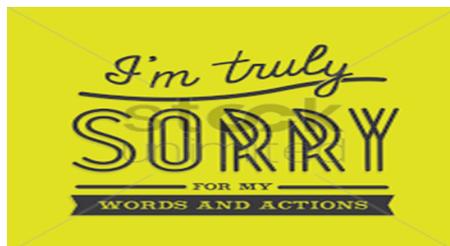


**East Durham Methodist Circuit:**  
**Online Service for 16th May 2021**

**Prepared by Rev Dawn Brown and Heidi Ure**

**Theme: I'm Sorry, Lord**



**Welcome and Opening Prayer:**

King of all the earth, Creator of the universe, Holy Triune God, from everlasting to everlasting, you are Lord. You are merciful and full of loving-kindness and great compassion.

We will rejoice, for your grace O Lord has overflowed for us. You have washed us thoroughly from our wickedness and cleansed us from our sin.

We will rejoice, for your grace, O Lord, has overflowed for us. Against you alone have we sinned and to you alone we look for restoration.

We will rejoice, for your grace, O Lord, has overflowed for us. Who is like our God, the One who takes away the iniquity of His people, the One who gives them clean hearts and right spirits?

We will rejoice, for your grace, O Lord, has overflowed for us. This is our God, the Holy One. Come before him with thanksgiving and offer him the sacrifice of praise. **Amen**

**Hymn:            **Only by Grace**            Gerrit Gustafson            **Stf 565****

Only by grace can we enter  
Only by grace can we stand  
Not by our human endeavour  
But by the blood of the Lamb  
Into Your presence You call us  
You call us to come  
Into Your presence You draw us  
And now by Your grace we come  
Now by Your grace we come

Lord if You mark our transgressions  
Who could stand?  
Thanks to Your grace we are cleansed  
By the blood of the Lamb.  
Lord if You mark our transgressions  
Who could stand?  
Thanks to Your grace we are cleansed  
By the blood of the Lamb.

**Repeat**

**Prayers of adoration and confession:**

Have mercy upon us, O God, according to your loving kindness. In your great compassion blot out our offences.

Wash me through and through from my wickedness and cleanse me from my sins, for I know my transgressions, and my sins are ever before me.

Against you only have we sinned and done what is evil in your sight. So you are justified when you speak and upright in all your judgments. Purge us from our sins, and we shall be pure. Wash us, and we shall be clean indeed. Hide your face from our sins and blot out all our iniquities. Create in us a clean heart and renew in us a right spirit, O Lord.

Give to us the joy of your saving help again and sustain us with your bountiful spirit. Open my lips, O God and my mouth shall declare your praise.

Lord God, you are the one who forgives us and teaches us what is right and shows us the way we should go. You are the one who provides us with all that we need and protects all those who call upon your name. Help us O God to remember your unfailing love, to give thanks for your forgiveness and your mercy and to rely upon your saving and healing power. For these and all our blessings, help us now to praise you with thankful and contrite hearts, we ask this in Jesus' name. **Amen**

And now let us say together the prayer that Jesus taught us:

**Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.  
Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done - on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses,  
As we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the Kingdom, the power and the glory,  
For ever and ever. **Amen****

**Hymn:            The Power of Your Love            Geoff Bullock            StF 471**

1. Lord I come to You  
Let my heart be changed, renewed  
Flowing from the grace  
That I've found in You  
Lord I've come to know  
The weaknesses I see in me  
Will be stripped away  
By the power of Your love

**Hold me close  
Let Your love surround me  
Bring me near  
Draw me to Your side  
And as I wait  
I'll rise up like the eagle  
And I will soar with You  
Your Spirit leads me on  
In the power of Your love**

2. Lord unveil my eyes  
Let me see You face to face  
The knowledge of Your love  
As You live in me  
Lord renew my mind  
As Your will unfolds in my life  
In living every day  
By the power of Your love

**Hold me close  
Let Your love surround me  
Bring me near  
Draw me to Your side  
And as I wait  
I'll rise up like the eagle  
And I will soar with You  
Your Spirit leads me on  
In the power of Your love**

**Reading:**

**Mark 1: 1-5 and 14 – 15**

New International Version

<sup>1</sup> The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God <sup>2</sup> as it is written in Isaiah the prophet:

“I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way” <sup>3</sup> “a voice of one calling in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’”

<sup>4</sup> And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>5</sup> The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River.

