



Worship at home' June 18th 2023



As we worship, we are reminded of the many ways in which we experience God in the 'ordinary' times and places of our lives, and are empowered by the Spirit to be Christ's followers in all of who we are and what we do.

Opening

O come, faithful God, who empowers the weak, who heals the broken-hearted, who encourages the fearful, who enlightens the blind, who releases the captives, who enriches the poor and brings new life to all.

O come, faithful God, fill us with your Spirit. that we might proclaim good news to those around us, by what we say, by what we do, and by who we are. You have called us, and anointed us as your people, to step out in love and share your hope. Let us worship you with praise. Amen!

Have you ever been asked to take on a role, such as a committee member, at work, or as a volunteer, and felt like it was beyond your capabilities?

How did you manage?

Did you find you grew into the role, or did it remain difficult?

Jesus asked his disciples to take on roles that may have felt far beyond them. They were to travel far and wide, not taking any resources with them, knowing that they might encounter opposition and resistance. Yet they would be empowered for the role by the Holy Spirit, working in and through them.



Matthew 9:35-10:10, 17-20

Jesus went around visiting all the towns and villages. He taught in the synagogues, preached the Good News about the Kingdom, and healed people with every kind of disease and sickness. As he saw the crowds, his heart was filled with pity for them, because they were worried and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. So he said to his disciples, "The harvest is large, but there are few workers to gather it in. Pray to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers to gather in his harvest."

Jesus called his twelve disciples together and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and every sickness. These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James and his brother John, the sons of Zebedee; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew, the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Patriot, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Jesus. These

twelve men were sent out by Jesus with the following instructions: "Do not go to any Gentile territory or any Samaritan towns. Instead, you are to go to the lost sheep of the people of Israel. Go and preach, "The Kingdom of heaven is near!" Heal the sick, bring the dead back to life, heal those who suffer from dreaded skin diseases, and drive out demons. You have received without paying, so give without being paid. Do not carry any gold, silver, or copper money in your pockets; do not carry a beggar's bag for the trip or an extra shirt or shoes or a walking stick. Workers should be given what they need. Watch out, for there will be those who will arrest you and take you to court, and they will whip you in the synagogues. For my sake you will be brought to trial before rulers and kings, to tell the Good News to them and to the Gentiles. When they bring you to trial, do not worry about what you are going to say or how you will say it; when the time comes, you will be given what you will say. For the

words you will speak will not be yours; they will come from

the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

Good News Bible

Reflect on the instructions Jesus gave his followers in this passage?

Which do you relate to?

Which do you find most difficult?

Jesus doesn't tell his followers to establish church buildings and gather there regularly. Rather, he sends us out to love, to teach, to heal, and to proclaim the good news of God's grace. Worship, learning and being together in community are vital to our faith: these activities equip us for our ministries of outreach, of compassion and justice and witness. We don't need special equipment or tools or training or money: we are the equipment. The Spirit of God will empower us with the words and the gifts and skills and graces for what we are called to do.



We are called to be Jesus' disciples, to carry on his mission of reconciliation and renewal of all of creation. We are to travel lightly, even when this means leaving behind church trappings and traditions, and even when we feel inadequate. When we trust in God, our abilities and resources, our talents and skills, who we are, is always enough.

In what ways does gathering together as a church community empower you for witness and service?

How do you value both "gathering" and "scattering"?

Pray for others

Jesus called twelve of his followers and sent them into the ripe fields, empowering them to carry out the task to which they were called.



Think of the names of 12 followers of Christ you know who bear witness to his love. Pray for each of them.

Closing: A Litany for the Uniting Church

We are a people saved by grace through faith.

Re-make us as your people, Lord.

Free us for witness and service.

As we join our praise with all creation,

re-make us as your people, Lord.

Free us for witness and service.

As we look, with all your people,

for the coming of your kingdom,

re-make us as your people, Lord.

Free us for witness and service.

As we seek, with other churches,

the unity for which Jesus prays,

re-make us as your people, Lord.

Free us for witness and service.

As we cry and groan and work

for justice and reconciliation,

re-make us as your people, Lord.

Free us for witness and service.

As we pray and learn to love

in the dark places of human life,

re-make us as your people, Lord.

Free us for witness and service.

As we long for our own transformation

and for the renewal of all your church,

re-make us as your people, Lord.

Free us for witness and service.

As we seek for peace in our homes,

our workplaces and our world,

re-make us as your people, Lord.

Free us for witness and service.

May your kingdom come, and your will

be done on earth as it is in heaven,

through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



Painting: K Tero, Ascot Community UC