

**Staying Connected 14
Worship and
Pastoral Resources
Week Beginning
Sunday 21st June 2020**

Coming into our Father's presence

God has sent into our hearts the Spirit of his Son,
crying,
'Abba! Father!'

STF 439 Abba Father

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9FGRbUrfvZ8>

Abba Father, let me be yours and yours alone.
May my will forever be ever more your own.
Never let my heart grow cold, never let me go,
Abba Father, let me be yours and yours alone.

Prayer of Adoration

The God who made the world
is not far from any one of us.
Eternal God, in whom we live and move and have
our being, whose presence we know in this time
and place; spanning the universe of time and
space; yet coming gladly to the humble heart;
desire of all nations, light of those who seek,
home of the lost; closer to us than mind or breath
or memory or soul; all-filling, all-ruling, all-loving;
unspeakably great – and shown to us in Jesus;
high and holy – and living in us in your Spirit;
in trembling awe we look up, and call you Father.
All glory is yours, Father. And you, you are ours.
Amen.

STF 705 It is God who holds the nations

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nhlpzkr204w>

It is God who holds the nations in the hollow of
his hand;
it is God whose light is shining in the darkness of
the land;
it is God who builds the City on the Rock and not
on sand:
may the living God be praised!

It is God whose purpose summons us to use the
present hour;
who recalls us to our senses when a nation's life
turns sour;

in the discipline of freedom we shall know God's
saving power:
may the living God be praised!

When a thankful nation, looking back, has cause
to celebrate
those who win our admiration by their service to
the state;
when self-giving is a measure of the greatness of
the great:
may the living God be praised!

God reminds us every sunrise that the world is
ours on lease:
for the sake of life tomorrow may our love for it
increase;
may all races live together, share its riches, be at
peace:
may the living God be praised!

Prayer of Confession

Father and maker of us all,
you have called us to deal justly,
to love mercy,
and to walk humbly before you;
yet in our thoughtless lives,
in our divided and inward-looking churches,
in our inhuman, power-hungry society, of east
and west, we turn away from you,
we betray your kindness,
we hide your truth in fearful hearts.

For all that, you gave us your Son,
who walked humbly with you,
gave his life in mercy, and brought us the new
righteousness of pardon, to keep alight in the
world the lamp of your compassion.
Forgive us, for his sake.
Rekindle in each one of us the light
of faith,
revive your Church with the light of
hope,
and hold up in our midst the light
that will shine on everyone.
Lord, in your mercy, hear our
prayer.

God was in Christ, reconciling the
world to himself, and entrusting to us the
message of reconciliation.



Hear then his word of grace to us: Your sins are forgiven. Amen. Thanks be to God.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 10:24-39

24 "The student is not above the teacher, nor a servant above his master. 25 It is enough for students to be like their teachers, and servants like their masters. If the head of the house has been called Beelzebul, how much more the members of his household!

26 "So do not be afraid of them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. 27 What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs. 28 Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. 29 Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father's care.^[a] 30 And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. 31 So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

32 "Whoever acknowledges me before others, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven. 33 But whoever disowns me before others, I will disown before my Father in heaven.

34 "Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. 35 For I have come to turn

*"a man against his father,
a daughter against her mother,
a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law—
36 a man's enemies will be the members of his own household."^[b]*

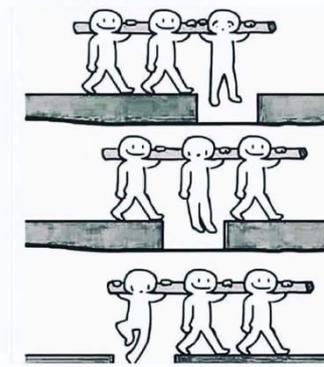
37 "Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. 38 Whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me. 39 Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it.

Reflection

Well that's not easy reading is it! This is one of those passages where we have to dig deep, but we don't have a lot of room here so you might

like to go and dig a bit more than we can here. What I would say though is first by picture:

If we unite, nobody falls



If we work together, everyone stays safe, dangers are safely negotiated and everyone survives. You getting this picture? In this particular time in our lives, when we fight an unseen enemy in COVID-19, when it's

clear that the one human race is fractured, it seems to me that we need the unifying love of God the Father, as demonstrated to us in Jesus the Son and alive in us today through the Holy Spirit. But to let God have his way, we need to listen to and accept his word and we need to give him control. That though can cause difficulty. It should be clear to us that Jesus causes a personal conflict. How happy are you to give up control of your life? I find it hard a lot of the time. But Jesus also causes a wider conflict. To believe in Jesus turns our world upside down. We become changed people – for the better – but others don't always see it that way. Leslie Strobel was an agnostic, her husband, Lee, an atheist. When Leslie came to faith it caused great conflict in their family. Lee, a legal editor with the Chicago Tribune, set-to to disprove the death and resurrection of Jesus. You can see the story in the film, 'The Case for Christ'. It typifies the conflict that Jesus talks about in this passage. It wasn't an easy time for Leslie, her marriage was at breaking point because she had become a follower of Jesus Christ. What did she do? She prayed, she read the Bible, she met with fellow Christians for support. What happened? Lee Strobel came to faith and became a Church leader. A wonderful ending to a mighty struggle. Our humanity tells us we have every reason to be afraid, yet Jesus encourages us to try and not to be because, although it might not be in our lifetime, Father God's Kingdom will come and reign here on earth as it does in heaven. Until such time, Jesus offers us the cross and we all know what a cross is. Not a fancy piece of jewellery but a means of death. We die to our own wants and live for those of Jesus. It's not an easy path to tread, yet if we dare, we will find there all that we need to negotiate this life, all

that we need to share the beauty of a perfect Father with others. Even though we are called to give up so much, even though others will turn against us, even though this is not an easy path, it is the best path. It is the path that brings life and unity and justice and mercy and healing and grace. It is a path that will light up this world. If we take up the cross and walk this path well the picture paints a thousand words. Thank God for his Fatherhood, for Jesus his Son our Saviour and the Holy Spirit who draw us into his Love and helps make us one.

