



April 2023

Minister: Rev. Joe Adams
Mob: 0798 541 7000

Singing the Faith 697

Oh freedom, Oh freedom, Oh freedom.
Freedom is coming, Oh yes I know.
Oh yes I know! Oh yes I know! Oh yes I know!
Freedom is coming, Oh yes I know!

Oh justice, Oh justice, Oh justice.
Justice is coming, Oh yes I know.
Oh yes I know! Oh yes I know! Oh yes I know!
Justice is coming, Oh yes I know!

Oh Jesus, Oh Jesus, Oh Jesus.
Jesus is coming, Oh yes I know.
Oh yes I know! Oh yes I know! Oh yes I know!
Jesus is coming, Oh yes I know!

South African traditional words collected and edited by Anders Nyberg (b. 1955)

The hymn above is a big favourite of mine. I heard it first many years before our hymn book *Singing the Faith* was published. It's such a great South African hymn of hope that speaks of the mission of Jesus over 2000 years ago in that first Holy Week.

As Methodists our faith is always learned and proclaimed through our hymns and songs and that is never truer than how we celebrate this month the story of Easter.

On the 2nd of April, Palm Sunday, as always we will enjoy singing hymns like this one:

Singing the Faith 264

Make way, make way, for Christ the King in splendour arrives;
fling wide the gates and welcome him into your lives.

Make way (Make way), make way (make way),
for the King of kings (for the King of kings);
make way (make way), make way (make way),
and let his Kingdom in.

Or Singing the Faith 262

All glory, laud, and honour to thee, Redeemer, King,
to whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring!
Thou art the King of Israel, thou David's royal Son,
who in the Lord's name comest, the King and Blessèd One.

My guess is just reading those words brought the tunes straight to your mind!

We get quite excited hearing them, imagining children and the poor of Jerusalem spreading their cloaks and palm branches so that Jesus the Messiah can enter the city in this display of worldly triumph. We will I'm sure take palm crosses home and treasure them.

Even more we will enjoy the triumph and hope of Easter Day.

Our Church like almost every other Methodist Church and Chapel around the world will echo with the strains of:

Singing the Faith 298

Christ the Lord is risen today; Alleluia!
All creation joins to say: Alleluia!
Raise your joys and triumphs high; Alleluia!
Sing, you heavens; let earth, reply: Alleluia!

And of course most services like ours this year will end with:

Singing the Faith 313

Thine be the glory, risen, conquering Son,
endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won;
angels in bright raiment rolled the stone away,
kept the folded grave-clothes where thy body lay.

Thine be the glory, risen, conquering Son,
endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won.

It's so easy doing Easter if we just move easily from Sunday to Sunday, from joy to joy. It's not good enough though because we miss the power and importance of Easter story. We miss too some of the greatest of our hymns.

On Maundy Thursday, the 6th April this year we meet with St. Stephen's in our sanctuary and remember the last supper and Jesus' command that we love one another. We will wait to remember as always the despair of the Garden of Gethsemane, and the abandonment of Jesus when at his arrest the disciples flee for their lives and leave him alone.

We will sing as I always do when I get to choose the hymns for Maundy Thursday the next hymn printed below. As always I will have tears in my eyes and I won't be the only one I'm sure. I'm typing all the verses of this one out because it is so precious and powerful.

Singing the Faith 277

My song is love unknown, my Saviour's love to me,
love to the loveless shown, that they might lovely be.
O who am I, that for my sake
my Lord should take frail flesh and die?

He came from his blest throne, salvation to bestow;
but they made strange, and none
the longed-for Christ would know.
But O my Friend, my Friend indeed, who at my need his life did spend!

Sometimes they strew his way, and his sweet praises sing;
resounding all the day hosannas to their King.
Then 'Crucify!' is all their breath,
and for his death they thirst and cry.

Why, what has my Lord done? What makes this rage and spite?
He made the lame to run, he gave the blind their sight.
Sweet injuries! Yet they at these
themselves displease, and 'gainst him rise.

They rise, and needs will have my dear Lord made away;
a murderer they save, the Prince of Life they slay.
Yet cheerful he to suffering goes,
that he his foes from thence might free.

In life no house, no home, my Lord on earth might have;
in death, no friendly tomb but what a stranger gave.
What may I say? Heaven was his home;
but mine the tomb wherein he lay.

Here might I stay and sing, no story so divine:
never was love, dear King, never was grief like thine!
This is my Friend,
in whose sweet praise I all my days could gladly spend.

