



'Action For Children' Sunday

Sunday 12th July 2020 15th in Ordinary

Rev'd Tony Morling

This short act of worship has been prepared for you to use as you are unable to attend church. If you are well enough why not spend a few moments with God, knowing that other people are sharing this act of worship with you.

Call to Worship

Rejoice! There is now no
condemnation in Christ Jesus.

Hymn: STF 481

The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want.

The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want.
He makes me lie in pastures green.
He leads me by the still, still waters,
His goodness restores my soul.

And I will trust in You alone.

And I will trust in You alone,

For Your endless mercy follows me,

Your goodness will lead me home.

He guides my ways in righteousness,
And He anoints my head with oil,
And my cup, it overflows with joy,
I feast on His pure delights.

Refrain

And though I walk the darkest path,
I will not fear the evil one,
For You are with me, and Your rod
and staff
Are the comfort I need to know.

Refrain

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Let us pray together

Lord, for all your gifts in creation, for
the gift of each other and the gift of
the Church we offer our thanks.

Most of all for the gift of Jesus who
went about among us as teacher and
friend, who lived, died, and rose
again we offer our deepest gratitude
and amazement. In Jesus' name.

Amen.

Let us take a time of quiet to bring to
mind the ways in which we feel we
have let God or ourselves down
during the last week...

Lord, when we are slow to listen,

forgive us.

Lord, when we are hasty in our
actions, forgive us.

Lord, for the things we have done,
that we should not have done,

forgive us.

Lord, for the things we have not
done, that we should have done,

forgive us.

Rejoice, for in Christ we know our
sins are forgiven. In Jesus' name.

Amen.

Today's Reading from the New Testament: - Hebrews 12: 1-3

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

Time to Reflect

As we slowly regain freedoms that have been limited because of Covid-19 I hope these verses from the book of Hebrews may have a message to encourage us. The unknown author reminds his readers of faithful people who have gone before them: people like Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, David and Samuel. These he describes as a 'cloud of witnesses' that were cheering on the early church as they ran their race. I'm told by those who have run a marathon that it is the support of spectators that makes all the difference- their cheers, shouts and words of encouragements lift the spirits.

So it is with our life of faith- we can be encouraged by our witnesses who have faced great challenges and yet persevered. Just as the book of Hebrews makes a list of witnesses, might you today jot down some of the names that have helped and inspired you? I wouldn't be surprised if that list contained many ordinary saints: Sunday school teachers, friends and family, local preachers, members of your church, some living- others promoted to glory. What a list! Might you remember before God in thanksgiving for all that made them special. With that list in your hand might you pause and know that they are cheering you on. Perhaps you could place that list in your Bible and when new names come add to your 'cloud of witnesses'.



Then Hebrews urges three responses: *Let us get rid of anything that holds us back... Let us run with determination the race that lies before us... Let us keep our eyes fixed on Jesus.* Each is essential to completing the race. After all, you cannot easily run if you laden down with heavy clothing, or if you are looking backwards or without a clear focus!

A member of my church in London came back injured from a skiing trip. She had hit a tree. I asked her, 'Why did you hit the tree? She replied, 'Because I was looking at the tree rather than the gap between the trees!' You may know a similar experience when driving on a motorway. Something gains your attention and slowly the car veers in that direction. What we look at invariably determines the direction of our travel which is before us. So the writer of Hebrews encouraged his readers to run with their eyes fixed on Jesus. In my experience that is still good advice and when churches do that, they don't go far wrong.



During these weeks and months ahead all our churches have real mission opportunities. But we also face tough decisions. But let's be encouraged! We have a great cloud of witnesses cheering us on and their courageous examples can really help us. And as we journey through the stages of lockdown, may we continue to run the race of faith with our eyes fixed on Jesus. He is with us every step of the way.

Hymn STF 504

May the mind of Christ my Saviour

May the mind of Christ my Saviour live in me from day to day, by his love and power controlling all I do and say.

May the word of God dwell richly in my heart from hour to hour so that all may see I triumph only through his power.

May the peace of God my Father rule my life in everything, that I may be calm to comfort sick and sorrowing.

May the love of Jesus fill me, as the waters fill the sea; him exalting, self abasing, this is victory.

May I run the race before me, strong and brave to face the foe, looking only unto Jesus as I onward go.

Katie Barclay Wilkinson (1859-1928)

Join us for Coffee & Chat,
on the phone by dialing

02203 481 5240

Meeting ID: **878 0011 0669 #**

Participants ID: #

Password: **336542 #**



A time of prayer

Let us pray for our world; for the worldwide effort to create a vaccine for Covid-19. For all the peoples of the world and for cooperation as we continue to live with this virus.

As we pray for our world we pray especially for those in government and industry whose decisions effect the lives of so many. And we pray for wisdom for those in power.

We pray for our own land. For all those involved in social care, health and all keyworkers, giving thanks for the work they do for us. We pray for local communities as we continue to move towards what has been called the new normal.

We pray for the whole Church throughout the world, especially churches in countries with unsympathetic regimes. We pray for the Methodist Church, both at the local level and also the Connexional Team.

Today, we pray for *Action for Children* and their work of giving children and parents a new outlook on life, hope and security. We pray your blessing on them and ask that you continue to inspire them as they share your love and peace in the world, in Jesus' name.

We take a time of quiet to remember those who have died, especially those who are part of our cloud of witnesses on our journey of life and faith.

We make all our prayers in Jesus' name. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father

Hymn: STF 415

The Church of Christ, in every age

The Church of Christ, in every age beset by change but Spirit-led, must claim and test its heritage and keep on rising from the dead.

Across the world, across the street, the victims of injustice cry for shelter and for bread to eat, and never live until they die.

Then let the servant Church arise, a caring Church that longs to be a partner in Christ's sacrifice, and clothed in Christ's humanity.

For he alone, whose blood was shed, can cure the fever in our blood, and teach us how to share our bread and feed the starving multitude.

We have no mission but to serve in full obedience to our Lord: to care for all, without reserve, and spread his liberating Word.

Fred Pratt Green (1903-2000)

A prayer of blessing

Dear Lord. As we run our race of faith, help us to get rid of anything that holds us back, to run with determination the race that lies before us, and let us keep our eyes fixed on You.

So may the blessing of God who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be with us all today and forever more. Amen.

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