

18th January 2026 – Morning Service

Come and See and Trust

Rev Jem Hawkins

Call to Worship: 1 Corinthians 1: 1-3

This letter is from Paul, chosen by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus, and from our brother Sosthenes. I am writing to God's church in Corinth, to you who have been called by God to be his own holy people. He made you holy by means of Christ Jesus, just as he did for all people everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours. May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace.

StF 440 – Amazing grace

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| 1) Amazing grace – how sweet the sound –
that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found,
was blind, but now I see. | 4) The Lord has promised good to me,
his word my hope secures;
he will my shield and portion be
as long as life endures. |
| 2) God's grace has taught my heart to fear,
his grace my fears relived;
how precious did that grace appear
the hour I first believed. | 5) And, when this heart and flesh shall fail
and mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess within the veil
a life of joy and peace. |
| 3) Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come;
God's grace has brought me safe thus far,
and he will lead me home. | 6) When we've been there ten thousand years
bright shining as the sun,
we've no less days to sing God's praise
than when we first begun. |

John Newton

Prayer

Living God, we give you thanks and praise for your constant love and grace which you pour out upon us. We worship You for you chose to be with us, born of Mary into a troubled world, as a vulnerable person: born into the frailty of the human family that You can be with us in our lives and that we can be born anew into Your family through Your Breath of Life, Your Holy Spirit in us. We praise You for Your grace and love which we know in Jesus – our friend and saviour!

Forgive, O Lord, when we stray from Your way of love and selflessness – when we hurt you and others through our selfishness and greed. Help us to turn from the ways of the world, to walk The Way Jesus shows us – and so build Your Kingdom of love where we are!

May we focus our minds and hearts on You as we seek your comfort, strength and direction:

Our worries which play upon our minds: **we place them in Your hands.**

The fears and hopes we have for ourselves and our circumstance: **we place them in Your hands.**

Our fears and hopes for those we love: **we place them in Your hands.**

Our prayers for we who are going through troubles and tribulations: **we place them in Your hands.**

Our prayers for all who are unfairly treaded: **we place them in Your hands.**

Our prayers of hope for the world and all God's creation: **we place them in Your hands.**

Ourselves, who come to You as Your children, through Your grace and love...

We lift our prayers to You, Creator God, in the name of Jesus and through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

A modern hymn of approach as we come to God:

Song – Good and Gracious King

- 1) I approach the throne of glory
Nothing in my hands I bring
But the promise of acceptance
From a good and gracious King
- 2) I will give to You my burden
As You give to me Your strength
Come and fill me with Your Spirit
As I sing to You this praise
- Ch) *You deserve the greater glory
Overcome I lift my voice
To the King in need of nothing
Empty handed I rejoice
You deserve the greater glory
Overcome with joy I sing
By Your love I am accepted
You're a good and gracious King*
- 3) O what grace that You would see me
As Your child and as Your friend
Safe secure in You forever
I pour out my praise again
- Br) Holy holy Lord Almighty
Good and gracious
Good and gracious
Holy holy Lord Almighty
Good and gracious King

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Introduction

Blessings and peace to all who share in this service as we seek to know more of Jesus as we respond to his invitation to “come and see” him for ourselves, and as we see, to believe, and as we believe – to follow. As we follow Jesus, there will be times in life when we get caught in the ‘sinking sand’ of troubles and tribulations in life. Then we wait upon the Lord and trust in Him. Psalm 40 speaks of this:

Reading: Psalm 40: 1-13 (NIV)

I waited patiently for the Lord;
he turned to me and heard my cry.
He lifted me out of the slimy pit,
out of the mud and mire;
he set my feet on a rock
and gave me a firm place to stand.
He put a new song in my mouth,
a hymn of praise to our God.
Many will see and fear the Lord
and put their trust in him.

