

Bangor & Holyhead Methodist Circuit
Sunday Worship Sheet, 18th January 2026

Our worship for this week was written by Simon Charters.

You may wish to have your Bible to hand. Please note the hymns are now at the back of the sheet for ease of printing. CCLI licence 556292

Theme: **Pass it on...**

Call to worship:

As Andrew and Simon Peter opened their hearts to the Lord, so let us follow their example.

Hymn: **StF 353 Jesus is Lord, Creation's voice proclaims it!**

Opening prayers:

Living God, you have spoken to your people across the centuries, you identified yourself with us in Jesus, you dwell within us through your Holy Spirit, making your presence come alive. Having come to us, you call us to come to you, promising that in Christ we shall find rest for our souls, that through Christ our spiritual hunger will be satisfied, and that from Christ we will receive life in all its fullness.

Gracious God, we come in response to your call, to offer our worship, our thanks, our confession, our lives. Sovereign God, we come seeking your guidance, your strength, your renewal and your will. Help us to come to you not just as an outward gesture, a matter of routine or duty, but in heart and mind and soul. Help us to make space in our hectic lives to be still in your presence, and so may we live in you, and you in us.

Mighty God, we come mindful of all our weaknesses before your strength, all our unworthiness before your holiness, all our foolishness before your wisdom, and all our smallness before your greatness. We come knowing that you accept us, despite our faults, that you love us despite our failures, that you will speak to us, despite our disobedience, and that you long to bless us, despite our ingratitude.

Forgive us that we so often fail to recognise how awesome you are, losing our sense of mystery in your presence, forgetting the constancy of your promises, underestimating the extent of your grace. Open our eyes once more to your presence, assure us of your redeeming and restoring love, and send us out in the name of Christ, to live and work for your glory. Through Jesus Chris our Lord, Amen.

Readings: **Isaiah 49.1-7**

1 Corinthians 1.1-9

John 1.29-42

Hymn: **StF 338 There is a redeemer**

Reflection:

The calling of the Methodist Church is to respond to the gospel of God's love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship and mission (from the Methodist Church website). That's

not new, it's what Paul was trying to do in his first letter to the Corinthian church with, amongst other things, the purpose of addressing reports of arguments and division between converts of various apostles. Paul admonishes them for their human frailty and but then steers them away from their own setting to a single focus on the one and only God. Yet he starts with Thanksgiving, and so should we. Whilst he was, in part, following the custom of letter writing in his day, it is more than that – it flowed from his experience of the grace of God in Christ Jesus. So when Paul writes to the church at Corinth, he first gives thanks for them, despite all the pain they are causing him. It is the reality of overwhelming, amazing grace in his own life and theirs which keeps Paul thankful not just on the good days but on all days. It is a way of introduction, of breaking the ice, but most importantly of explaining why they, and we, should focus on God's love for us in Christ.

In a very simple start to our gospel passage, this focus is clear from all parties. John sees Jesus passing by and declares him to be the Lamb of God, the one of whom he had been talking. The next day, Jesus passes by again, John repeats the claim, and off trot Andrew and the other disciple to follow Jesus. No split loyalties there, then (apparently)! We don't know how long Andrew had been a disciple of John but clearly John had some authority or personality that captured Andrew's imagination – after all, it probably hadn't been a bundle of laughs following a hair-shirted prophet into the wilderness. Yet, this event seems so straightforward - a very low-key shift of attention from John to Jesus. What was it that was so compelling? Surely, they were looking out for a lion – the traditional picture of the Messiah, not a lamb?

But John has seen the power in this man called Jesus, he has seen the power of the Spirit anoint him, he had understood that he is looking at the one that he was sent to herald, to shout about, to clear the way for. And so, by day 2, here are a couple of John's disciples that see this also. They follow at a time, late in the day, when they will be able to spend the evening with him - the encounter is not rushed, they will be able to take their time.

And such is the power of Jesus words that the first thing that Andrew does after that is to go to get his brother Simon with the words "we have found the Messiah". Simon seems to have had no hesitation following Andrew to Jesus, and Jesus' reaction would have been an affirmation that Peter had found the right person. Two people had already given up their freedom to follow a prophet, while one remained behind, only to become the rock on which God's church was to be built. The words of John and Jesus overcame any hesitation or misplaced sense of loyalty that could have prevented the creation of a new, and very powerful, band of disciples.

