

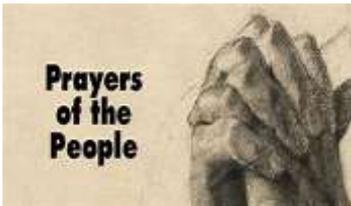
**Earlsdon Methodist Church
Sunday Worship
5th July 2020**

Theme: 'Learn from Me'

Call to Worship

Jesus say: 'Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls'.
Amen.

Hymn 41 StF: Blessed Be Your Name



As Jesus praised his Father in heaven, so do we. We praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth. You have hidden things from the wise, and revealed them to us, your children, through Jesus Christ, your most precious Son. We praise you Lord.

Dear Lord, we do not always comprehend who we are talking to when we come before your throne of grace. That we are in the presence of a mighty God. Please Lord, forgive us for times when our perception and understanding of you are far too small; When we try to fit you into that tiny box that we think we can cope with;

When we are frightened to let your power and Holy Spirit take over our lives. When we are hateful and suspicious of others because of the colour of their skin, gender, sexuality, belief, and other differences.

Forgive us Lord and make us whole.

Pause for a Reflection.

May Almighty God forgive us our sins and keep us in eternal life. Amen

Lord God, we thank you for the gift of life, morning by morning new mercies we see. We thank you Lord, for your abundant grace that is sufficient for us and for your patience and love as you wait for us to come into the fulness of our understanding about your mighty and awesome Being.

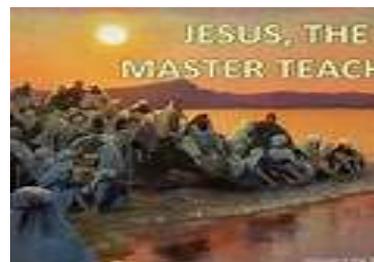
Loving God, for thank you the richness of creation

And the beauty of it; you have supplied all our needs according to your riches in glory. We thank you Lord for showing us how to love and care for each other through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. **Amen.**

Gospel Reading: Matthew 11.16-19, 25-30



These two Gospel portions derived from the narratives that follows the teaching on mission. John the Baptist sent Jesus' disciples to ask Jesus



Ironically, some of the people missed the plot and only saw Jesus as 'a glutton, drunkard, and

whether he was the expected Messiah. Jesus answered by highlighting the acts of power he has been doing (11:4-5).

Jesus started by addressing the crowd about the role of John the Baptist as a prophet and the responses and expectations of Israel's generation at the time as well as the responses and expectations of him as the Messiah in his time.

Jesus made a play of words by comparing the generation as children playing in the market and failing to respond to his as well as John the Baptist's call to a new life through him.

Jesus said, **'we played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not mourn.'**

Jesus' statement paints a scenario wherein the people are insensitive to the current situation, they failed to discern that a prophet was in their midst, preparing the way for the Messiah; similarly so, they failed to 'see' that the Messiah had indeed arrived and was amongst them, therefore, they did not respond to the call to follow Christ.

Question: How sensitive are we today to the voice of Jesus Christ? Do we hear his flute and if so, do we dance to Jesus' tune?

We may be familiar with the saying **'to dance to the tune.'** We say so when we think people are following an ideology, philosophy, or rules without questioning or putting up resistance.

If we say we are Christians and we follow Christ, are we prepare to dance to His tune? Dancing to Jesus' tune comes with a price. Are we willing to pay the price?

Jesus' comment about mourning and wailing comes from a culture wherein mourning is a community activity. Therefore, ignoring such a call will be a social taboo.

The people had a problem with John the Baptist because he spent most of his days fasting. As a result, they said "He has a demon". Jesus however sat amongst the pharisees, he turned water into wine at the wedding in Canaan, **(John 2:1-25)**. Jesus ate and drank with people considered to be outcasts and sinners.

