

(StF) Singing the Faith  
(SoF) Songs of Fellowship

## **Notices**

### **Call to worship**

#### **John 20:30-31 (NIVUK)**

##### **The purpose of John's gospel**

<sup>30</sup> Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. <sup>31</sup> But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

### **Song (SoF) 3145**

Our first hymn reflects on the Easter story. You may need your dancing shoes on for this one; *This is amazing grace*,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R-rbmpzoQ5o>

Bethel Kids

Who breaks the power of sin and darkness,  
Whose love is mighty and so much stronger?  
The King of Glory the King above all kings.

Who shakes the whole earth with holy thunder,  
Who leaves us breathless in awe and wonder?  
The King of Glory the King above all kings.

*This is amazing grace,  
This is unfailing love,  
That You would take my place,  
That You would bear my cross.  
You laid down Your life.  
That I would be set free.*

*Oh, Jesus, I sing for all that You've done for me.*

Who brings our chaos back into order,  
Who makes the orphan a son and daughter?  
The King of Glory the King of Glory.

Who rules the nations with truth and justice,  
Shines like the sun in all of its brilliance?  
The King of Glory the King above all kings.

Worthy is the Lamb who was slain,  
Worthy is the King who conquered the grave.  
Worthy is the Lamb who was slain,  
Worthy is the King who conquered the grave.  
Worthy is the Lamb who was slain,  
Worthy is the King who conquered the grave.  
Worthy is the Lamb who was slain,  
Worthy, worthy, worthy.

Jeremy Riddle, Josh Farro & Phil Wickham  
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## **Children Leave**

Lord we pray your blessing on our young people and their leaders as they go to their breakout room. **Amen.**

## **Prayers**

### **A prayer of praise**

This is amazing grace,  
This is unfailing love,  
That You would take our place,  
That You would bear our cross.  
You laid down Your life.  
That We would be set free.

Risen Christ,

**we give you thanks and praise:**

for the players in the Easter story.

**We give you thanks and praise:**

for the disciples sticking together for reassurance.

**We give you thanks and praise:**

for Thomas who dared to ask for proof.

**We give you thanks and praise:**

for Mary who mistook Jesus for the gardener.

**We give you thanks and praise:**

for the disciples who failed to recognise you.

**We give you thanks and praise:**

for the disciples struggling to catch fish.

**We give you thanks and praise:**

for each and everyone who has encountered you.

Yours is the glory.

**Amen. Amen to that.**

**Lord we can only marvel at what you have done for us. Amen.**

## **Prayer of Confession**

### **A prayer of confession**

Lord, we have already acknowledged that you laid down your life in order that we would be set free. We come before you to acknowledge our human frailties for which we seek your forgiveness. Roll away the stones that block us seeing your resurrection light.

## **Bible Reading**

Our absolution comes from the first letter of John.

### **1 John 1:5-2:2 (NIVUK)**

#### **Light and darkness, sin and forgiveness**

<sup>5</sup> This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. <sup>6</sup> If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. <sup>7</sup> But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

<sup>8</sup> If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. <sup>9</sup> **If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.** <sup>10</sup> If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us.

<sup>2</sup> <sup>1</sup> My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father – Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. <sup>2</sup> He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

## **Lord's Prayer**

Our Father in heaven  
hallowed be your Name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial  
and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,  
now and for ever. **Amen.**

### **Song (StF) 316**

Our next hymn, *When Easter to the dark world came*, comes by courtesy of the Isle of Man Methodist Church. This setting of the hymn by W H Hamilton, is played and sung by Gareth Moore.