Andrew became Jesus' first "fisher of men" - first his brother Simon, with words he could not possibly have fully understood as he said them; and later the boy with the loaves and fish, which Jesus used to feed 5,000 people (John 6:8-9). He shows us that if we bring the little that we have and offer it to the Lord, we will be amazed at what he does with it. We, like Andrew, only need to have faith the size of a mustard seed to see mountains being moved.

Perhaps, in reading this, you are drawn to your own calling. Maybe it has been or is being fulfilled. Maybe, though, you question it, or you're drawn to think of the frustrations you feel today in these apparent shortcomings. This is where the Isaiah passage – the second servant song, gives encouragement. Verse 4 declares the servant's frustration, and it is good to voice that frustration, but it finishes with the emergence of a beautiful resolution – "Yet surely my cause is with the Lord".

Surely, that is all we need to know, all we need to focus upon, and to acknowledge with thanksgiving.

Prayers for the world and the Church, thankful of God's goodness.

O Lord our God, as we bring our prayers for others to you now, we are aware of our inadequacies to help more and do more. We come to you, none the less, trusting in your power and your love. We see the needs around us and for them we pray.

We pray for God's church and for all those who have been called into ministry either through ordination or as lay people especially equipped to be leaders, teachers and carers for God's children.

We pray for this world in its brokenness and need. We pray for those who bear the responsibilities of government that they might hear and respond to God's calling for peace and reconciliation, justice and freedom from oppression. We pray for an end to the political unrest around the world where stable lives are uprooted and futures made more uncertain. We think of all countries at war and pray for those trying to bring a lasting peace.

We pray for those areas of the world where storms and floods and fires are still wreaking havoc. May those who are seeking resolutions for the climate come together, listen to each other, see the need and move towards sustainable action.

We pray for the frightened and the fearful and the voiceless in societies who have no good news to tell, no stories to encourage, no history they believe to be of worth to repeat to other generations. For the rootless and the lost who see no path ahead and no point to the future. We pray for the ill and the suffering whose pain overwhelms them, physical or mental, bring them your comfort, your love, your word of truth, your light in dark days.

We pray for those who we know personally who need our prayers and your love... May we tell them of your love, your promises and life eternal.

All our prayers we offer in the name of Jesus. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

Hymn: StF 673 Will you come and follow me

Blessing:

May you know Jesus' presence in your heart and in your life – wherever you are or go, whatever you do, and whoever you meet - now and always. **Amen.**

Hymn 353

- 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 alleluias, 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.
- 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.

David John Mansell (b. 1936)

Hymn 338

- 1 There is a Redeemer,
Jesus, God's own Son,
precious Lamb of God, Messiah,
Holy One.
*Thank you, O my Father,
for giving us your Son,
and leaving your Spirit
till the work on earth is done.*
- 2 Jesus my Redeemer,
name above all names,
precious Lamb of God, Messiah,
O for sinners slain.
- 3 When I stand in glory
I will see his face,
and there I'll serve my King for ever
in that holy place.

vv. 1-2 Melody Green (b. 1946)

v. 3 Keith Green (1953–1982)

Hymn 673

- 1 Will you come and follow me
if I but call your name ?
Will you go where you don't know
and never be the same ?
Will you let my love be shown,
will you let my name be known,
will you let my life be grown
in you and you in me ?

2 Will you leave yourself behind
if I but call your name ?

Will you care for cruel and kind
and never be the same ?

Will you risk the hostile stare
should your life attract or scare ?

Will you let me answer prayer
in you and you in me ?

3 Will you let the blinded see
if I but call your name ?

Will you set the prisoners free
and never be the same ?

Will you kiss the leper clean,
and do such as this unseen,
and admit to what I mean
in you and you in me ?

4 Will you love the 'you' you hide
if I but call your name ?

Will you quell the fear inside
and never be the same ?

Will you use the faith you've found
to reshape the world around,
through my sight and touch and sound
in you and you in me ?

5 Lord, your summons echoes true
when you but call my name.

Let me turn and follow you
and never be the same.

In your company I'll go
where your love and footsteps show.

Thus I'll move and live and grow
in you and you in me.

John L. Bell (b. 1949) and Graham Maule (b. 1958)