John the Baptist had to live a life of fasting because he had the arduous task of preparing the way for the Messiah. He lived in the desert eating locust and honey - this was a very tough existence that demanded a lot of self - sacrifice. **(Luke 7:33-35)**

Whereas although Jesus fasted, his purpose was, he came to reconcile humanity, to proclaim good

friend of tax-collectors and sinner.

On reflection, the king should be sitting in a royal palace and passing judgement and not to be amongst them.

Question? What is our mission and how do we serve our communities? Are we connected to our communities? Do we reach out and be amongst our struggling brothers and sisters? Do we hear of their stories and walk alongside them?

How do others perceive us in the role of our calling?

For such is what it means to dance to the tune of Jesus' flute!

The gift of discernment

In **verse 25**, Jesus said the spirit of wisdom cannot be put down to human intelligence but rather it is by the divine grace of God. He said that is why some younger people may have the ability to spiritually discern but some older folks may not be able to do so because they do not have a relationship with him.

As such, when we align our spirit with the Spirit of God, regardless of our age, gender, or ethnicity, we receive the gift of discernment. It is our gift of discernment that leads us to see the things of Christ and how we respond to each other and situation.

At this point, Jesus confirms his divine identity! The fact that he inherited his divine power from his Father and that the Father and the Son are one.

Good News: During these difficult times, let us be encouraged by Jesus' call to mercy and grace.

Jesus is calling us - so let us bring others with us to answer the call of Christ. If you already have a relationship with him, I encourage you to use this time to renew your relationship.

Jesus Christ wants a relationship with us - a relationship that is not qualified by our religious practices and outlook but rather - a relationship that allows us to surrender to him.

Having a relationship with Christ may often mean that we have to take up His yoke - serve others, love without prejudice, forgive others, seek peace, and pursue it, be fair and just, preach the Gospel,

Yes, we must dance to the tune of Jesus' flute, if we are to follow him!

That way, we will learn from him about what it means to be true disciples and to serve in the kingdom of God.

To this end, Jesus our gentle Saviour teaches

news to the poor, set the captives free, give sight to the blind ... **(Luke 4:18).**

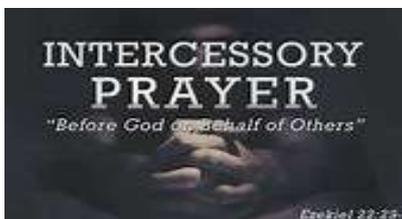
us humility and promises to give rest to our souls if we will dance to his tune and mourn with him when he wails! **Amen.**



A Prayer of Spiritual Communion

Longing for the time when we can truly share bread and wine together, we pray, loving God, that Jesus meets us now, in this time and this place. Though we cannot receive you in bread and wine, through your Holy Spirit come into our hearts. By your love assure us of your risen life within us even in the darkest times. Make us one with you and with each other as we remember we are part of your body. And as your body equip us still to serve you and minister your grace in new ways to your hurting world. **Amen.** *(Birmingham District Synod Worship)*

Hymn 594 StF: Lord, Jesus Christ



Loving God, we pray for all in authority, that they will be respectfully conscious of the weight on their shoulders, and that they will act responsibly for the people they serve. We pray for them in their personal lives, with the worries and cares that only they see.

We pray for our friends, family, colleagues. We pray that as we walk alongside them, you will use us to bring them close to you, and they will learn of your love.

We pray that we will be sensitive to the needs of those around us – the people we see every day at the shops, the school gates, the bust queue. We do not know what burdens they carry or if they need a kind word of encouragement and hope from us.

We pray that we will see the positive in people, even when it is hard, and reach out to encourage them.

Loving God, we pray for our sisters and brothers who are ill, receiving treatment, or experiencing some form of discomfort. May they receive your healing balm and divine intervention.

We pray for the Church that it will be an epitome of truth – God’s love, equality, and justice. Hear our prayers O Lord and let our cries fall unto You. **Amen.**



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.**

Blessing: Jesus has called us to come to him and blessed us with his richness. Now he sends us out into his world, to make sure people see him and listen to him through us. What responsibility, what a joy, what a privilege. We are yours Lord, use us as you will. **Amen!**

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