



**'Staying Connected' 19
Week Beginning
26th July 2020
Worship**

Opening words

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:
To God be the glory for ever and ever! Amen!

Hymn. Singing The Faith 764 We Believe in God The Father.
https://youtu.be/Yg6oGRAcP_o

We believe in God the father, God Almighty, by whose plan
Earth and heaven sprang to being, all created things began.
We believe in Christ The Saviour, Son of God in human frame,
virgin-born, the child of Mary upon whom the Spirit came.

Christ, who on the cross forsaken, like a lamb to slaughter led,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, He descended to the dead.
We believe in Jesus risen, heaven's King to rule and reign,
to the father's side ascended, 'til as judge He comes again.

We believe in God the Spirit, in one Church below, above,
Saints of God in one communion, one in holiness and love.
So, by faith, our sins forgiven, Christ our Saviour, Lord and friend
We shall rise with Him in glory to the life than knows now end.

Timothy Dudley-Smith. (b. 1926),
From the Apostles' Creed.

Prayers

We look to God.....

Eternal God, we praise you, for you are the source of light and life.
Your word made the whole of creation, in all its beauty and splendour,
bringing order out of chaos, light out of darkness.
We praise you that the evidence of your creative activity is all around us still.

We praise you Father, for your supreme revelation of yourself in our Lord Jesus Christ,
and for the clear vision of your love that we see in Him.

Inspire us now with the life and light He came to bring,
that our praises may be worthy of Him, and resound to His honour and glory.

We look into our own hearts.....

Lord, as we recognise your beauty and holiness and give you due adoration, we are mindful
of our need of grace.

Where we have been quick to judge or condemn...

Lord, forgive us.

Where our worship has fallen short of honouring you as we should...

Lord, forgive us.

Where our hearts have been closed to learning and growing as your Disciples....

Lord, forgive us.

Where we have neglected the needs of others...

Lord, forgive us.

Where we have accepted injustice and neglected to stand alongside those who have suffered abuse...

Lord, forgive us.

When the task of making Disciples as become unimportant....

Lord, forgive us.

Lord Jesus, thank you so much that you do not leave us to suffer the consequences of our sins, but demonstrate time and again your faithfulness and commitment to us. So fill us with the same Spirit, that as St Paul reminds us, we will be transformed from one degree of glory to another, and ultimately, into the likeness of Christ.

In Jesus' name, **Amen**

HYMN Singing The Faith 508. Purify my Heart

<https://youtu.be/mZXOpIFnHhE>

Purify my heart, let me be as gold, and precious silver,
purify my heart, let me be as gold, pure gold.

Refiners fire, my heart's one desire
is to be holy, set apart for you, Lord.

I choose to be holy, set apart for you, my master,
ready to do your will.

Purify my heart, cleanse me from within, and make me holy,
purify my heart, cleanse me from my sin, deep within.

Refiners fire, my heart's one desire
is to be holy, set apart for you, Lord.

I choose to be holy, set apart for you, my master,
ready to do your will.

Scripture Reading - Phillipians 2:1-11

2 If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, **2** make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. **3** Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. **4** Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. **5** Let the same mind be in you that wasⁱⁿ in Christ Jesus,

6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited,⁷ but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness.

And being found in human form, **8** he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross.

9 Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, **10** so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

11 and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Message

This week I learnt something! (humour me....it doesn't happen often!)

Some of you may know of a lady by the name of Avis Parsons (nee Hearn). Avis was one of just six women awarded the Military Medal for her courage in staying at her post to relay vital information during the Battle of Britain. This included plotting the formations of German bombers as they massed over France and began their attacks. On what has been described as the hardest day of the Battle of Britain Avis was at work telephoning radar plots to the RAF base, and all the time her station was being bombarded into rubble.

It turns out that Avis was my nan's sister-in-law – my great Aunt.

She and countless others are rightly often remembered and honoured, because of their selfless attitudes and actions – despite themselves being vulnerable. We have rightly been honouring front-line workers during the pandemic for similar reasons.

In Philippians 2:3, Paul instructs us to '*Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. **4** Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. **5** Let the same mind be in you that wasⁱⁿ in Christ Jesus.....'*

Then he goes on to say how Jesus demonstrated the greatest example of selflessness by giving up His life for all, and celebrates how because of His ultimate sacrifice, Jesus has been raised and given the name above every other name.

Because of the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus Christ, who thought not of Himself but for each human being who would ever live on the earth, every generation now has the chance to receive all the benefits and blessings He has to give – life in all its fullness – and forevermore.

Friends, we have the chance to live in such a way that will benefit and bless those for whom Jesus is just a swear word – those for whom belonging to a church has never even been a consideration.

As we look to the future we must bless each other. We must love and support one another. And of course we must find ways of worshipping together, whether outside, in homes, or in our chapels – as we gradually learn how we can..

But we must learn how to be the Church differently too. As God's people we must look not only to our own interests, but to the interests of others. We must be prepared to give some things up, in order that much more energy is put to going to – and being where people are. One of our top priorities must be to make disciples.

As we are living off of the sacrifice and selflessness of people like my Great Aunt Avis, like all our key workers, and most especially like Jesus Christ – so we must humble ourselves, be faithful to Christ's call, and build His Church, so that others in our communities too will know that He is Christ The Lord. **Amen**

I invite you to make this final hymn your prayer to God.

Hymn- Great is The Darkness

<https://youtu.be/jEeyevjD7Kw>

Great is the darkness that covers the earth, oppression, injustice and pain.
Nations are slipping in hopeless despair, though many have come in your name.
Watching while sanity dies, touched by the madness and lies.

*Come, Lord Jesus, come, Lord Jesus, pour out your Spirit we pray.
Come, Lord Jesus, come, Lord Jesus, pour out your Spirit on us today.*

May now your Church rise with power and love, this glorious Gospel proclaim.
In every nation salvation will come to those who believe in your name.
Help us bring light to your world, that we might speed your return. *Come, Lord Jesus....*

Great celebrations on that final day, when out of the heavens you come.
Darkness will vanish, all sorrow will end, and rulers will bow at your throne.
Our great commission complete, then face to face we shall meet. *Come, Lord Jesus....*

Gerald Coates and Noel Richards

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Blessing

May the joy and peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you, wherever He may send you.
May you and all those you love know all the rich blessings of God.

And may you know the guidance, comfort and power of His Spirit – now and always. **Amen**