**When ten disciples met in fear,  
Then 'Peace' said Jesus, 'I am here.'  
When Thomas' heart was hurt and grieved,  
Then Jesus wounds his doubt relieved:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RV58YPdfKV8>

When Easter to the dark world came,  
Fair flowers glowed like scarlet flame:  
*At Eastertide, at Eastertide,  
O glad was the world at Eastertide.*

When Mary in the garden walked,  
And with her risen Master talked:  
*At Eastertide, at Eastertide,  
O glad was the world at Eastertide.*

When John and Peter in their gloom  
Met angels at the empty tomb:  
*At Eastertide, at Eastertide,  
O glad was the world at Eastertide.*

**When ten disciples met in fear,  
Then 'Peace' said Jesus, 'I am here.'**  
*At Eastertide, at Eastertide,*

*O glad was the world at Eastertide.*

**When Thomas' heart was hurt and grieved,  
Then Jesus wounds his doubt relieved:**

*At Eastertide, at Eastertide,  
O glad was the world at Eastertide.*

And friend to friend in wonder said:

'The Lord is risen from the dead!'

*At Eastertide, at Eastertide,  
O glad was the world at Eastertide.*

This Eastertide with joyful voice

We'll sing: 'The Lord is King! Rejoice!'

*At Eastertide, at Eastertide,  
O sing, all the world, for Eastertide.*

W H Hamilton

## **Bible Reading**

Our first Bible reading will now be read to us by \_\_\_\_\_.

### **John 20:19-31 (NIVUK)**

#### **Jesus appears to his disciples**

<sup>19</sup> On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you!' <sup>20</sup> After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

<sup>21</sup> Again Jesus said, 'Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.' <sup>22</sup> And with that he breathed on them and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. <sup>23</sup> If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.'

#### **Jesus appears to Thomas**

<sup>24</sup> Now Thomas (also known as Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. <sup>25</sup> So the other disciples told him, 'We have seen the Lord!'

But he said to them, 'Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.'

<sup>26</sup> A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you!' <sup>27</sup> Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.'

<sup>28</sup> Thomas said to him, 'My Lord and my God!'

<sup>29</sup> Then Jesus told him, 'Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.'

### The purpose of John's gospel

<sup>30</sup> Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. <sup>31</sup> But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

## **Song (SoF) 2856**

Here we are, a week after Easter. Let us in our next hymn, *I cast my mind to Calvary*, reflect on the Easter story once more.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k1mHJYjFUx4>

I cast my mind to Calvary  
Where Jesus bled and died for me.  
I see His wounds, His hands, His feet;  
My Saviour on that cursed tree.

His body bound and drenched in tears,  
They laid Him down in Joseph's tomb.  
The entrance sealed by heavy stone:  
Messiah still and all alone.

*O praise the Name of the Lord our God  
O praise His Name forevermore  
For endless days we will sing Your praise  
Oh Lord oh Lord our God*

Then on the third, at break of dawn,  
The Son of heaven rose again.  
O trampled death, where is your sting?  
The angels roar for Christ the King.

He shall return in robes of white,  
The blazing sun shall pierce the night.  
And I will rise among the saints,  
My gaze transfixed on Jesus' face.

Benjamin Hastings, Dean Ussher & Marty Sampson  
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## **Reflection**

Right at the end of John chapter 20 we are told why he wrote his gospel.

### **John 20:30-31 (NIVUK)**

#### **The purpose of John's gospel**

<sup>30</sup> Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. <sup>31</sup> But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

How well do we know what John has written or indeed what the other gospel writers or the Bible's numerous other authors have written for that matter. John wrote his book so that those who read it might believe.

## **The Methodist quadrilateral**

Although you may not know it, and I didn't know it until I trained to be a local preacher, Methodists, that's us or most of us, traditionally use a fourfold approach to learn about the Christian faith and apply it to contemporary issues and to Christian practice. This is known as the Methodist or Wesleyan Quadrilateral. The first of these is:

### **Scripture**

Through which we seek to discover the word of God through reading the Bible. According to the Methodist website, there are different understandings among Methodists about the Bible's authority in our lives. We need to use resources like different Bible translations, commentaries, Bible reading notes and more formal Bible study, perhaps as part of a group, to discover these.

For completeness the other three members of the Quadrilateral are tradition, reason, and experience. Briefly

### **Tradition**

is the wisdom and creativity of Christians over time and across the world. It includes inspirational material like hymns, songs, prayers, poetry, Christian art and devotional books. There are also formally agreed teachings like the creeds, the content of the [catechism](#), and statements and reports from the [Methodist Conference](#). Tradition here should not be confused with traditional.

