



**AT HOME SERVICE**  
**Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2025**

*compiled by Alison Morgan – Local Preacher*

Let us come to worship the God made visible in Jesus.  
The one who holds all things together.  
The one who is beginning and end.

**Let us pray**

Living God, give us eyes to see you  
In creation, in strangers, in others;  
Give us ears to hear you in words, in music, in silence;  
Give us voices to proclaim you in  
Our homes, churches and communities;  
And give us lives to celebrate, serve and revere you  
In all places, at all times and among all people. Amen

**Let us thank the Lord in song by singing Hymn 367 Mission Praise**

1] Jesus is Lord!  
Creation's voice proclaims it,  
For by His power each tree and flower  
Was planned and made.  
Jesus is Lord! The universe declares it;  
Sun, moon and stars in heaven cry:  
'Jesus is Lord!'

*Jesus is Lord! Jesus is Lord!*  
*Praise Him with hallelujahs,*  
*For Jesus is Lord!*

2] Jesus is Lord!  
Yet from His throne eternal  
In flesh He came to die in pain  
On Calvary's tree.  
Jesus is Lord!  
From Him all life proceeding,  
Yet gave His life a ransom  
Thus setting us free.

*Jesus is Lord.....*

3] Jesus is Lord!  
O'er sin the mighty conqueror,  
From death He rose and all His foes  
Shall own His name.  
Jesus is Lord!  
God sends His Holy Spirit  
To show by works of power  
That Jesus is Lord.

*Jesus is Lord.....*

*David J. Mansell (b. 1936)*

## **Let us pray**

Creator God,

From the moment your Spirit hovered over the waters of this earth, we were part of a vision held lovingly within your heart.

From the moment you spoke and separated darkness from light, you created space where we might one day walk.

From the moment your joy spilled out into green and living things, your beauty was revealed for us to taste and see.

Creator God, for this world, beauty and majesty, passion and artistry, a green and pleasant place, we praise your mighty name.

Forgive us, compassionate God, when we fail to see you:

In the face of strangers; in the tears of the desperate;

In the anxiety of the afraid; in the silence of the broken;

In the fragility of creation in one another or in ourselves.

Forgive us and help us to encounter you afresh.

God of wonder,

Though we don't always see you, you always see us.

Although our eyes aren't always open

To the ways of your kingdom, it is always open to us.

Although we don't always recognise you

In our daily encounters, you are always there.

Thank you for meeting us where we are,

For your grace and forgiveness,

And your life-giving Spirit, which fill us day by day.

We praise you, God of encounter and promise, for those kingdom moments in our lives that have been turning points; those encounters that have given us fresh eyes, new insights, warmed hearts; those people whose eyes have been so fixed on you that they have inspired us in our faith and in our daily lives.

We praise and thank you for all the ways you meet us in one another, and most of all we praise you for your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. Amen

## **Our reading today is from Luke 10 vs. 38-42 Jesus Visits Martha and Mary**

Now as they went on their way, he entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. She had a sister, named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to what he was saying. But Martha was distracted by her many tasks; so she came to him and asked, 'Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me.' But the Lord answered her. 'Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her.'

## **Reflection**

This is a well-known story of two sisters, one who is working her socks off to serve her guests, the other just wants to sit and listen to Jesus.

How do you picture the scene in today's Gospel reading?

Hospitality is exceedingly important in the biblical world in general and in Luke's Gospel in particular.

When Jesus comes to Bethany, Martha demonstrates hospitality by welcoming Jesus into the home she shares with her sister Mary. She then busies herself with the tasks of serving their guests. Meanwhile her sister Mary is doing nothing, and sitting at the feet of Jesus listening to his words, assuming the posture of a student learning at the feet of a rabbi, a role traditionally reserved for men. Some people may cheer for Mary who ignored traditional roles, so she could sit and listen to Jesus, some may empathize with Martha who was quite cross with her sister for leaving her to do all the work. But Jesus' response to Martha seems less empathetic, rebuking her for her distractions and worry.

