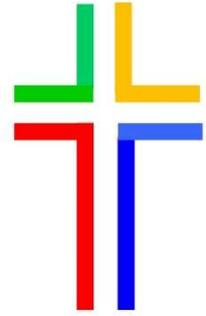


# Week St Mary Methodist Church – Sunday 27 September



Next Sunday we are holding is for sure a Week St Mary first, a drive-in Harvest Festival. It's a way we can sing some of the Harvest hymns and perhaps people who have not felt safe to come to Chapel may feel comfortable coming out and remaining in their cars. At the same time we can be together. The service will be led by Sophie and her message and the music *should* be transmitted over your car radio. We are keen no-one is left out so please contact Peter or Trina if you do not have a car or have any questions. We do hope you will join us on this adventure.

## PRAYER

Lord, we confess that we do not always follow the example of Jesus and live a life of humility. We are often selfish, or vain, or full of our own importance. Help us to value others above

ourselves. Help us to live out your purposes for us, and to joyfully act in the ways that Jesus taught.

**Amen**

## READING FOR TODAY Philippians 2:1-13 (NIV) Imitating Christ's humility

Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion,<sup>2</sup> then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind.<sup>3</sup> Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves,<sup>4</sup> not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.<sup>5</sup> In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

<sup>6</sup> who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;<sup>7</sup> rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

<sup>8</sup> And being found in appearance as a man,

he humbled himself

by becoming obedient to death –  
even death on a cross!

<sup>9</sup> Therefore God exalted him to the highest place

and gave him the name that is above every name,

<sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

<sup>11</sup> and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord,

to the glory of God the Father.

<sup>12</sup> Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed – not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence – continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling,<sup>13</sup> for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfil his good purpose.

## REFLECTION

After recent week's readings from Matthew we turn today to Paul's letter to the Philippians and his theme of humility. Paul wrote this while he was in prison. He had a number of reasons for writing and if you look through the whole letter you can see these.

But one of the main reasons for writing, and one he returns to in several places, was that he had heard there was some disunity within the church there. And our reading is concerned with this – Paul is appealing for unity and gives the example of Christ's

humility as something the church followers should be practising rather than selfish ambition or vain conceit. He starts by pointing out to the Philippians that **if** they possess the qualities listed in verse 1 then the list in verse 2 should follow.

He then goes on to be even more explicit. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit but value others above yourselves. Such self-denying love is actually unusual and so Paul goes on to emphasise it by quoting Christ as an example.

Then there is one of the most loved and exalted passages in the Bible (v6-11) – a piece that is often called the ‘Hymn of Christ’. Paul clearly believes the best way to encourage the

## **THE LORD’S PRAYER**

### **PRAYER FOR OTHERS**

We pray for humility during these troubled times. Help us to humbly accept that other people may see things differently, that they may be subject to circumstances about which we are unaware, and that none of us can be sure of how things will develop.

We pray for all those in need, grief, isolation, or depression. Help us to look to their interests rather than our own, and to act with love rather than judgement, and so follow the example and teachings of Jesus.

Amen.

### **HYMN H&P 74, StF 317**

At the name of Jesus  
every knee shall bow,  
every tongue confess him  
King of Glory now;  
Tis the Father's pleasure,  
We should call him Lord,  
who from the beginning  
was the mighty Word.

Humbled for a season,  
to receive a name  
from the lips of sinners  
unto whom he came;  
faithfully he bore it  
spotless to the last,  
brought it back victorious  
when from death he passed.

believers in Philippi to live in greater humility, and so have true fellowship and unity, is by reminding them of the example of Christ – in your relationships have the same mindset as Jesus. Jesus didn’t consider his relationship with God to be something to be used to his own advantage, rather he took the form of an obedient servant. He lived a life of utter obedience – even to the extent of dying on the cross.

In the next section Paul begins to spell out in more detail some of the actions he is looking for. We might reflect whether we are humble enough to concentrate on the interests of others rather than our own, and do our actions fulfil God’s purposes?

Bore it up triumphant  
with its human light,  
through all ranks of creatures  
to the central height;  
to the throne of Godhead,  
to the Father's breast,  
filled it with the glory  
of that perfect rest.

In your hearts enthrone him;  
there let him subdue  
all that is not holy,  
all that is not true;  
crown him as your captain  
in temptation's hour,  
let his will enfold you  
in its light and power.

For this same Lord Jesus  
Shall return again,  
with his Father’s glory  
With his angel train;  
all the wreaths of empire  
meet upon his brow,  
and our hearts confess him  
King of Glory now.

### **BLESSING**

And the blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be upon us and remain with us always.  
Amen

*‘Humility and patience are the surest proofs of the increase of love’ - John Wesley*