2026 11 01 WORSHIP AT HOME

Dear friends,
This Sunday falls on All Saints Day and so I shall follow that theme in this offering.
I hope that you are coping with the huge change in weather lately – after months of no rain we seem to be making up for it in a big way! Let's hope that the reservoirs start to fill again and that we can return to a somewhat more normal place. Look after yourselves and keep safe and warm.
Every blessing, Margaret

Call to worship:

Lord, we come to you as we are, that we may be changed by your grace.
We come with our emptiness that we may be filled.
We come with darkness, seeking your light.
We come with our weakness, to receive your strength.
We come with our brokenness that you may make us whole.
We come as we are, so that we may be changed by your grace.
We come with our worship to praise you for ever.
We come with our words and prayer which we offer for your glory.
Lord, we come to you. Amen.

The words to 'For all the saints who showed your love' by John L. Bell [b.1949] and Graham Maule [b. 1958] **Singing the Faith 746**

1 For all the saints who showed your love
in how they lived and where they moved,
for mindful women, caring men,
accept our gratitude again.

2 For all the saints, who loved your name,
whose faith increased the Saviour's fame,
who sang your songs and shared your word,
accept our gratitude, good Lord.

3 For all the saints, who named your will,
and saw your kingdom coming still
through selfless protest, prayer and praise,
accept the gratitude we raise.

4 Bless all whose will or name or love
reflects the grace of heaven above.
Though unacclaimed by earthly powers,
your life through theirs has hallowed ours.

Prayer including Lord's Prayer

Lord God of history, we thank you for the way you have been with your people across the years – from Abraham and Moses; for the way you called judges and priests, rulers and prophets, writers and thinkers to guide and challenge your people, teaching them more of your will and constantly seeking to draw them closer to you.

We thank you for the way Jesus called 12 ordinary people to be his apostles and how, through their faith and witness, you chose countless others to become your Church. How you have spoken through your Church, despite its faults and weaknesses, errors and misunderstandings. You have spoken over countless generations – and more people come day by day to living faith.
We thank you for the way you have made yourself known through the life, witness and example of those who have gone before us, running their race and keeping the faith.
We thank you, Lord God, for the tradition of faith in which we stand – the great multitude of witnesses surrounding us from past and present – and we have the privilege of belonging to one another and to you.
And yet, Lord, we know that we still let you down and ask you to forgive us.
Sometimes we just forget all you have done and how much you love us.
Sometimes we fail to honour the heritage in which we stand – our love, trust and commitment too weak.
There are times when we are half-hearted, casual and careless because our we are too concerned with the trivial and unimportant things around us – and we don't focus on the work of your kingdom.
We are sorry, Lord God, and ask your forgiveness. Amen.

Lord God, we thank you that you are a forgiving and loving God. Speak into our lives so that our love may grow, our faith grow ever deeper, and our resolve to serve you become stronger and stronger. Amen.
[Prayer copyright 1998 Nick Fawcett – Prayers for All Seasons Book One]

Our Father who art in heaven hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come and 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.

I am planned to lead worship at a church where they still have a few young people attending and while I was looking around for something suitable for them I came across this piece by H.J. Richards in The Bumper Book of Resources volume 1www.kevinmayhew.com. Copyright 2015 H. J. Richards.
It is entitled 'Who's the lucky one?' and is based on Matthew 5: 3-10

The beatitudes, as these lines are commonly known, are often misunderstood. It is not as if, 'come the Revolution', the tables will be turned, and the unfortunates of this world will lord it over their oppressors. On the contrary, God's favourites will remain poor, unimportant, heartbroken, gentle and hungry. But it is they who are the really fortunate ones, because nothing stands between them and God. In fact, they are just like Jesus, who identified himself with the marginalised, and in whom they were therefore able to see the face of God himself.
How much luckier can you get?

How lucky you are if you are poor! God will make you rich!
How lucky you are if you're not very important! God will make you great!
How lucky you are if your heart has been broken! It will mend even stronger!
How lucky you are if you're starving! You'll get all you want and more!
How lucky you are if you are tender with others! You know how tender God really is!

How lucky you are if you're straight with people! You see God very clearly indeed!
How lucky you are if you make friends with people! You have brought a bit of heaven to earth!
How lucky you are if people hate you for standing up for what is right!
A new world can be built on people like you!
From the Beatitudes for Children copyright McCrimmons Used with permission

And of course, you can read from the Gospel according to St Matthew chapter 5; 1-12 for the full version.

Meditation of a Christian in the early Church – taken from Bumper Book of Resources Volume 1 [as above]. Copyright 2015 Nick Fawcett

Love your enemies? Turn the other cheek? Give without counting the cost?
How many can do that, I ask you? I couldn't.
Yet many I've seen have done as much and more, renouncing this world and its comforts, reaching out to those who persecute them – day after day meeting hatred with love and evil with good.
Stephen, Peter, Andrew, James – they've all gone the same way, and countless others like them – giving their service, their lives, their all for the sake of Christ.
All right, so perhaps their stories have been embellished – none of them quite the unblemished saints we paint them – yet for all that their lives put mine to shame, displaying faith I can only dream of – commitment which exposes my feeble attempt as empty posturing, a playing at discipleship.
How did they do it?
Was it through iron will, or some innate goodness inherited from birth?
Neither of those. It's down to one thing, pure and simple: knowing and loving Jesus deep in their hearts.
That's the secret of their strength: not some steely resolve or genetic trait, but the one whose example they followed – the one who gave himself for them, showing what loving, caring and giving is all about.
We revere them as martyrs, saints of God, but they would shake their heads, puzzled, for to them they're only giving back to him who offered more.
Yes, they sacrificed much, but if I fail to understand why – if I fail to know the One they did it for, then it is not they who are the losers..... it's me.
.....
Speak, Lord, through those who have run the race before us – through all the people who have kept the faith till their journey's end. Speak through those whom we especially remember today, examples of courage and commitment – speak through those who inspired us in our lives, all those ordinary men and women who have loved as you love, and whose lives impacted on ours. Encourage and inspire us through their love for you – their willingness to take up their cross; and so help us, in turn, to follow you more faithfully, love you more deeply and honour you more completely. Amen.

Close:

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all evermore. Amen.