Samuel Crossman (c. 1624–1683)

With Crossman's poetry so majestic and moving in our ears the sanctuary lights will be extinguished and everything beautiful removed or covered in black cloth. Hearing words detailing the despair and horror of Jesus suffering we will leave in silence, knowing he did all this for us.

On Good Friday I am certain even those who do not manage to get to worship will think of this astounding world famous hymn:

Singing the Faith 287

When I survey the wondrous cross,
on which the Prince of Glory died,
my richest gain I count but loss,
and pour contempt on all my pride.

I cannot journey from Palm Sunday to Easter Day without remembering Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, the betrayal of Jesus by Judas, or the denial of Peter. They are part of our experience of faith; the low days and the days when our actions and hearts betray and deny God too.

Easter Day never ever tastes properly sweet if it isn't contrasted with the horror of Calvary and the desolation of Easter Saturday.

Which brings us right back to Freedom is Coming. The journey of Jesus who set his face to Jerusalem is a revealing of God's promise of freedom, justice, hope and power. Every healing and every word of life giving teaching proclaims that change is coming.

- Freedom is coming as Jesus walks willingly toward the cross and the empty tomb; the revealing of God's love and the power of heaven.
- Freedom is coming and it looks like the isolation of the Garden of Gethsemane.
- Justice is coming and it looks like Jesus, arms flung wide open crucified to a tree.
- Hope is coming and it looks like the desolation of disciples just like us huddled together with grief filled tear stained faces.
- Power is coming as Jesus breaks the hold of death for him and us for all time.

How exciting! Freedom is coming, over and over again every time we accept God's love and challenge and the Spirit's power in our hearts in the here and now.

What a story we have to share and live in the light of. This Easter I pray you will sing and follow the story of Jesus from entry to Jerusalem to Resurrection day. I pray the joy and hope of resurrection light might fill your mind with possibilities and your heart with unspeakable hope.

Death has lost its sting, Alleluia!

God bless you

Rev'd Joe

NOTES FROM THE VESTRY

To begin, may we just reflect back on a few of the March highlights:

- It has been such a blessing to see the Coffee Morning / Warm Space continue to develop as each week we welcome a mix of regular visitors and new people. It is such a joy and privilege to have time to sit and chat, meeting new people and sharing with them whilst also seeking to provide practical support as needed.
- The Circuit SPA day on 4 March, where we spent time thinking about our mission here at Wimpole Road and how this might engage with, support and be supported by the wider Circuit. We will be having a further Wimpole Road mission planning meeting very soon and a date for this will be announced shortly.
- Our Member Confirmation service in mid-March when we welcomed Sonia and Dave into Methodist membership was such a joy and we pray God's blessing on them both as they continue their journey of faith.

- Sonia was also baptised and this combined with Mothering Sunday, proved to be a memorable service for everyone.
- The material we have been studying in our weekly Three Together Lent Course has been hard and challenging for all who have been able to attend, but we need to think and pray about all of these difficult situations that are faced in life; and also be so grateful that the Three Churches have been able to join together for this study.

If you are reading this message ‘hot off the press’ it is likely to be Palm Sunday, when we think of the celebration of Jesus riding triumphant onto Jerusalem. Something of a ‘watershed’ day as Jesus’ followers were convinced victory was nigh - but it would certainly seem that they had no real understanding of what this victory was really going to be nor the pain that Jesus would suffer to achieve this for us all. For us, Palm Sunday is a little different in so much as we know how the events of Holy Week play out.

Please join us through Holy Week as we seek to journey with Jesus with times of prayer and reflection as we prepare ourselves for the victory that we will celebrate on Easter Sunday morning.

Full details of the prayer and meditation meetings and services for Holy Week can be found later in the Newsround and if you need any further information, please speak to a Steward.

Other dates for the diary include:

Pentecost Celebration on Sunday 28 May with an outside joint service on the Recreation Ground with St, Stephen’s. Please do come along and bring friends for this special service of witness.

Our **Church Annual Meeting** that will be held within our Sunday morning worship on **11 June**, and led by Rev. Joe Adams.

New Town Open Gardens on 11 June, when we have been invited to take part. If you feel able to help with this or would just like to know more about it please speak to me.

Holiday Club from 24 – 28 July (earlier than normal). Booking for this will open shortly, but we also need volunteers to help during the week - please speak to me if you are able to help in anyway or need any further information about this.

And finally our **New Town Community Day will be on Saturday 16 September.**

Andrew Topple

THURSDAY CIRCLE

March began with a visit from John, a volunteer with the East Anglian Children's Hospice, who gave us an update on the work of the charity, and members took advantage of his collecting box to make donations, which were gratefully received. This was followed up a fortnight later by a Quiz Afternoon, which itself raised £120 for the charity. Thank you to all who contributed in any way.

