

Call to Worship

And the one who was seated on the throne said,

"See, I am making all things new." Rev 21:5

God and his son were humiliated on the cross but when the son cried out that it is finished then everything was in place for the Father to make all things new.

STF 378 Father of everlasting grace

[\(1904\) Father of Everlasting Grace - YouTube](#)

<p>1 Father of everlasting grace, your goodness and your truth we praise, your goodness and your truth we prove ; you have, in honour of your Son, the gift unspeakable sent down, the Spirit of life, and power, and love.</p> <p>2 Send us the Spirit of your Son, to make the depths of Godhead known, to make us share the life divine ; send him the sprinkled blood to apply, send him our souls to sanctify, to bless and seal us with this sign.</p>	<p>3 So shall we pray, and never cease, so shall we thankfully confess your wisdom, truth, and power, and love, with joy unspeakable adore, and bless and praise you evermore, and serve you as your hosts above :</p> <p>4 Till, added to that heavenly choir, we raise our songs of triumph higher, and praise you with a bolder voice, out-soar the first-born seraph's flight, and sing, with all our friends in light, with everlasting love rejoice.</p> <p>Charles Wesley (1707–1788)</p>
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Or

STF 346 Christ is the world's light

[\(1904\) Christ Is the World's Light - Christian Song with Lyrics - YouTube](#)

<p>1 Christ is the world's light, Christ and none other ; born in our darkness, he became our brother. If we have seen him, we have seen the Father : glory to God on high.</p> <p>2 Christ is the world's Peace, Christ and none other ; no one can serve him and despise another ; who else unites us, one in God the Father ? Glory to God on high.</p>	<p>3 Christ is the world's Life, Christ and none other ; sold once for silver, murdered here, our brother — he, who redeems us, reigns with God the Father : glory to God on high.</p> <p>4 Give God the glory, God and none other ; give God the glory, Spirit, Son, and Father ; give God the glory, God with us, my brother : glory to God on high.</p> <p>Fred Pratt Green (1903–2000)</p>
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Prayer of adoration and Confession

Our sovereign God, we come before you at this hour to praise and worship you. You created our world and created us to worship you. We thank you for the harmony in nature, the summer sun, the flowers blooming around us. Thank you for the warmth of your love that sustains this world.

Our Lord Jesus, our Shepherd and King, we come to You as we are, to offer you our praise and worship. You gave your whole life for us. We thank you for all you have done for us and we ask for your presence to be among us - both as a church and as individuals. You alone made the sacrifice for your flock that has transformed our lives and you alone have the power to cleanse us with your sacrifice.

We seek your grace, to ask for your forgiveness, for our failings. Help us also to forgive those who have wronged us and we plead for your kindness to open the hearts of those we have wronged in the past so they can forgive us.

Let your people be blessed in this worship as we come before your throne of grace.; let the lives of your congregation be enriched, give us your peace and let your Holy Spirit fill and empower us in your presence. This we ask in the sacred name of our Lord Jesus. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, As it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive them that trespassed against us. And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, The power, and the glory, For ever and ever. Amen.

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Bible Reading

Revelation 22:1-5

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ² down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. ³ No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. ⁴ They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. ⁵ There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.

Acts 16:9-15

Acts 16:9-15

During the night Paul had a vision: there stood a man of Macedonia pleading with him and saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." When he had seen the vision, we immediately tried to cross over to Macedonia, being convinced that God had called us to proclaim the good news to them.

We set sail from Troas and took a straight course to Samothrace, the following day to Neapolis, and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city for some days. On the sabbath day we went outside the gate by the river, where we supposed there was a place of prayer; and we sat down and spoke to the women who had gathered there. A certain woman named Lydia, a worshiper of God, was listening to us; she was from the city of Thyatira and a dealer in purple cloth. The Lord opened her heart to listen eagerly to what was said by Paul. When she and her household were baptized, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come and stay at my home." And she prevailed upon us.

[\(1904\) In Christ Alone \(My Hope Is Found\) - Adrienne Liesching | LYRIC VIDEO - YouTube](#)

<p>1 In Christ alone my hope is found, he is my light, my strength, my song ; this Cornerstone, this solid Ground, firm through the fiercest drought and storm. What heights of love, what depths of peace, when fears are stilled, when strivings cease ! My Comforter, my All in All, here in the love of Christ I stand.</p> <p>2 In Christ alone ! — who took on flesh, fullness of God in helpless babe ! This gift of love and righteousness, scorned by the ones he came to save : till on that cross as Jesus died, the wrath of God was satisfied for every sin on him was laid ; here in the death of Christ I live.</p>	<p>3 There in the ground his body lay, light of the world by darkness slain : then bursting forth in glorious Day up from the grave he rose again ! And as he stands in victory, sin's curse has lost its grip on me, for I am his and he is mine — bought with the precious blood of Christ.</p> <p>4 No guilt in life, no fear in death, this is the power of Christ in me ; from life's first cry to final breath, Jesus commands my destiny. No power of hell, no scheme of man, can ever pluck me from his hand ; till he returns or calls me home, here in the power of Christ I'll stand !</p> <p>Keith Getty (b. 1974) and Stuart Townend (b. 1963)</p>
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or