The problem with Martha is not that she is busy serving and providing hospitality. Certainly Jesus commends this kind of service to the neighbour many times, notably in the parable of the Good Samaritan that immediately precedes the story of Mary and Martha. The problem with Martha is not her serving, but rather that she is worried and distracted. The word translated "distracted" in verse 40, *periespato*, has the connotation of being pulled or dragged in different directions. I think we all know what that feels like.

Martha's distraction and worry leaves no room for the most important aspect of hospitality – gracious attention to the guest. In fact, she breaks all the rules of hospitality by trying to embarrass her sister in front of her guest and by asking her guest to intervene in a family dispute. She even goes so far as to accuse Jesus of not caring about her.

Martha's worry and distraction prevented her from being truly present with Jesus, and caused her to drive a wedge between her sister and herself, and between Jesus and herself. She has missed out on the 'one thing needed' for true hospitality, listening to your guest. How much more so when the guest is Jesus!!

That is why Jesus said that Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her.

Jesus' words to Martha may be seen as an invitation rather than a rebuke. The one thing needed for Martha is to receive the gracious presence of Jesus, to listen to his words, to know that she is valued not for what she does or how well she does it, but for who she is as a child of God.

Many people can identify with Martha. Feeling pulled in different directions, feeling worried and distracted by many things. It is true that much of our busyness and distraction stems from the best of our intentions. We want to provide for our families, we want to give our children every opportunity to enrich their lives, we want to serve our neighbours, we want to serve the Lord. Indeed where would the church be without its Marthas, those faithful people who perform the tasks of hospitality and service so vital to making the church a welcoming and well- functioning community?

But if all our activities leave us with no time to be still in the Lord's presence and hear God's word, we are likely to end up anxious and troubled. Both listening and doing, receiving God's Word and serving others, are vital to the Christian life. We do know that Jesus invites all of us who are worried and distracted by many things to sit and rest in his presence, to hear his words of grace and truth, to know that we are loved and valued as children of God. There is need of only one thing: attention to our guest. As it turns out, our guest is also our host, with abundant gifts to give. Amen

Our God is always ready to listen.

**Let us pray to him now**

Father continue to pour out your gifts on the Church, so that many may be saved and our faith may grow strong and bear much fruit.

Look with mercy on the conflicts of our world;

Realign our values and goals until they are in line with your will, and our laws and expectations reflect your justice and love.

Bless our homes and families and all our neighbours and friends;  
Train us to listen to one another with full attention, and recognise one another's gifts.  
Encourage the hesitant, curb the overpowering, heal the sick, refresh the exhausted, soften the hardened hearts, open the eyes of the complacent, and comfort all who are sad.

God of Love;

We put our trust in you.

Thank you, Lord our God, for the hope you have given us through Christ, which enables us to enjoy living in eternity even while we still journey here.

In the name of Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen

### **Let us say the Lord's Prayer**

#### **Hymn 162 Mission Praise**

1] From heaven You came, helpless babe,  
Entered our world, Your glory veiled,  
Not to be served but to serve,  
And give Your life that we might live.

*This is our God, the Servant King,  
He calls us now to follow Him,  
To bring our lives as a daily offering  
Of worship to the Servant King.*

2] There in the garden of tears  
My heavy load He chose to bear;  
His heart with sorrow was torn,  
'Yet not my will but yours,' He said.

*This is our God, the Servant King.....*

3] Come see His hands and His feet,  
The scars that speak of sacrifice,  
Hands that flung stars into space  
To cruel nails surrendered.

*This is our God, the Servant King....*

4] So let us learn how to serve  
And in our lives enthrone Him,  
Each other's needs to prefer,  
For it is Christ we're serving.

*This is our God, the Servant King....*

*Graham Kendrick (b. 1950)*

Lord, life is busy. Help us this week to take some time to sit at your feet and truly see and hear from you.  
Be in our decision-making and in our thoughts.

And may the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the Love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen