



The Church at Carrs Lane
Service for Sunday 22nd March 2020, 10.30am



We are an inclusive and affirming Church. You are welcome just as you are.

If you are able, please use this service on Sunday morning, starting at 10.30am, and then we will all be worshipping together.

Welcome! – we are all welcomed by God. Usually we say this to welcome each other to the shared space of the church building – in these times we are unable to physically meet – but we say again – ‘we are all welcomed by God’ because it is the heart of God who welcomes us to God’s heart.

We await with anticipation the day when we can gather again, and now we can still revel in the welcoming love of God.

We invite you to close your eyes and picture someone you know in this church community (if you’ve not been before, imagine warm, welcoming people smiling at you!) – know that we are together in spirit as we worship together.

We have shared hymns below – please say or sing them. The numbers relate to ‘singing the faith’ song book, but the words are reproduced for ease. Many hymns are ‘of their time’ and use masculine language to God – feel free to sing or say whichever pronouns are most helpful for you – God is bigger than all our language.

We sing or say together hymn 186, ‘tell out my soul’ as we echo the words of Mary and of Hannah in ‘the magnificat’, we sing or read with thanksgiving to God and sing that we will continue to praise God, to ‘tell out’ God’s goodness, whatever the circumstances. Dudley

[Note: this Timothy Dudley Smith version is also on YouTube with words and music:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CWDwMbu6w6c> Ctrl + click to follow link]

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord!
Unnumbered blessings give my spirit voice;
Tender to me the promise of his word;
In God my Saviour shall my heart rejoice

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his Name!
Make known his might, the deeds his arm has done;
His mercy sure, from age to age to same;

His holy Name--the Lord, the Mighty One

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his might!
Powers and dominions lay their glory by
Proud hearts and stubborn wills are put to flight
The hungry fed, the humble lifted high

Tell out, my soul, the glories of his word!
Firm is his promise, and his mercy sure
Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord
To children's children and for evermore!

(c) Timothy Dudley Smith

Prayers.

Lord God, today we come in such strange times – so much fear and panic, and yet so many outpourings of kindness and goodness too.

We give you praise that you are constant in your love and faithful to us. We praise you that your love is unending and that even in the midst of difficulties and confusion, you are our rock and refuge, even when we don't understand.

We confess to you anything which distances us from you, anything which we regret:
(silence)

We ask your forgiveness.
(silence)

We thank you that you say to us each, 'my child, your sins are forgiven, go in Peace and sin no more'.

We thank you too for each other – even though we cannot meet together today, we thank you for the community, the family, of this church. We thank you for those we usually see, and those who struggle to attend. We thank you for those who have died.

We thank you especially this day for those who, throughout our lives, have cared for us, and do care for us. Those who have given us safe space in which to grow and learn.

We thank you for this day and come to you with gratitude and thanksgiving.

In Jesus' name.
Amen.

We sing or say hymn 78: Give thanks with a grateful heart

[This is also available as a YouTube video with words and music:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KMTmZKotTYw> Ctrl + click to follow link]

Give thanks with a grateful heart
Give thanks to the Holy One
Give thanks because He's given Jesus Christ, His Son

Give thanks with a grateful heart
Give thanks to the Holy One
Give thanks because He's given Jesus Christ, His Son

And now let the weak say, "I am strong"
Let the poor say, "I am rich"
Because of what the Lord has done for us"

(c) Don Moen

Our bible reading for today is 1 Corinthians 13: 1-8a

If I speak in the tongues^[a] of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. ² If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. ³ If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast,^[b] but do not have love, I gain nothing.

⁴ Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵ It does not dishonour others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶ Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷ It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

⁸ Love never fails.

Message (there will be a recorded message to view online, but for those without access, this is an additional message)

'Love' 'all you need is love' 'love conquers all'
We bandy the word about! And seem to mean different things.
'I love my cat!' 'I love those shoes!' 'I love my mum!' 'ooh I love chocolate digestives!'

Love is indeed a many splendoured thing and we seem to mean all sorts of things by it!

Today, on Mothering Sunday, we are grateful particularly for the love of those who have helped us have the safety to learn and grow. For some of us that is a mother, a father, a family member. For some of us, family life is best forgotten and we have found those safe people elsewhere in life.

I hope we all have someone today of whom we can say, 'they gave me the safe space to grow' and 'they loved me'.

We affirm the love of God for all, and we often experience that in the positive love of others.

In church life, we are challenged to make a loving and safe community. Well how very lovely, how very nice for all the lovely Christians to be loving and create a safe community.

Yes indeed! But sometimes not simple. If the church grows and changes, it will include different people, and as well as being a delight, that can also bring challenges sometimes. How do we adapt and enable each other? How do we ensure that it is truly a 'safe space' for everyone? Sometimes that means difficult conversations if behaviour is not safe or not loving. Sometimes it means challenging ourselves to see the best in others even if we're struggling (and asking them to search for the best in us).

Today as we thank God for people who have helped us have the safe space in which to learn and grow, those who have positively loved us, we commit ourselves to being those people, and together to being that community, for each other and for others who will yet come and belong.

(silence)

Please take a moment to think and pray.

We sing together hymn 619, thanks for friends who keep on loving:

Thanks for friends who keep on loving,
finding ways to help us grow,
celebrating our achievements,
sharing in our pain and woe.
God is glimpsed where love is faithful:
mirrored here in time and space.
Thanks to God for friends who love us:
Christ revealed in every face.

Other people help to shape us
when they take the time to share

words of wisdom, honest actions
through our journey in God's care.
In our faithful, honest learning
we discover things unknown.
Thanks to God for friends who teach us:
seeking talent yet ungrown.