Blessed is the one
who trusts in the Lord,
who does not look to the proud,
to those who turn aside to false gods.
Many, Lord my God,
are the wonders you have done,
the things you planned for us.
None can compare with you;
were I to speak and tell of your deeds,
they would be too many to declare.

Sacrifice and offering you did not desire—
but my ears you have opened—
burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not
require.

Then I said, “Here I am, I have come—
it is written about me in the scroll.
I desire to do your will, my God;
your law is within my heart.”

I proclaim your saving acts in the great assembly;
I do not seal my lips, Lord,
as you know.
I do not hide your righteousness in my heart;
I speak of your faithfulness and your saving help.
I do not conceal your love and your faithfulness
from the great assembly.

Do not withhold your mercy from me, Lord;
may your love and faithfulness
always protect me.
For troubles without number surround me;
my sins have overtaken me, and I cannot see.
They are more than the hairs of my head,
and my heart fails within me.
Be pleased to save me, Lord;
come quickly, Lord, to help me.

Reflection

This is a psalm I turn to during the difficulties of life. When I seem to be in a difficult situation or can find no way out, and when I do not seem able to pray or hear God, the words of the first two verses just come into my mind...

*I waited patiently for the Lord;
he turned to me and heard my cry.
He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire;
he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand. (Psalm 40: 1-2 NIV)*

Different translations use slightly different words – like the Good News Bible which finds us stuck in quicksand or The Living Bible where “He lifted me out of the pit of despair, out from the bog and the mire, and set my feet on a hard, firm path, and steadied me as I walked along.”

Different wordings have come to my mind at different times but the hope they express remains the same: when we are stuck in the muck and the mire, and we feel like we are sinking, wait for the Lord, who hears the cry of our hearts (even if we can’t manage to cry out with words). Even when we can’t see it or feel it, God is listening! God is working! God will lift us up out of the quicksand and set our feet on a rock. On the Rock of Jesus, we can rest, draw breath, and continue our journey of life.

King David, who wrote this psalm, knew how hard it is to wait patiently when troubles seem overwhelming. Waiting patiently is so hard – but God will come and lift us – and, as the psalm says – “Come quickly, Lord!” (Psalm 40:13)

There is a great hymn that was in the Methodist Hymn Book (of 1933) number 336:

MHB 336: In loving-kindness

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| 1) In loving-kindness Jesus came,
My soul in mercy to reclaim,
And from the depths of sin and shame
Through grace He lifted me. | 3) His brow was pierced with many a thorn,
His hands by cruel nails were torn,
When from my guilt and grief, forlorn,
In love He lifted me. |
| Ch) <i>From sinking sand He lifted me;
With tender hand He lifted me;
From shades of night to plains of light,
O praise His name, He lifted me!</i> | 4) Now on a higher plane I dwell,
And with my soul I know 'tis well;
Yet how or why, I cannot tell,
He should have lifted me. |
| 2) He called me long before I heard,
Before my sinful heart was stirred;
But when I took Him at His word,
Forgiven, He lifted me. | |

Charles Homer Gabriel

Prayer

Creator God, lift us from our troubles. **Lord, lift us.**

Creator God we pray for those we know who feel they are sinking. **Lord, hear their cry.**

We pray for those whose world is changing. **Lord, set their feet on the solid rock.**

We lift up those who walk the path of life, being your hands of support to those around them. **May they be blessed and blessing.**

We pray that we all may be patient in adversity, faithful in our journey and loving in our hearts and lives. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; 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.**

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.**

We place our hope in God who is with us through the seasons of our lives.

