against us', you went on to say.

And so we seek your forgiveness

for those who have lied to us and hurt us,

for those who have taken advantage of us and denied us,  
for those we struggle to forgive.  
Your cross speaks of the power of your forgiving love.  
As we receive this afresh ourselves,  
help us to offer it to others.  
For your name's sake we pray.  
Amen

**Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil:**

'God, it is so tempting to cheat. It would make life so much easier.'

**'Are you sure about that, my child. What if you were found out?'**

'Well, I won't be. It is so easy because.....'

**'It's so tempting?'**

'But I pray "lead us not into temptation", and here I am being led. Why don't you do something about it – like stop it happening and then I won't be tempted?'

**'Well, I rather hope you might resist yourself, knowing it is wrong, which you clearly do. I assume that is why you are talking to me about it. Rather than my controlling you like a puppet, I would much prefer you to realise I am always here to help you. Check it out against what you know to be true. Then, if it doesn't look good, you have a choice to say, "No".'**

'So is this what we mean when we pray "deliver us from evil". I need to fight evil when I come across it. Come to you, have a chat, see how it looks, check it out against your Way, and then turn away and say, "No, I won't do that." Oh well, that's easy then.....I don't think! God, I am so glad you are there. Without you I'm not sure I could do this.'

**'Well, that's all right then, because I am here always and I am not going anywhere.'**

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours**

**Now and for ever. Amen**

'So, I guess, God, you are pretty amazing. If we would live the way you want us to, your kingdom would be everywhere and therefore your power and your glory would be shining and overwhelming all of us and

everything, and we would all want to say, “thank you”, because, well, you are.....God!’

**‘Thank you, my child, you are pretty amazing too.....’**

**Hymn: Give Thanks To The Lord, Our God And King (StF 77)**

Give thanks to the Lord, our God and King:

his love endures forever.

For He is good, he is above all things.

His love endures forever.

Sing praise, sing praise.

With a mighty hand and an outstretched arm

his love endures forever.

For the life that's been reborn,

his love endures forever.

Sing praise, sing praise.

Sing praise, sing praise.

*Forever God is faithful,*

*forever God is strong.*

*Forever God is with us,*

*forever.*

*Forever God is faithful,*

*forever God is strong.*

*Forever God is with us,*

*forever.*

*Forever*

From the rising to the setting sun,

his love endures forever.

By the grace of God, we will carry on,

his love endures forever.

Sing praise, sing praise.

Sing praise, sing praise.

*Forever God is faithful,*

*forever God is strong.*

*Forever God is with us,*

*forever.*

*Forever God is faithful,*

*forever God is strong.*

*Forever God is with us,*

*forever.*

*Forever*

**Closing Words:**

As we leave this space we go with the love of God within us,  
the peace of God around us,  
and the wisdom of God to guide us.  
For when we call, God answers us,  
when we falter, God strengthens us.  
and God's love is with us always.

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