Prayers of Intercession

Father God we, your Church are gathered together. Despite the uncertainty of these times, we pray for a sense of expectation and inspiration as we go to disciple the world. Help us to put our differences behind us and to unite instead behind the great commission of Jesus, to make disciples of all nations.

Lord, in your mercy **hear our prayer.**

We pray for a world struggling to live justly and in peace. We pray for those who have to search for daily food or walk long distances for clean water. We remember with sadness those whose lives are cut short by COVID-19 and other diseases or by violence and discrimination. We remember those who have fled their homes in fear. We pray for those who meet persecution and torture with courage and dignity. May your kingdom come and your will be done on earth as it is in the heavenly places.

Lord, in your mercy **hear our prayer.**

We thank you for those people who sustain us by their love and forgiveness. Thank you for the network of people with whom our lives are inextricably linked and who make up the fabric of our family and community life. Make us alert to each others' needs and be quick to serve and encourage one another. May our gentleness with each other reflect your gentleness with us.

Lord, in our mercy **hear our prayer.**

We pray for those who are laid low by suffering and those who are experiencing the outrageous assault of pain. We trust your love for us and for all people, and your deep desire for our well-being. As we name in our hearts those who are in the grip of suffering, help us so to pray and to act

that they may know your comfort and healing, both now and in the coming days.

Lord, in your mercy **hear our prayer.**

We thank you for those people who have trod the narrow path and given us examples and models by which we try to live. We thank you for those who have lived and died in quiet holiness and whose prayers have helped to sustain the world. Help us to live in the light by which they lived, and to worship the source of that light, Jesus Christ our risen Lord.

Lord, in your mercy **hear our prayer.**

Rejoicing in the fellowship of all your saints, we commend ourselves and all people to your unfailing love. **Merciful father, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

Go Light your World (see separate sheet) &/or

STF 50 Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H5611FJ7pUw>

Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise,

The city of our God, the holy place,

The joy of the whole earth.

Great is the Lord in whom we have the victory,

He aids us against the enemy,

We bow down on our knees.

And Lord, we want to lift your name on high,

and Lord, we want to thank you,

for the works you've done in our lives;

and Lord, we trust in your unfailing love,

for you alone are God eternal,

throughout earth and heaven above.

Blessing

We go blessed by the great name of God our Abba Father, of Jesus Christ our Saviour and Holy Spirit our Guide. We go to love, to serve in his name. Amen.

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Go Light Your World

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WsM5lt9tCFo&t=5s>

There is a candle in every soul
Some brightly burning, some dark and cold
There is a Spirit who brings fire
Ignites a candle and makes His home.

Carry your candle, run to the darkness
Seek out the hopeless, confused and torn
Hold out your candle for all to see it
Take your candle, and go light your world
Take your candle, and go light your world.

Frustrated brother, see how he's tried to
Light his own candle some other way
See now your sister, she's been robbed and lied to
Still holds a candle without a flame.

Carry your candle, run to the darkness
Seek out the lonely, the tired and worn
Hold out your candle for all to see it
Take your candle, and go light your world
Take your candle, and go light your world.

We are a family whose hearts are blazing
So let's raise our candles and light up the sky
Praying to our Father, in the name of Jesus
Make us a beacon in darkest times.

Carry your candle, run to the darkness
Seek out the helpless, deceived and poor
Hold out your candle for all to see it
Take your candle, and go light your world

Carry your candle, run to the darkness.
Seek out the hopeless, confused and torn
Hold out your candle for all to see it
Take your candle, and go light your world
Take your candle, and go light your world

Songwriters: CHRISTOPHER M. RICE

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Good Good Father

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-ak0OoFBw3c>

[Chris Tomlin](#)

I've heard a thousand stories of what they think
you're like
But I've heard the tender whispers of love in the
dead of night

And you tell me that you're pleased
And that I'm never alone
You're a good good father
It's who you are, it's who you are, it's who you are
And I'm loved by you
It's who I am, it's who I am, it's who I am
I've seen many searching for answers far and wide
But I know we're all searching
For answers only you provide
'Cause you know just what we need
Before we say a word
You're a good good father
It's who you are, it's who you are, it's who you are
And I'm loved by you
It's who I am, it's who I am, it's who I am
Because you are perfect in all of your ways
You are perfect in all of your ways
You are perfect in all of your ways to us
You are perfect in all of your ways
You are perfect in all of your ways
You are perfect in all of your ways to us
Oh, it's love so undeniable
I, I can hardly speak
Peace so unexplainable
I, I can hardly think
As you call me deeper still
As you call me deeper still
As you call me deeper still
Into love, love, love
You're a good good father
It's who you are, it's who you are, it's who you are
And I'm loved by you
It's who I am, it's who I am, it's who I am
You're a good good father
It's who you are, it's who you are, it's who you are
And I'm loved by you
It's who I am, it's who I am, it's who I am
You're a good good father
It's who you are, it's who you are, it's who you are
And I'm loved by you
It's who I am, it's who I am, it's who I am
You're a good good father
You are perfect in all of your ways
It's who you are, it's who you are, it's who you are
And I'm loved by you
You are perfect in all of your ways
It's who I am, it's who I am, it's who I am
Songwriters: Anthony Brown, Pat Barrett

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