StF 526 – Lord of all hopefulness

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| 1) Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy,
whose trust, ever childlike,
no cares could destroy,
be there at our waking, and give us, we pray,
your bliss in our hearts, Lord,
at the break of the day. | 3) Lord of all kindliness, Lord of all grace,
your hands swift to welcome,
your arms to embrace,
be there at our homing, and give us, we pray,
your love in our hearts, Lord,
at the eve of the day. |
| 2) Lord of all eagerness, Lord of all faith,
whose strong hands were skilled
at the plane and the lathe,
be there at our labours, and give us, we pray,
your strength in our hearts, Lord,
at the noon of the day. | 4) Lord of all gentleness, Lord of all calm,
whose voice is contentment,
whose presence is balm,
be there at our sleeping, and give us, we pray,
your peace in our hearts, Lord,
at the end of the day. |

Jan Struther © 1931 Oxford University Press

Psalm 40 is a prayer and statement of faith that God is with us. But how do we know this? Let us look at how some people got to know of Jesus as the special “Anointed One” – the “Messiah” – in the gospel of John.

Reading: John 1: 29-42 (GNT)

The next day John saw Jesus coming to him, and said, “There is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is the one I was talking about when I said, ‘A man is coming after me, but he is greater than I am, because he existed before I was born.’ I did not know who he would be, but I came baptizing with water in order to make him known to the people of Israel.”

And John gave this testimony: “I saw the Spirit come down like a dove from heaven and stay on him. I still did not know that he was the one, but God, who sent me to baptize with water, had said to me, ‘You will see the Spirit come down and stay on a man; he is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ I have seen it,” said John, “and I tell you that he is the Son of God.”

The next day John was standing there again with two of his disciples, when he saw Jesus walking by. "There is the Lamb of God!" he said.

The two disciples heard him say this and went with Jesus. Jesus turned, saw them following him, and asked, "What are you looking for?"

They answered, "Where do you live, Rabbi?" (This word means "Teacher.")

"Come and see," he answered. (It was then about four o'clock in the afternoon.) So they went with him and saw where he lived, and spent the rest of that day with him.

One of them was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. At once he found his brother Simon and told him, "We have found the Messiah." (This word means "Christ.") Then he took Simon to Jesus.

Jesus looked at him and said, "Your name is Simon son of John, but you will be called Cephas." (This is the same as Peter and means "a rock.")

Reflection

Here is a beginning for some who would walk with Jesus.

As in many such beginnings, there is a voice who shares what they know of God With Us. In this instance it is John the Baptist who tells those who would hear, including his own followers, about how he "saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on Jesus" – who is "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

John's disciples went to see Jesus for themselves... "come and see" Jesus invited. They saw Jesus and the things he said and did for themselves – and started to believe. One of them was Andrew who told what he knew to his brother Simon – who then saw for himself, became known as Peter, the Rock – and followed Jesus for himself – and told others what he knew... and so the good news spread.

It still does.

May we walk ever closer to Jesus through life – and tell others of what we know so that they may "come and see" for themselves.

As followers of Jesus, we are privileged to know and be changed by the Love of Jesus. We know He will be with us whatever we go through and His friendship gives us hope and assurance, even when we are waiting in the muck and mire of life: Jesus is the Rock on whom we stand, on whom we place our trust.

We finish with another old song, this time in the MHB and Hymns and Psalms: Trust and obey.

H&P 687 – When we walk with the Lord

1) When we walk with the Lord
In the light of his word,
What a glory he sheds on our way!
While we do his good will,
He abides with us still,
And with all who will trust and obey:

*Ch) Trust and obey, for there's no other way
To be happy in Jesus,
But to trust and obey.*

- 2) Not a burden we bear,
Not a sorrow we share,
But our toil he doth richly repay;
Not a grief nor a loss
Not a frown nor a cross,
But is blest if we trust and obey:
- 3) But we never can prove
The delights of his love
Until all on the altar we lay;
For the favour he shows,
And the joy he bestows,
Are for them who will trust and obey:

John Henry Sammis

Blessing

May we walk with God, live The Way of Jesus and share the Good News that God is With Us – to build God's Kingdom and shine His love. **Amen.**

The Grace

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

- 4) Then in fellowship sweet
We will sit at his feet,
Or we'll walk by his side in the way;
What he says we will do,
Where he sends we will go –
Never fear, only trust and obey: