



Circuit Contact

Welcome to our Circuit Worship for

23rd February 2025 Prepared by Dr Lynne Bradbury

Worship in the following locations:

Wellspring Methodist Church, Cheadle - At 10:30pm - With Rev Julie Hassall - Holy Communion

Endon Methodist Church - At 10:00am - Mr Howard Monks

Ipstones Methodist Church - At 10:30am - With Mr Mark Fallows

Rudyard Methodist Church - At 11:00am - With Mr Dennis Johnson

The Gathering At St Andrews, Cheddleton - at 16:00pm

Trinity, Leek - At 10:30am - With Rev Denise Williamson - Covenant Service/Holy Communion

Waterhouses Methodist Church - At 18:30pm - With Rev Julie Hassall - Holy Communion

Wetley Rocks Methodist Church - At 14:30pm - With Ms Heather Hayward

Sunday 2nd March 2025 – Worship at Wellspring Cheadle– At 10:30am – With Dr Lynne Bradbury



The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ

Let's join in worship as we sing together (StF 82) O Lord my God [O Lord My God, When I in Awesome Wonder \(How Great Thou Art\) \(Singing the Faith 82 / StF 82\) - YouTube](#)

Let's close our eyes, still our souls, and keep a few moments of quiet (a few moments of silence).

Let's pray: Lord God, as Creator, Saviour, and Holy Spirit, descend upon my heart and mind as I open myself to the Grace that comes from you. I want to praise you with every experience in my life. I pray that you will forgive me for all those things in my life which are not worthy of your disciple. (Take a few minutes to be aware of God's presence and his free and full forgiveness.)

Thank you loving Lord for all the blessings in my life and the knowledge that your forgiveness makes me whole again, in the name of Jesus, Amen

Hymn: (StF 495) Dear Lord and father of mankind [Dear Lord and Father of Mankind - YouTube](#)

As a local preacher, it has been my practice over many years to invite the congregation to share 'the Grace' at the end of each service. Members of congregations have tended to automatically respond with the traditional format:

'May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all
now and always. Amen.'

Perhaps we should explore our understanding of God's grace, so that we better understand our prayer. The Christian theological understanding of Grace reveals undeserved favour from God through the death and resurrection of his son Jesus Christ, which is freely offered to all people. This favour cannot be earned; it's freely given. Grace is the essence of the gospel (Acts 20v24) <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts%20%3A24&version=NIV>; Grace gives us eternal encouragement and good hope (2 Thessalonians 2 V16) <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Thessalonians%20%3A16-17&version=NIV>. But grace also disciplines us and trains us to live in a way that honours God.

Sometimes we may find ourselves saying 'the Grace' as if we are on automatic pilot, as our worship closes and we turn our attention to the responsibilities of the rest of the day; but perhaps we need to give this time our full attention as we consider the great privilege of living in God's full and free grace.

God's grace is the basis of Christian faith; Ephesians 2 v8

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians%20%3A8&version=NIV> says, 'We are saved by faith through grace.' This theme is taken up by John Wesley who explains God's grace as:

- 'prevenient grace' where grace precedes our conversion (Titus 2 v11 – 12)
- 'Justifying/saving grace' which restores us to God as we become aware of his love
- 'Sanctifying grace' which perfects those who commit their lives to following Jesus.

As Methodist Christians, we are expected to grow in grace through prayer, self-denial, and Bible study. For humans to be full of grace they must demonstrate charity or giving to others out of gratitude and in the joy of God's favour toward us. Grace bestows blessings which we don't deserve, but also a commitment to service in sharing God's love and salvation.

So how might we bless each other by sharing the grace in our services? We certainly need to give this prayer our full attention and commitment as it sends us out in the full knowledge of the gift of grace and our responsibilities within this gift. We might wish to explore other versions. I found this in 2

Thessalonians 1:12

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Thessalonians%20%3A12&version=NIV> where Paul writes to the Thessalonian Christians who were persevering while suffering great trials and persecution for their faith:

We pray this so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him,
according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul appears to separate Jesus from God in this version, and there is no mention of the Holy Spirit. At the time of writing, there was still much debate about a Trinitarian God and the place of Jesus and the Holy Spirit within God. Paul, as other writers, had the main focus of preaching God's saving love through his son, Jesus Christ's death and resurrection. Paul was very focused upon this sense of God's grace, and there were plenty of opportunities ahead for Christian leaders to explore the Trinity.

Let's sing: (StF440) Amazing Grace [Amazing Grace - YouTube](#)

Let's pray. Thank you, gracious Lord, for blessing me with your grace, to know that your love offers me new life in the joy of your kingdom. I pray that all those who need to know the power of your grace will be touched by the Holy Spirit today and will respond to your love. I pray that our world may come together to bow before you with a desire to live in peace, hope and the joy of your presence. (Bring before God those you wish to bring into his presence today). I bring this prayer in the name of Jesus, Amen.

(You might want to write your own version of the Grace, to reflect your understanding and the emphasis which might be important for you. You may wish to keep these to yourself but, if you would like to send any to me, I would be thrilled to share in your thoughts.)

We close this worship with a favourite form of the Grace, for many people: **Jude 1**

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jude%201&version=NIV>

²⁴To him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy— ²⁵to the only God our Saviour be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.