When we find our friendships challenged
through mistakes and different views,
we discover deeper living
as the love of God renews.
For in Christ we see forgiveness;
know a strength still to embrace.
Thanks to God for friends who keep us:
making real the gift of grace.

Praise to God for this great gifting
of relationship and friend:
imaging divine relating;
found in heaven with no end.
Bless us Maker, Word and Spirit
as companions on the way.
Thanks to God for friends who help us
to fulfil our lives each day.

© Gary Hopkins

We pray now for others.
Lord we come to you, aware of your love and wanting to share in your love for the
world.

At this time of health crisis with so many changes around the world, we pray for
healing, for governments and everyone making difficult decisions (silent prayer)
Lord we thank you for each other: we pray for each other

We pray for people around the world, particularly those who already were suffering
in war and hunger and poverty (silent prayer)
Lord we thank you for each other: we pray for each other

We pray for people who live near us. (silent prayer)
Lord we thank you for each other: we pray for each other

We pray for people afraid at this time (silent prayer)
Lord we thank you for each other: we pray for each other

We pray for people ill and for those who care for them (silent prayer)

Lord we thank you for each other: we pray for each other

We pray for all the people delivering important services, people we may not have realised before who are so essential – people who keep health services, social services, benefits offices, schools, childcare, shops, deliveries, postal services and other crucial services running. (silent prayer)

Lord we thank you for each other: we pray for each other

We make other prayers in silence to you (silent prayer)

Lord we thank you for each other: we pray for each other

We bring our prayers in Jesus' name.

Amen.

We join in the 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 trespass 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 forever.
Amen.

We join together in our last hymn, 81, now thank we all our God

[This can also be played on YouTube with King's College Choir, Cambridge
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7GStAhbJoSA> Ctrl + click to follow link]

1. Now thank we all our God, with heart and hands and voices,
Who wondrous things has done, in Whom this world rejoices;
Who from our mothers' arms has blessed us on our way
With countless gifts of love, and still is ours today.
2. Oh, may this bounteous God through all our life be near us,
With ever joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us;
And keep us in His grace, and guide us when perplexed;
And guard us through all ills in this world, till the next!
3. All praise and thanks to God the Father now be given,
The Son, and Him Who reigns with Them in highest Heaven—
The one eternal God, Whom earth and Heav'n adore;
For thus it was, is now, and shall be evermore.

(c) Martin Rinkart

Blessing:

May God bless you and keep you. May God make God's face to shine upon you. And as we continue, close in heart even if not literally together, may we know God holds us all in the palm of God's hand, in the safety of eternal love.

Amen

CCLI No. 121878

See below for more links to worship opportunities.

Worship online

Whilst churches are not meeting there are a number of options for you to connect with worship this coming Sunday morning.

[Birmingham Methodist District Live Sunday Worship](https://www.facebook.com/Birminghammethodistdistrict/)

(<https://www.facebook.com/Birminghammethodistdistrict/>)

Our Methodist District will be streaming worship live this coming Sunday on their Facebook Page. Click on the above link on Sunday morning (22nd March) just before 10:30am to join them. You do not need a Facebook account to watch it.

[Wesley's Chapel Live](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUAUqhmhevz5sqhh72LIMxA)

(<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUAUqhmhevz5sqhh72LIMxA>)

[Wesley's Chapel in London](https://www.wesleyschapel.org.uk/) (<https://www.wesleyschapel.org.uk/>) will also be streaming live each Sunday morning on YouTube, only at 11am, click on the link above at that time to join in. Again, no account required.

Radio and TV (please remind friends who are not on the Internet about these TV and radio programmes)

- [Songs of Praise](https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006ttc5) (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006ttc5>)
- [Choral Evensong](https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006tp7r/episodes/player://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006tp7r/episodes/player)
(<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006tp7r/episodes/player://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006tp7r/episodes/player>)
- [Daily Service](https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006wzfs/episodes/guide) (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006wzfs/episodes/guide>)
- [Sunday Worship](https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qnds/broadcasts/upcoming)
(<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qnds/broadcasts/upcoming>)

New Inclusive Church

Pray and Connect Facebook Group

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1414900058671549/>

Weekly online prayer gathering for those involved in NIC is via Zoom (Webinar platform). Details on the Gatherings page of the New Inclusive Church website

All online gatherings are listed here: <https://newinclusivechurch.org.uk/gatherings/>

Community Groups for New Inclusive Church are also listed on the website:

<https://newinclusivechurch.org.uk/community-groups/>

Weekly Sunday orders of service and worship resources from the Methodist Church are available online at <https://bit.ly/2wcY1mk>

Read prayers, relating to the crisis, from the Revd Dr Barbara Glasson, President of the Methodist Conference, and from Churches overseas: <https://methodist-news.org.uk/BVI-6SL9G-53XW9D-3ZYUD7-1/c.aspx>

During our struggle Vice-President of the Methodist Conference, Professor Clive Marsh, reflects on where God is during the coronavirus pandemic in his blog:

<https://methodist-news.org.uk/BVI-6SL9G-53XW9D-3ZYQ10-1/c.aspx>

The URC's Daily Devotions Team at <https://devotions.urc.org.uk/> will keep you in the loop with devotions, online worship and other resources if you sign up. The website also has Podcasts if you prefer to listen.

Service Sheets from the Methodist Church for forthcoming Sundays available at: <https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/worship/singing-the-faith-plus/seasons-and-themes/worship-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/>