STF 385 Holy Spirit we welcome you

[\(1904\) Holy Spirit We Welcome You \(Lyrics\) - YouTube](#)

<p>1 Holy Spirit, we welcome you, Holy Spirit, we welcome you ! Move among us with holy fire as we lay aside all earthly desire, hands reach out and our hearts aspire. Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit, we welcome you !</p> <p>2 Holy Spirit, we welcome you, Holy Spirit, we welcome you ! Let the breeze of your presence blow that your children here might truly know how to move in the Spirit's flow. Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit, we welcome you !</p>	<p>3 Holy Spirit, we welcome you, Holy Spirit, we welcome you ! Please accomplish in us today some new work of loving grace, we pray — unreservedly — have your way. Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit, we welcome you !</p> <p>Christopher Alan Bowater (b. 1947)</p>
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or

stf 407 Hear the call of the Kingdom

[\(1904\) Hear the Call of the Kingdom with Lyrics -- Stuart Townend - YouTube](#)

<p>1 Hear the call of the kingdom, lift your eyes to the King ; let his song rise within you as a fragrant offering of how God, rich in mercy, came in Christ to redeem all who trust in his unfailing grace.</p>	<p><i>King of heaven, we will answer the call. We will follow, bringing hope to the world, filled with passion, filled with power to proclaim salvation in Jesus' name.</i></p> <p>3 Hear the call of the kingdom to reach out to the lost with the Father's compassion in the wonder of the cross,</p>
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<p>2 Hear the call of the kingdom to be children of light with the mercy of heaven, the humility of Christ ; walking justly before him, loving all that is right, that the life of Christ may shine through us.</p>	<p>bringing peace and forgiveness, and a hope yet to come : let the nations put their trust in him.</p> <p><i>King of heaven, we will answer the call ...</i></p> <p>Keith Getty (b. 1974), Kristyn Getty (b. 1980) and Stuart Townend (b. 1963)</p>
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SERMON: The centrality and orchestration of the work of the Holy Spirit

https://youtu.be/7EEoXSQ_Zgc

The lectionary readings focus our minds on the work of the Holy Spirit. We are given insight into experience of 3 of the apostles – Peter, Paul and John with the Holy spirit. Each of the events reveal some challenges for us. Let’s take them in turns.

Peter’s experience with the Holy Spirit

At the time our Lord Jesus was in Israel, the religion was Judaism and it was a hard decision for a non-Jew or gentile to become a member of Judaism in order to worship God. In Judaism, gentiles who wanted to serve God, had to go through some steps to become members of Judaism. They needed to undergo confession of faith before a priest, then the males had to go through circumcision and then become eligible to be baptised into Judaism. If a gentile was too old to undergo the rites, then they would not be baptised but could be classified as a God fearing. Cornelius, a gentile soldier, was in that category and was described as God fearing gentile. Cornelius in his prayer met an angel who gave him the address where Peter was staying and asked him to invite Peter to his house. He believed the message and sent soldiers to fetch Peter. At the time Peter was also having a hard time with the Holy Spirit. Peter was hungry in a trance and the Holy Spirit presented him food that appeared to Peter as unholy food. Peter refused to eat the food but the Holy Spirit asked Peter to accompany the gentile soldiers to Cornelius house. He obeyed and went to Cornelius’ house with other church members and spoke about Jesus who was crucified and immediately Cornelius, his friends who were there and his family - all received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Peter was astonished and baptised all of them with water baptism.

Peter on returning to Jerusalem was made to give explanation for his action. At this time, the church had a wider range of membership – some Jewish priests had joined, some influential people had joined and even some Sanhedrin members were secret members so to speak. Peter who was the head of the church, was neither a rabbi nor a priest and the church in Jerusalem felt he had acted in ignorance in baptising uncircumcised gentiles.

His simple explanation was, if any blame is due then blame the Holy Spirit. He presented me food that appeared unholy for me to eat when I was in a trance. He asked me to go to Caesarea into the house of a gentile and he put the word in my mouth and then baptised the people first. It is God who has moved the goal post #>The Holy Spirit #>

Segregation between Jews and gentiles was a hard drawn line, even in the temple, the priest sat next to the altar, followed by Jewish men, then Jewish women and then gentiles. It was as if then God’s blessing in the church was distributed according to seating arrangement.

