

# Salford Methodist Circuit



**Light Shines Out - 7th February 2021**

**Pat Wilson**

Good morning and welcome to worship. We start with an opening prayer.

God of sunrises, during what feels like an eternal night of the soul, we praise you for you are the One who causes the sun to rise.

Thank you for always being a light in the dark places of the world and the dark places of our lives. Our hope is in God, for you are the light of the world and you call us to be lights for others.

May your light and love blaze in us and in all the world.

Amen.

## **Hymn: Light of the world, here I am to worship**

*Light of the world,  
you stepped down into darkness,  
opened my eyes, let me see  
beauty that made this heart adore you,  
hope of a life spent with you.*

*So here I am to worship,  
here I am to bow down,  
here I am to say that you're my God,  
and you're altogether lovely,  
altogether worthy,  
altogether wonderful to me.*

*King of all days  
oh so highly exalted,  
glorious in heaven above.  
Humbly you came  
to the earth you created,  
all for love's sake became poor.  
So here I am to worship...*

*And I'll never know how much it cost  
to see my sin upon that cross.  
And I'll never know how much it cost  
to see my sin upon that cross.  
So here I am to worship...*

And now a prayer for light and love by Andre Katharina:

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Lord, our God, our eternal light, our eternal flame that nourishes our souls. We open our mind, our spirit and our soul to You, who gives us love and light, through Your eternal blessing and unites all our soul's in Christ.

Praised are You, who guides us with Your mercy and leads us to peace.

Our hearts are calm in a state of silent surrender trusting in Your love and guidance.

We thank You for this creation and for all the blessings You are constantly giving to us.

We thank You for the brilliant thoughts, sweet moments and loving feelings received through the Holy Spirit in our lives.

May the light of Your wisdom enlighten the minds of all people.

May Your truth shine in all souls, and Your love flow through all hearts, so that all people can enter the world of Love and realize that all life comes from You, may we bow down together all people as one and praise Your name.

May You strengthen all the leaders in this world to embrace the principles of brotherly love, charity and truth and act on Your behalf. May they unveil the divine plan so that all may see and bring it to action.

Spread Your blessing on all of us, as we cannot create and live in full truth and integrity without being touched by You.

Feed all people with the powers of Your "Eternal Love".

Send us Your joy and peace every day, so that our world becomes a symphony of love. May the Spirit of Christ spread in us and act through all souls.

We bow to you, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit in humility and gratitude.

Amen

## **Hymn: Longing for light, we wait in darkness**

*Longing for light, we wait in darkness.  
Longing for truth, we turn to you.  
Make us your own, your holy people,  
light for the world to see.*

*Christ, be our light!  
Shine in our hearts.  
Shine through the darkness.  
Christ, be our light!  
Shine in your Church gathered today.*

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*Longing for peace, our world is troubled.  
Longing for hope, many despair.  
Your word alone has power to save us.  
Make us your living voice.  
Christ, be our light...*

*Longing for food, many are hungry.  
Longing for water, many still thirst.  
Make us your bread, broken for others,  
shared until all are fed.  
Christ, be our light...*

*Longing for shelter, many are homeless.  
Longing for warmth, many are cold.  
Make us your building, sheltering others,  
walls made of living stone.  
Christ, be our light...*

*Many the gifts, many the people,  
many the hearts that yearn to belong.  
Let us be servants to one another,  
making your kingdom come.  
Christ, be our light...*

## **Bible Reading: Isaiah 42 : 6-7**

*I, the Lord, have called you in righteousness;  
I will take hold of your hand.  
I will keep you and will make you  
to be a covenant for the people  
and a light for the Gentiles,  
to open eyes that are blind,  
to free captives from prison  
and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness.*

## **Bible Reading: Matthew 5 : 13 - 20**

### **Salt and Light**

*You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.  
You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.*

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Our Old Testament reading this morning speaks of the coming of the Messiah, a light to the Gentiles who were in the dark as to the true knowledge of God and by Jesus ministry he was a light to them in their understanding and in their lives.

In our Gospel reading we hear Jesus declare "you are the salt of the earth needed for good health but useless if it loses its flavour". Then Jesus says that we are the light of the world. As Christians our job description is more than personal holiness but to touch the lives of everyone around us. Our light is not just by our words but by our actions in humility and for peace,

When we live as people of blessing, we are salt and light in our work place, our homes and in our nation.

This last year has been a difficult time for everyone of all ages from preparing last March for our first lockdown; at that time we really knew nothing about the pandemic but had no real idea of the all the implications that this would bring to us.

Since then we have been in tiers and lockdowns, churches schools and businesses have been open then closed and we are urged to stay at home.

Easter came and went and all faiths had their celebrations cancelled. Folk had their shopping slots and shopped on line.

Strange times but amidst the chaos light shone out in other ways.

Our Church buildings were closed but we the church were still active in different ways we worshipped and met on Zoom. We kept in touch with each other, the volunteers continued the Food Bank, we sent messages to each other and there was always that friends who searched daily to send us jokes to keep us smiling. We got in touch with friends we hadn't seen for years.