In between these two events we had an evening meeting, when Gunni Graygoose put us through a fun evening of seated activities.

On 23 March we had an enjoyable afternoon as member Pat Farrow read her poetry to us, covering a wide range of subjects. She really is very talented and clever. She was ably assisted by Ann Finch!

Coming up:

6 April Join us in the afternoon for our Maundy Thursday Service.

13 April Peter Jones will talk about and show the film 'Night Mail'.

20 April A 'Cream Tea' at the Mercury Theatre.

27 April A chance to play 'Give us a Clue'.

The new programme from May to October is nearing completion and will be available shortly.

Everyone is welcome to come and join us on **Thursday afternoons at 2.30 p.m.**

Joan Gomer – Secretary

OVER 60'S LUNCH CLUB AT ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH

Monday 17 April from midday for 12:30 lunch

If you are interested in coming along please give Jill a ring on (01206) 572605. Booking is essential for catering purposes.

Two courses will be served with tea or coffee to follow for a charge of **£5**. Dietary needs can be catered for if known in advance.

Many thanks from The Lunch Club Team

WIMPOLE ROAD CHURCH SERVICES FOR APRIL

Sunday mornings at 11.00 a.m.

2 April	Joanne Eckersley – Palm Sunday
9 April	Rev. Joe Adams – Easter Sunday - Holy Communion
16 April	Rev. Joe Adams – Baptism and Thursday Circle Service
23 April	Jonathan Sparkes
30 April	Rev. Dr Marion Cole

A WARM WELCOME AWAITS

Join us after the service for coffee/tea and biscuits in the church parlour for a time of fellowship and refreshments.

EASTER 2023

Holy Week (from Monday 3 April)

Monday – Wednesday a short vigil at 7:30 pm

Hosted on Monday at St. Margaret's, Tuesday at St. Stephen's and Wednesday at Wimpole Road

Maundy Thursday Holy Communion at 7:30 pm at Wimpole Road

Good Friday

New Town Walk of Witness, starting with prayer at St. Stephen's at 10:00 and ending with refreshments at Wimpole Road

Prayer & Meditation at 2:00 pm at St. Margaret's

Easter Saturday Vigil at St. Stephen's at 7:30 pm

Easter Sunday Celebration:

St. Margaret's 9:30 am

St. Stephen's at 11:00 am

Wimpole Road at 11:00 am

A PRAYER FOR GOOD FRIDAY

Saviour of the world,
what have you done to deserve this?
And what have we done to deserve you?

Strung up between criminals,
cursed and spat upon,
you wait for death,
and look for us,
for us whose sin has crucified you.

To the mystery of undeserved suffering,
you bring the deeper mystery of unmerited love.

Forgive us for not knowing what we have done;
open our eyes to what we are doing now,
as, through wood and nails,
you disempower our depravity
and transform us by your grace.

Amen

A PRAYER FOR EASTER EVENING

Jesus Christ, you meet us;
your hands still holed,
but your breath warm,
and your conversation engaging.
Death has not changed your accent
or diminished your love.

And though the world
should still show signs of its imperfection,
the good news is that you have destined it
and all its people to be made whole.

So, as on this Easter evening
we are gathered in your house
and cheered by your Gospel,
join us,
As you joined your first disciples
and make our worship your Emmaus road.
Amen

{Both taken from 'Stages on the Way' produced by the Wild Goose Worship Group}

FOR YOUR PRAYERS:

All those known to us who have ongoing health problems.



WORKING TOGETHER



PRAYER MEETING Tuesday 10.00 - 10.30 a.m.

Meeting number: 195 594 506 password 011904

JOINT BIBLE STUDY GROUP – please speak to Andrew Topples for more details

Join online via Zoom or Dial in from your phone on:

0203 051 2874, 0203 481 5237, 0203 481 5240 or 0131 460 1196

**‘THREE TOGETHER’
ONLINE FACEBOOK SERVICE
EVERY SUNDAY at 6.30 p.m.**

Ecumenical worship led by and shared with all three churches, Wimpole Road, St. Stephen's and St. Margaret's.

FUTURE NEWSROUNDS

Please don't forget, if you have stories, items or prayer requests that you would like to contribute to a future monthly Newsround - please contact me by telephone, e-mail or post.

Tel: (01206) 869505 or e-mail: alison.ablewhite@btinternet.com

KEEP UP TO DATE ON OUR WEBSITE:

www.wimpoleroadchurch.org.uk