### **Reason**

says we are called to love God with our minds as well as with our hearts. To the best of our ability we need to think things through in the light of reason. This means becoming aware of different points of view, and using our own critical thinking to make sense of God's world.

### **Experience**

particularly stresses the importance of our own experience of God's grace working in our lives. We gain wisdom and maturity from life experience, especially when we pray and reflect about our story with other Christians.

But for many years, centuries even, the scriptures were not accessible to ordinary folk. Not until the early to mid 14th century, did English fight to be the language of the Christian Bible through the efforts of theologian John Wycliffe, who opposed the church's use of a Latin scripture because it prevented most of the population from reading the Bible for themselves. Eventually, Henry V of England would use his power to create an English language Bible in the early 15th century. However, for various reasons there continued to be opposition to having the Bible printed in English. The next major translator was William Tyndale, and in his time the possession of an English Bible had become illegal once more so he left the country in order to write his translation of the Bible from the original Hebrew and Greek, which he published in 1526. Eventually, Henry VIII of England wished for the creation of an English Bible and a new Church of England so that he could divorce his wife Catherine of Aragon. And in time, King James I would create an official version of the Bible which became wide spread. Tyndale's work formed 85% of the King James Bible.

The English of the day though was not the English of today. Though Wycliffe died before English became the official language of the Bible, in the TV series, *An Adventure Of English*, Melvyn Bragg discussed how Wycliffe's translation eventually led to the transition of various Latin words into the English language, including "angel," "barbarian," "birthday," "communication," "cock-crow," "emperor," "envy," "glory," "Godly," "jubilee," "justice," "profession," "suddenly," "visitor" or "zeal." And many familiar phrases do have their origin here: "woe off is me," "an eye for an eye." You read them first in Wycliffe's Bible.

Similarly many of William Tyndale's sayings we still use today, including, "scapegoat," "let there be light," "the powers that be," "my brother's keeper," "fight the good fight," "the apple of mine eye," "a man after my own heart," "the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak," "sign of the times," "ye of little faith," "eat, drink and be merry," and words such as "fisherman," "stumbling block," "beautiful" and "zealous."

"A prophet has not honour in his own country," "a stranger in a strange land," "a law unto themselves," we live and move and have our being," and "let my people go," all come from Tyndale's pen.

And the King James Bible deliberately used words like "ye" and "thou," which were no longer in common use, to create the sense that the words written would appear to be ancient, to have authority.

Thinking about those phrases we commonly still use now, I am now going to play you a clip from a recent Match of the Day programme. It is the introduction to a match between Leeds United and Chelsea. The respective managers are Marcelo Bielsa and Thomas Tuchel. Listen to what the commentator says about them.

You may have heard the word "apostles" there, but I want to focus on the rather clever way the commentator uses another those phrases that we get from the English translation of the

Bible: “a doubting Thomas,” —the main subject of today’s reading from John. It is Jesus himself who gives us the challenge from the story: **‘Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.’**

It is interesting to note that immediately after these words of Jesus John writes, **“Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.”**

The challenge for us today is twofold:

The first is to make sure that we know what is written in the Bible, particularly the four gospels, because as John says, it is these that are written so that we may believe Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God. As has been said, many of the common expressions we use in our English language today come from the Bible. They give us links which we can use to relate the Bible to everyday life and to everyday people.

The second challenge is that of using our experience as explained earlier. Our experience is our story of our relationship with God. We can use that experience, that of our story in our witness to people around us.

And all the people said, “Amen.”

## **Song (SoF) 2856**

Not long before Easter I was listening to a podcast by Carolyn Lawrence, our current Vice-President in which she referred the hymn, *Jesus Christ, my living hope* by *Phil Wickham*, which was unknown to me. We are going to sing that now.

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

Phil Wickham

How great the chasm that lay between us  
How high the mountain I could not climb  
In desperation, I turned to heaven  
And spoke your name into the night  
Then through the darkness  
Your loving kindness  
Tore through the shadows of my soul  
The work is finished, the end is written  
Jesus Christ, my living hope

Who could imagine so great a mercy?  
What heart could fathom such boundless grace?