The Judaizers in the early church felt that the scriptures followed in Judaism should apply to the new church and even though they accepted Peter’s explanation about the Holy Spirit baptising the gentiles, they still continued to persecute anybody else who baptised an uncircumcised person and Paul was persecuted for that.

For the Judaizers, the line between gentiles and Jews had been drawn in scriptures. The question is, does God recognize these lines? We serve a God who is colour blind, who is gender blind, who is nationality blind and after the work of his son Jesus on the cross, all people now appeared the same colour, the same gender. We live in a world where there are boundaries and lines drawn all around us by race, colour, language, status and various status.

In our world today, there are many voices which contradict scriptures and there are voices which are strict on scriptures as our guidelines. But of course, we are too sophisticated to be bound by dogmas in scriptures. In these

modern times, whatever popular opinion approves as consensus of correctness, become accepted as right even if it is contradictory to Biblical teaching.

On the other hand, there are many people who feel that we should not compromise on the Biblical Word. Allowing society to determine what should be right before God may be a slippery road for Christians.

The one who sits on the throne said: "Behold I make all things new". The Holy Spirit has shown that he is prepared to remove boundaries in our worship after all he is the one who applies the atonement of Christ to us and he alone must be the one to decide where any boundary should be. We have to use the means of grace and prayer to determine what God wants us to do in our worship and what his will is.

The case for Paul

Paul in his mission to preach to the gentiles was led by the Holy Spirit. At one point when he was preaching from town to town in Galatia, the Holy Spirit told him to change his itinerary and attend to an urgent need in Macedonia and so he left for Philippi - one of the towns in Macedonia. This was a Roman colony and Paul's preaching landed him in Prison but so many people became converted as well as the seed was sown. Here again we find the Holy Spirit leading. Our churches are not led by ministers and vicars but by the Holy Spirit and it is important that every church and her members come to recognise the essential role of the Holy Spirit in our worship. This is made evident in the experience of John which follows.

The experience of John

John is taken in the spirit by an angel and given a view of heavenly worship. There he saw the new heaven and the new earth and the new Jerusalem. He received the message that God was making everything new. Then the angel showed him the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life (Rev 22:5). This river is the Holy Spirit to quench the thirst of anyone one who is thirsty. To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life (Rev 21: 6).

The Holy Spirit is flowing from the throne to apply the work of Christ to anyone who is thirsty. We are all spiritually thirsty. Our churches are spiritually thirsty.

Summary

We need to work with the Holy Spirit and be led by him in our worship as did Peter.

We need to work with the Holy Spirit in our Mission action Plan as did Paul

And we need to work with the Holy Spirit to satisfy our spiritual hunger as was revealed to John.

Christ, our Lord has accomplished the task of redemption and invites all into the Kingdom of God. And the Holy Spirit seeks to make it all inclusive to the glory of our Lord Amen.

STF 410 Lord your church on earth is seeking

[\(1904\) Lord, Thy Church on Earth is Seeking \(with lyrics for congregations\) - YouTube](#)

<p>1 Lord, your Church on earth is seeking your renewal from above ; teach us all the art of speaking with the accent of your love. We would heed your great commission : sending us to every place — preach, baptise, fulfil my mission, serve with love and share my grace.</p> <p>2 Freedom give to those in bondage, lift the burdens caused by sin.</p>	<p>3 In the streets of every city where the bruised and lonely dwell, let us show the Saviour's pity, let us of his mercy tell. In all lands and with all races let us serve, and seek to bring all the world to render praises, Christ, to you, Redeemer, King.</p> <p>Hugh Sherlock (1905–1998)</p>
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Give new hope, new strength and courage, grant release from fears within : light for darkness ; joy for sorrow ; love for hatred ; peace for strife. These and countless blessings follow as the Spirit gives new life.	
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Offertory

Prayer of intercession

God of power and might, your broken world cries out from the depths,
our world is dominated by the darkness of war, terror, pain and suffering.

We think of the on-going and deepening conflict in Ukraine and in many areas of our world. World leaders have failed to break the impasse and it is heart-breaking to see cities and towns rendered desolate

We share the pain and anguish of those who have had to flee from their homes,
countries and livelihoods and the risks they face fleeing from war. We ask that your power will bring an end to this madness in humanity.

God of life, we ask for your healing power on those who are enduring pain and illness.

We especially think of and all those we name quietly in our hearts.....

We share the grief of people close to us, who've recently lost loved ones.

We especially think of

We know your everlasting light shines with within us in moments of great sadness as well as great joy.
Within our darkest night, Let your light shine.

God of love and hope, renew in us a deeper sense of who we are in you.

Help us to be aware of your presence every day. Make us instruments of grace and may the power of your resurrection bring us hope and new strength through Christ Jesus our Lord. **Amen.**

Blessing

May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord send us out from here in the power of the Holy Spirit. May the Lord equip us to be the source of strength for others. May his peace rest on us for ever.

Amen