And then the late Captain Tom raised money for the NHS, and Footballer Marcus Rashford, having lived through hunger himself, raised awareness of the shortage of food for children.

This year we learned of the vaccine being produced and the talk in Government was there was light at the end of the tunnel.

As people waited for the vaccine they chatted and supported total strangers.

These last few weeks have also seen Holocaust Memorial Day, remembering the dreadful loss of so many and remembering all the rest of the tragic times and dark times that we've had over the years.

Just as Moses and the light of the burning bush lead his people from darkness of slavery to the light of a new life in a new country, not without its struggles, so the survivors never gave up hope that God was with them and they could see

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God's light through all their suffering. Some years ago, I was quite privileged to be able to sit with a lady and hear her testimony

She was a lovely lady, a very cheerful lady and a very grateful lady for anything anyone did for her. She was very young when she survived the Holocaust and she told me that she thanks God every day of her life for her life and her family. Her faith is strong as ever and it shines out.

We also mourned the huge and sad loss of so many people in the Pandemic. This pandemic affects the whole world; but we know now that there is the light at the end of the long tunnel thanks to the brilliant work of our scientists and the vaccine coming. God has led the people once again to a new life, a different kind of living just like he led Moses.

The darkness of winter is fading now, and the light of spring is coming into our lives again, showing that there are new shoots appearing bringing new beginnings, new life, new hope.

And this last week we celebrated Candlemas, remembering the joy of Anna and Simeon recognising the baby Jesus when he was presented in the Temple. They had dedicated their lives to God and were rewarded in seeing the light of the World.

For each of these occasions we lit candles the light shining out in the darkness in remembrance and in hope, although we had to do it remotely. But we knew that collectively our light was shining out in love and hope for our world.

As followers of the Light of the World we too must shine into the lives of others lifting them up supporting them and walking along side of them in their dark times. We are here to hold the Christ light for them in the night-time of their fear. Amen.

## **Hymn: When We Walk With The Lord**

*When we walk with the Lord  
In the light of his word,  
What a glory he sheds on our way!  
While we do his good will,  
He abides with us still  
And with all who will trust and obey:*

*Trust and obey,  
For there's no other way  
To be happy with Jesus,  
But to trust and obey.*

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*Not a burden we bear,  
Not a sorrow we share,  
But our toil he doth richly repay;  
Not a grief nor a loss,  
Not a frown nor a cross,  
But is blest if we trust and obey:  
Trust and obey...*

*But we never can prove  
The delights of his love  
Until all on the altar we lay;  
For the favour he shows,  
And the joy he bestows,  
Are for them who will trust and obey:  
Trust and obey...*

*Then in fellowship sweet  
We will sit at his feet,  
Or we'll walk by side in the way;  
What e says we will do,  
Where he sends we will go -  
Never fear, only trust and obey:  
Trust and obey...*

## **Prayer of Intercession**

Loving God we give thanks that wherever we are and whatever we do you walk with us.

You know our worries and our fears our joys and our sorrows.

You call us to speak to you in prayer- even when the places we would usually go to are not available.

Help us to know you Spirit's presence wherever we pray.

Today we especially pray for those who are living in fear may you give them your strength.

For those who have not yet realised the urgency of the health situation may you protect them, and all of us from harm.

Today we especially want to pray for those who are lonely, those who are sick and those who are grieving  
that they may all feel your love and peace.

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For those who work to care for others at this difficult time and all who work to keep our community safe and for those who keep our city functioning and safe for those who keep us supplied with food and necessities.

We especially pray for families home schooling and balancing so much in the home, may they find inner strength in you.

May they and we find peace and Hope.

In the name of Jesus.

As we deal with the day to day practicalities of protecting each other from coronavirus may we remember Our Calling is to care for each other. We are a people of hope and we called to love and bring that Hope to those in our lives in these difficult days.

May we find our strength in you to fulfil our calling to love and care for all.  
Amen.

## **Hymn: Take My Life And Let It Be**

*Take my life, and let it be  
consecrated, Lord, to thee;  
take my moments and my days,  
let them flow in ceaseless praise.*

*Take my hands, and let them move  
at the impulse of thy love;  
take my feet, and let them be  
swift and beautiful for thee.*

*Take my voice, and let me sing  
always, only, for my King;  
take my lips, and let them be  
filled with messages from thee.*

*Take my silver and my gold,  
not a mite would I withhold;  
take my intellect, and use  
every power as thou shalt choose.*

*Take my will, and make it thine;  
it shall be no longer mine;  
take my heart - it is thine own;  
it shall be thy royal throne.*

*Take my love; my Lord, I pour  
at thy feet its treasure-store;  
take myself, and I will be*

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*ever, only, all for thee.*

So I thank you all for worshipping with us together, it makes us connected. And so we will have a sung blessing.

Go in peace.

Light of the World - Tim Hughes

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Longing For Light - Bernadette Farrell

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