The God of ages stepped down from glory  
To wear my sin and bear my shame  
The cross has spoken, I am forgiven  
The king of kings calls me His own  
Beautiful saviour, I'm yours forever  
Jesus Christ, my living hope

Hallelujah, praise the one who set me free  
Hallelujah, death has lost its grip on me  
You have broken every chain  
There's salvation in your name  
Jesus Christ, my living hope

Hallelujah, praise the one who set me free  
Hallelujah, death has lost its grip on me  
You have broken every chain  
There's salvation in your name  
Jesus Christ, my living hope

Then came the morning that sealed the promise  
Your buried body began to breathe  
Out of the silence, the roaring lion  
Declared the grave has no claim on me

Then came the morning that sealed the promise  
Your buried body began to breathe  
Out of the silence, the roaring lion  
Declared the grave has no claim on me  
Jesus, yours is the victory, whoa!

Hallelujah, praise the one who set me free  
Hallelujah, death has lost its grip on me  
You have broken every chain  
There's salvation in your name  
Jesus Christ, my living hope

Hallelujah, praise the one who set me free  
Hallelujah, death has lost its grip on me  
You have broken every chain  
There's salvation in your name  
Jesus Christ, my living hope

Jesus Christ, my living hope  
Oh God, you are my living hope

Songwriter: Phil Wickham

## **Prayers of Intercession**

Let us pray for a world in need of peace:  
peace between warring nations,  
peace between conflicting political ideologies,  
peace between peoples of faith.

**Lord, you are the Prince of Peace; bring peace to our troubled world.**

Let us pray for a world in need of love:  
love for people who have lost their self-respect,  
love for friends who have become alienated,  
love for relatives who have lost their affection for each other,  
love for those who mourn.

**You are the God of love; help us to spread your love across a trouble world.**

Let us pray for a world in need of hope:  
hope in the midst of despair when all seems lost,  
hope when evil seems to be winning,  
hope for a better future for everyone.  
We have just sung Jesus Christ, my living hope; help us to show that we are people of the living hope.

Let us pray for a world in need of joy:  
joy when there is cause for celebration,  
joy where there is a reason to give thanks,  
joy as a means of sharing in the wonder of creation.

**Lord, you came into the world to bring joyful news; help us to spread that joyful news.  
Amen.**

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## **Bible Reading**

Before we close, here are the remaining words from today's epistle reading from the first letter of John.

### **1 John 1:1-4 (NIVUK)**

#### **The incarnation of the Word of life**

<sup>1</sup> That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched – this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. <sup>2</sup> The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. <sup>3</sup> We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our

fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. <sup>4</sup> We write this to make our joy complete.

## **Song (SoF) 2845**

Our final hymn, *Christ is risen, He is risen indeed!*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b6d1BBMM1u4>

The Church at Liberty Park

How can it be? The One who died  
Has borne our sin through sacrifice,  
To conquer every sting of death;  
Sing, sing hallelujah.

For joy awakes as dawning light  
When Christ's disciples lift their eyes;  
Alive He stands, their Friend and King;  
Christ, Christ, He is risen.

*Christ is risen, He is risen indeed!  
Oh, sing hallelujah.  
Join the chorus, sing with the redeemed:  
Christ is risen, He is risen indeed.*

Where doubt and darkness once had been,  
They saw Him and their hearts believed;  
But blessed are those who have not seen,  
Yet sing hallelujah.

Once bound by fear now bold in faith,  
They preached the truth and power of grace;  
And pouring out their lives they gained  
Life, life everlasting.

The power that raised Him from the grave  
Now works in us to powerfully save;  
He frees our hearts to live His grace;  
Go tell of His goodness.

He is risen!  
He's alive! He's alive!  
Heaven's gates are opened wide!  
He's alive! He's alive!

Now in heaven glorified!  
(Repeat)

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## **Benediction**

### **Hebrews 13:20-21 (NIVUK)**

#### **Benediction and Final Greetings**

<sup>20</sup> Now may the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, <sup>21</sup> equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. **Amen.**