



Opening Words Psalm 98:1

Sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvellous things.

Hymn: [All heaven declares, StF 293](#)

All heaven declares
the glory of the risen Lord;
who can compare
with the beauty of the Lord?
For ever he will be
the Lamb upon the throne;
I gladly bow the knee,
and worship him alone.

I will proclaim
the glory of the risen Lord,
who once was slain
to reconcile us to God.
For ever you will be
the Lamb upon the throne;
I gladly bow the knee,
and worship you alone.

Noel Richards (b. 1955) and Tricia Richards (b. 1960)

Prayer:

Gracious and loving God,
today we bring our praises to You, because:
You are the maker and Sustainer of all creation, upholding all things by Your hand;
out of Your great love for the world, in Jesus You chose to leave the holiness and purity of Heaven, embracing life on earth, to live as carpenter and preacher, leading His disciples into all truth and calling them to mission;
in Jesus, You showed Your care for all people and call us to receive the gift of life won at the cost of His death on the cross;
to receive your forgiveness for sin through repentance and faith and Your healing by the power of Your Holy Spirit that we might live in Your power and be transformed into the image of Jesus, in whose Name we pray. Amen.

Bible Readings Acts 10:44-48 & 1 John 5:1-6

Many years ago, we took a group of young people to the MAYC London Weekend, I was an absolute convert to the weekend and can remember selling the event to several teenagers who had never experienced it for themselves, I wanted every teenager in the whole world to have their lives influenced in the way I had been. Speaking to one of the lads at the services on the M1 during our return journey I asked him what he had thought "it was OK" he said, "but not as good as you made it out to be" Thankfully, he went back the following year and several other years.

Consider:

- *Are we sometimes cautious of sharing faith with others because they might neither see nor value the things, we hold dear?*
- *Do we sometimes think that the gift of God is only for those who are part of the fellowship? In the Acts reading, we see the Christian way of life suddenly becoming available to the Gentiles. Who are the Gentile equivalents in the modern world? How do we reach out to them?*
- *John reminds his readers that if we love the Father, we also love the Son and if we love the Son, then we are brothers and sisters in the fellowship of his Church.*

Hymn: My Jesus, my Saviour StF 363

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mqSQvoindE4>

My Jesus, my Saviour
Lord there is none like you
All of my days, I want to praise
The wonders of your mighty love
My comfort, my shelter
Tower of refuge and strength
Let every breath, all that I am
Never cease to worship You

*Shout to the Lord, all the earth let us sing
Power and majesty, praise to the King
Mountains bow down and the seas will roar
At the sound of Your name
I sing for joy at the work of your hands
Forever I'll love you, forever I'll stand
Nothing compares to the promise I have
In YOU*

Gospel Reading: John 15:9-17

Several years ago, I was involved in a Church where we made a concerted effort to pray for revival and God sent two men to our Church, both in their nineties, the first came because he was no longer able to cycle to the Anglican Church, the second had been a Methodist until his village chapel closed down many years earlier and only reconnected, because his wife of sixty odd years had died and he was lonely. Both men suffered hearing loss, but loved a good sing, they were both loud, extremely loud, not necessarily in tune, not necessarily at the same speed as the organ, and made singing challenging, sometimes almost impossible and frequently hilarious. Some people in the Church loved and accepted those two old men, many tolerated them, but I was actually asked by some to visit these two and ask them to stop coming and ruining our worship. I refused!

Consider:

- *In our previous two readings, we see the recognition that the story of faith is for those outside our current community. How do we react when people don't think, behave, or act the way we do? Who is right? And who is wrong?*
- *In this passage from John's Gospel, Jesus reminds the disciples, that he has loved, just as the Father has loved him. How far will we go in our efforts to love? How do we love those who appear to be "unlovable"?*
- *Should we stop praying that God will send people to us, because he keeps on sending "the wrong kind of people"? What do the right kind of people look like?*

Prayers for others

Lord our God, we pray for our mixed up, muddled and compromised world. May those who lead peoples and nations be inspired to work in ways that benefit all whom they are called to serve.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Where tyranny, violence or oppression spread injustice, may those who know the truth be stirred to challenge and transform situations, for the good of all. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Thank you for those who provide health and vaccination services. May such resources be shared among nations, that all humanity may attain fulness of life. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

We pray for Your Church that we may demonstrate the humility and love of Jesus, declaring in word and deed your immeasurable love. By Your Holy Spirit may we live ever to Your glory, that others may come to know their place in Your family. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

The Lord's Prayer Our Father ...

Hymn: Listen to [Living Hope by Phil Wickham](#) Or Lord, we have come at your own invitation 595 StF

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JmKDO0nHsk>

Lord, we have come at Your own invitation,
Chosen by You, to be counted Your friends;
Yours is the strength that sustains dedication,
Ours a commitment we know never ends.

Here, at Your table, confirm our intention,
Give it Your seal of forgiveness and grace;

So, in the world, where each duty assigned us
Gives us the chance to create or destroy,
joy.

Teach us to serve without pride or pretension,
Lord, in Your kingdom, whatever our place.

When, at Your table, each time of returning,
Vows are renewed and our courage restored:
May we increasingly glory in learning
All that it means to accept You as Lord.

Help us to make those decisions that bind us,
Lord, to yourself in obedience and

A prayer of blessing (based on Jude 24-25)

To him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy – to the only God our Saviour be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and for evermore! Amen.