

Worship for Sunday 15th November 2020

Good morning.

Welcome to our time of worship, prepared by Hilary, as we worship together at home.

We will share words from the Bible, sing songs of praise and take time for contemplation.

Later, we will hear from Ric Bowman from Frampton Park whose sermon is called 'The Golden Chain' and is speaking from Romans 8: 28-30

Prayers for the World are led by Chris.

Come to Jesus with a repentant heart and allow him to carry you into the light.

**“Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your unfailing love;
according to your great compassion
blot out my transgressions.
Wash away all my iniquity
and cleanse me from my sin.”
Psalm 51: 1-2 NIV**

**“Generous in love—God, give grace!
Huge in mercy—wipe out my bad record.
Scrub away my guilt,
soak out my sins in your laundry.
I know how bad I've been;
my sins are staring me down.”
Psalm 51: 1-2 The Message**

To begin our worship, let us sing our praise to Jesus, remember his loving kindness. He stands beside us every moment. Sing to Jesus and tell him that you need him.

Song: Jesus I need you

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qz_oad9XZ0o

**“In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ
Jesus: who, being in very nature God,
did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own
advantage;
rather, he made himself nothing
by taking the very nature of a servant,
being made in human likeness.
And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself
by becoming obedient to death –
even death on a cross!**

**Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
and gave him the name that is above every name,
that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.”**

Philippians 2: 6-11

Song: Ancient of Days

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HBcP1ICgUIM>

**“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and for ever.”
Hebrews 13: 8**

Song: Everlasting God

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2gZ2LeFTQ4I>

Song: Yesterday, today and forever

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bjOLDaSfIHQ>

Prayers for the World prepared by Chris



"Surveillance cameras monitoring and tracking everyone's movements"

CHINA

I would like to continue uplifting China where there is ongoing repression of Christians and the churches (and all religions). One key policy of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is social control - to “sinicise” (to make Chinese) the church, attempting to bring everyone under the control of the Party, which is totally atheist and dictatorial and to follow its commands. Extreme monitoring has been set up in the cities to track those considered to be subversive including Christians.

To this end Bibles are not for sale and confiscated if found, even though China has the world's largest printing press; churches are being destroyed and pastors are being charged with inciting subversion and put in prison for up to 15 years.

Children are being taught anti-Christian propaganda in school and those under 18 are not allowed to attend church. In Hong Kong 25% of university students are Christians. Since the takeover of Hong Kong by China the churches are under threat and many students are in conflict about joining protests – whether they should obey the authorities or stand for human rights.

Doctors, nurses and other professionals must sign saying they have no religious faith. This seems inconceivable for those of us living in Britain and I cannot relate to or grasp the idea of losing the freedom of speech or of worship.

First let us pray to give thanks –

- **for the continuing growth in the Chinese church with over an estimated 100 million Christians and for their courage to stand firm for Jesus in churches, and those individuals in rural areas and villages; Eph 6:13**
- **for the online church set up because of Covid19 which has enabled preachers to reach many more people and to relate scripture to the relevance of everyday life rather than verse by verse theological study (as reported by a pastor); Ps 119:30-32**
- **for the Christian radio broadcasts that reach vast areas of the country.**
- **for the strong missionary movement among Chinese, which is sending Christians, secretly, to other countries with the gospel.**
- **for the remaining house groups which are attracting neighbours, strengthening individual growth and helping members to witness to family and work colleagues.**
- **for the opportunities of sharing the gospel in Hong Kong universities.**
- **for links with external agencies including Open Doors, OM, Baptist Union to be effective in encouraging, strengthening and giving hope to our Chinese brothers and sisters.**

Second let us pray to ask the Lord –

- for a softening of the heart of Xi Jinping to change the harsh nature of his leadership and recognise his responsibilities for all Chinese people's regardless of faith; Ps 2:10-11
- for the erosion of human rights to cease.
- for Christian professionals to use their skills to witness among other intellectuals.
- for links between Chinese universities and those abroad to be a vehicle for spreading the love of Jesus to Chinese students.
- for Christian students in Hong Kong to shine their light brightly and make an effective witness to Jesus' love.
- for Christian students to support human rights protests and make a stand, speaking out against injustices as scriptures teach Isaiah 1:17 & Ps 103:6
- for Hong Kong churches that they may be able to continue preaching and teaching
- for pastors and leaders who are poorly paid and who make huge sacrifices to receive training that will help them strengthen their pastoral role.
- for Christian young people who are being attracted by the secular world and lifestyle to remain close to Jesus and resist temptations; Luke 12:15
- for Christians to cope with constant monitoring by security guards and facial recognition cameras and to withstand their anxiety, please give them your peace; Phil:4 6-7
- for family life to be centred on Jesus, reading the scriptures and prayer.
- for those suffering persecution being falsely accused of undermining the State and being imprisoned by the CCP.

Our Heavenly Father we thank you for you promise that you will sustain and build your church in China in the Name of Jesus. Amen Matt:16.18

Song: Father God we come

https://www.resoundworship.org/song/father_god_we_come

Romans 8: 28-30 NIV

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.”

Romans 8: 26 – 28 and 28 – 30 The Message

“ Meanwhile, the moment we get tired in the waiting, God’s Spirit is right alongside helping us along. If we don’t know how or what to pray, it doesn’t matter. He does our praying in and for us, making prayer out of our wordless sighs, our aching groans. He knows us far better than we know ourselves, knows our pregnant condition, and keeps us present before God. That’s why we can be so sure that every detail in our lives of love for God is worked into something good.

God knew what he was doing from the very beginning. He decided from the outset to shape the lives of those who love him along the same lines as the life of his Son. The Son stands first in the line of humanity he restored. We see the original and intended shape of our lives there in him. After God made that decision of what his children should be like, he followed it up by calling people by name. After he called them by name, he set them on a solid basis with himself. And then, after getting them established, he stayed with them to the end, gloriously completing what he had begun.”

**Sermon. Ric Bowman
The Golden Chain**

<https://youtu.be/JkgHx1Cly7U>

**Christ the Lord has overcome the darkness.
He’s alive. Death has been defeated. Praise the Lord.**

**Song: Jesus, Saviour of the world
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yfA4cxmOgTU>**

**“May the LORD bless you
and keep you;
make his face shine on you
and be gracious to you;
turn his face toward you
and give you peace.”**

Numbers 6:24-26