



Circuit Contact

Welcome to our Circuit Worship for

30th March 2025 Prepared by Rev Joyce Smith

Worship in the following locations:

Boundary Methodist Church - At 18:00pm - With Ms Heather Hayward

Wellspring Methodist Church, Tean - At 10:30pm - Local Arrangement

Endon Methodist Church - At 10:00am - With Rev Anne Gibson

St Leonards, Ipstones - At 11:00am - With Rev Julie Hassall and Rev Jane Held

Onecote Methodist Church - At 11:00am - With Ms Beryl Stew

Rudyard Methodist Church - At 11:00am - With Rev Joyce Smith

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

St Andrews Methodist Church, Cheddleton - At 10:30am - With Ms Gill Meredith - Holy Communion

Trinity, Leek - At 10:30am - With Rev Denise Williamson

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

Wetley Rocks Methodist Church - At 10:30am - With Deacon Peter Ogle

Sunday 6th April 2025 – Worship at Wellspring Cheadle– At 10:30am – With Dr Lynne Bradbury.

- **Messy Church – At Wellspring Cheadle- At 15:30pm**



Come, let us celebrate the forgiving, reconciling love of God.

**For once we were lost and felt so far away;
now we have been found and welcomed home.**

Know that God's love is lavished upon you forever.

We rejoice at the news of forgiveness and hope!

Come, let us celebrate and praise the God of Love.

AMEN! ¹

We sing: 443 [Come Let Us Sing of a Wonderful Love \(Tune: Wonderful Love - 4vv\) \[with lyrics for congregations\]](#)

Loving God, may we be found in and may we find, a place called home
a place where faith holds us and grace renews us
where forgiveness longs for us to be who you will us to be.

May we find a place called home where we are accepted as we are
where we are taken in and loved unconditionally.

A place called home where we belong and our souls fit and our questions are allowed
our anger is heard, our needs are recognised, our pain is held and our names are known.

May this be that place, O God, this community, this group of travellers and doubters
and companions on the way.

This home, where your place is our place and place isn't a building
but a way of being together in relationship, held together by love

Loving God, Homecoming God, may we make this a home

to all who still yet seek a place of grace-filled sanctuary, and gracious welcome. ²

Amen

Reading: [Luke 15: 1-32](#)

Reflection

Lost-it's a word that can be used in many different ways. I get lost every time I hear Mozart's Ave Verum Corpus, I stop whatever I'm doing, and the world recedes as I become engulfed by the sublime sound. I become lost in music. When I listen to my teenage grandchildren talking it's almost another language, I don't understand a word that's being said, I am lost. We can be lost geographically, lost in a crowd, or feel lost spiritually, when everything we thought we knew and believed is challenged. We can lose parts of ourselves to sorrow and grief, we can lose ourselves in anger and resentment, we can lose our sense of identity and belonging.

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In this passage Jesus tells 3 stories of something lost being found and how that is always a cause for rejoicing. These three parables build on each other, the first two tell of relentless searching until the lost is found and set up the experiences the father and sons will have. Together they are stories of wholeness and completeness. It's not just that there was a lost sheep and a lost coin, the crux of the story is that without them the flock is not complete, the coin was not just a commodity, it was probably part of a dowry; they were essential to the shepherd and the woman. Without them something was missing, something beyond monetary value. Then Jesus tells the third story, but what do we call this third story? The Prodigal Son, the Two Sons, the running father? Who are we in the story? Henri Nouwen wrote "The Return of the Prodigal Son" after studying the Rembrandt painting and he suggests that we are all each of the sons at different points in our lives and that we should aspire to be like the father. He challenges the reader to reflect on their own journey of returning and reconciliation.

We all feel taken for granted and resentful at times, overlooked in favour of those who for whom everything just seems to fall in their lap. The older son feels lost in the everyday, part of the furniture, yet the father leaves the celebrations to tell him just how much he is loved and valued, how essential he is to his father. The father actively pursues him when the son feels lost, just as he runs to greet the returning son. He hitched up his long robes (a sign of wealth and class) and ran, exposing bare legs, What a complete loss of dignity! He could have waited for the son to come to him in repentance and humility, but so great was his love and joy that he ran towards the son who had been lost. Lost in so many ways, by demanding his inheritance the son had lost his status, he became

lost in debauchery, he lost his Jewish identity by making himself unclean, he lost his family. When he hits rock bottom, he returns, not with any hope of restoration but knowing that life as a servant would be preferable to his miserable existence. Sometimes we have to hit rock bottom before acknowledging our need of God.

What do these parables us about God? God is the shepherd; he pursues us to restore us to his flock. God is the woman, relentlessly searching for the small, precious thing that is of such great value to her. God is the father, loving each and everyone of us, never taking us for granted and always running to meet us on the road. Whatever we may have done, whatever we are going through, God runs to clasp us in his loving embrace.

Listen and reflect: [WHEN GOD RAN | MUSIC VIDEO | WITH LYRICS](#)

We pray:

Holy and Gracious God

You, the one of prodigal grace

We give you thanks for the gift of life
and for the blessings of this life,
for family and friends and
love abundant.

Lead us through the trials
the suffering and sorrow
the challenges and struggles
the tired time, despair and bleak places,
back to you, and love abundant.

Be with those who weep or cannot sleep
who have no peace, who seek release
and comfort them with love abundant.

Fill us with hope,
sustained in your mercy,
with patience and stamina
upheld by your Holy Spirit
in your prodigal grace.

Transform us and all our broken ways
transforms us that we can be made whole

And in wholeness may we be
the hands and heart of Christ. Amen.³

As we pray, we remember those for whom
life is a struggle, we bring them to God and
ask they may know the love, strength and
comfort of our loving God.

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory
are yours now and for ever.
Amen.

We sing 323 : [I Will Sing The Wondrous Story, KTF 68, Scenic Hymn, Feat. Mark Pentecost and Col Adamson](#)

May the *God* who shakes heaven and earth,
Whom death could not contain,
Who lives to disturb and heal us,
Bless you with power to go forth
And proclaim the *Gospel*. Amen

¹ Written by Nancy Townley, www.ministrymatters.com

² written by Roddy Hamilton, <http://www.nkchurch.org.uk/index.php/mucky-paws>

³ written by Terri, www.revgalprayerpals
