

WEEKLY WORSHIP SHEET – 2ND SUNDAY BEFORE ADVENT

Call to worship (Roots)

This day God summons us.

God calls us to account.

We bring our joys and sorrows.

We bring our success and failure.

We lay our lives open to God's judgement and mercy.

This day God summons us.

God gives precious gifts to us.

Our hearts and hands are open for all that God would give us.

Our trust is in the Lord, who puts his trust in us.

A gathering prayer (Roots 2017)

As a church, we have been given many gifts, many talents, many opportunities, and so we pray:

Loving God, help us – individually, and as your people together – to be your witnesses in the world today.

Help us to take risks and not stay in our comfort zones. Bless us with the courage of your first disciples, that your kingdom may come and your will be done in this place and throughout the world. We ask this in Jesus' name, Amen.

A prayer of approach (Roots 2017)

We bring to you, gracious God, what is yours: our thanks, our praise, our hearts, our lives. As we sing, as we celebrate, as we listen and as we pray, bless each one of us with a sense of your presence and the reassurance of your love. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Bible readings

Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18

Psalm 90:1-12

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

Matthew 25:14-30

Prayer of confession (Roots 2017)

Forgive us, God of all: when we bury your gifts in the ground of our fear; when we bury our responsibilities in the ground of reluctance; when we bury your hopes for us in the ground of our diffidence. Forgive us, and free us to be fruitful servants, people on whom you can depend and rely. We ask this in Jesus' name, Amen

Prayer of thanksgiving (Roots 2017)

You give us so much, Lord, trusting us more than we trust ourselves, giving us more than we think we deserve, blessing us with opportunities that we are slow to take. Thank you for believing in us; help us to believe in ourselves, in one another and in you.

Song – What's the world coming to? (Fleetwood Mac)

<https://tinyurl.com/yyjoqoj7>

Alternative version of the Lord's Prayer (by J Burklo)

Dear One, closer to us than our own hearts, farther from us than the most distant star, you are beyond naming. May your powerful presence become obvious not only in the undeniable glory of the sky, but also in the seemingly base and common processes of the earth. Give us what we need, day by day, to keep body and soul together, because clever as you have made us, we still owe our existence to you. We recognise that to be reconciled with you, we must live peaceably and justly with other human beings, putting hate and bitterness behind us. We are torn between our faith in your goodness and our awareness of the evil in your creation, so deliver us from the temptation to despair. Yours alone is the universe and all its majesty and beauty. So it is. Amen

A time to reflect

It's not those with talent who don't utilise their gifts that I worry about, despite the loss to humanity. It's the ones without the necessary talent who get to the top more through foul means than fair. And I worry, just as the Psalmists did before me, how God can let them succeed and get away with nothing but bad intent. Sometimes, in my despair I join with the Psalmists who call for God to vindicate the good and punish the bad. And I forget that this is not the end of the story. For Christ came to save us, one by one, looking into each of our hearts and calling us to turn from our wicked ways and follow the way that leads towards the light. It is not for nothing that they say, evil succeeds when good people do nothing. Now is the time for people to join together, to build each other up and work for good as servants of God.

Prayers of intercession (Roots)

Gracious God, we pray for all who are afraid: for those facing violence in places of war, or in the home; or those facing ill health or disability; for those facing the loss of their job, their home, or someone they love.

We pray for those who are afraid because they have done great wrong and fear the consequences; for those who become paralysed by their sense of failure or inadequacy.

We pray for those whose fearlessness brings pain and anxiety to others; for those whose complacency causes suffering; for those whose recklessness endangers the lives of others. From all these and from ourselves, replace the darkness of dread with the light of your presence. Give protection from evil and despair with the armour of faith, love and hope. So may we all take our place in your kingdom, where

love casts out fear, and where we enter into your joy for ever. Amen

A prayer for all ages (Roots 2017)

Dear God, when we have a little and when we have a lot, help us to: **use it not lose it**. When we are entrusted with opportunities, help us to: **cheer not fear**. When you invite us to be your stewards, help us to be: **workers not shirkers**. And at the end of our efforts, help us to make: **double not trouble**. With thankful hearts and in Jesus' name. Amen

A sending out prayer (Roots 2017)

May you flourish as you use your gifts. May you grow in faith and wisdom. And may 'Well done, good and faithful servant' be your joy to hear as you work, rest and pray, day by day. Amen

Bible readings for this week

Monday 16 November

Psalm 83:1-4, 9-10, 17-18

Judges 4:8-24

Romans 2:1-11

Tuesday 17 November

Psalm 83:1-4, 9-10, 17-18

Exodus 2:1-10

1 Thessalonians 5:12-18

Wednesday 18 November

Psalm 83:1-4, 9-10, 17-18

Esther 7:1-10

Matthew 24:45-51

Thursday 19 November

Psalm 100

Genesis 48:15-22

Revelation 14:1-11

Friday 20 November

Psalm 100

Isaiah 40:1-11

Revelation 22:1-9

Saturday 21 November

Psalm 100

Ezekiel 34:25-31

Matthew 12:46-50