**And**

<sup>14</sup> After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. <sup>15</sup> “The time has come,” he said. “The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!”

**Hymn: Lord, I need You**

Matt G Maher, Jesse P Reeves, Daniel Carson, Christy Nockels, Kristian P Stanfill

1. Lord I come, I confess  
Bowing here, I find my rest  
Without You, I fall apart  
You're the one that guides my heart

**Lord, I need You, oh I need You**  
**Every hour, I need You**  
**My one defense, my righteousness**  
**Oh God, how I need You**

2. Where sin runs deep, Your grace is more  
Where grace is found is where You are  
And where You are, Lord I am free  
Holiness is Christ in me

**Lord, I need You, oh I need You...**

3. So teach my song to rise to You  
When temptation comes my way  
And when I cannot stand, I'll fall on You  
Jesus, You're my hope and stay

**Lord, I need You, oh I need You...**

**Reading: Psalm 51**

New International Version

**For the director of music. A psalm of David. When the prophet Nathan came to him after David had committed adultery with Bathsheba.**

<sup>1</sup> Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions.

<sup>2</sup> Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. <sup>3</sup> For I know my transgressions and my sin is always before me.

<sup>4</sup> Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight; so you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge.

<sup>5</sup> Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me. <sup>6</sup> Yet you desired faithfulness even in the womb; you taught me wisdom in that secret place.

<sup>7</sup> Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.

<sup>8</sup> Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice. <sup>9</sup> Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity.

<sup>10</sup> Create in me a pure heart, O God and renew a steadfast spirit within me. <sup>11</sup> Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. <sup>12</sup> Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.

<sup>13</sup> Then I will teach transgressors your ways, so that sinners will turn back to you

<sup>14</sup> Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, you who are God my Saviour and my tongue will sing of your righteousness.

<sup>15</sup> Open my lips, Lord and my mouth will declare your praise. <sup>16</sup> You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings.

<sup>17</sup> My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart you, God, will not despise.

<sup>18</sup> May it please you to prosper Zion, to build up the walls of Jerusalem. <sup>19</sup> Then you will delight in the sacrifices of the righteous, in burnt offerings offered whole; then bulls will be offered on your altar.

**Hymn:      Just as I am, without one plea**

Charlotte Elliott

**H&P 697**

1. Just as I am, without one plea  
but that you died to set me free,  
and at your bidding 'Come to me!'  
O Lamb of God, I come.

4. Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind!  
Sight, riches, healing of the mind  
all that I need, in you to find:  
O Lamb of God, I come.

2. Just as I am, without delay  
your call of mercy I obey  
your blood can wash my sins away:  
O Lamb of God, I come.

5. Just as I am! You will receive,  
will welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve:  
because your promise I believe,  
O Lamb of God, I come.

3. Just as I am, though tossed about  
with many a conflict, many a doubt,  
fightings within and fears without,  
O Lamb of God, I come.

6. Just as I am! Your love unknown  
has broken every barrier down:  
now to be yours, yes, yours alone,  
O Lamb of God, I come.

**Message:    I'm Sorry, BUT....**

I always struggle with the word, Sorry.

What am I sorry about? Sorry I was caught? Or sorry I was not that good at hiding what I have done? Or am I really truly sorry for what I have done and the ripple effect it has on my life and the lives of others.

How many times have you heard an empty apology?

I often say to my boys: 'Sorry' does not push the 'shopping' trolley.



It's a decision that needs to be made and it means nothing if it does not come from the heart. If a trolley is not directed correctly, it can cause a major disaster.

Our Psalm, written by David, comes from a man who has been brought down to his knees, his heart and life is broken and he knows he needs to do something. Because disaster has enfolded his life.

King David gives us a picture of true repentance. David loved God, but that doesn't mean he didn't sin. David prays after having an affair with a married woman, getting her pregnant, and having her husband killed to try and hide it.

What made David "a man after God's own heart"? It was his repentance, not his perfection.

David doesn't just say, "I'm sorry." He means it. He pleads with God to have mercy on him. He acknowledges and feels the weight of his sins, which is always before him. When we're really sorry, we acknowledge our wrongdoing without making excuses. Owning the wrongdoing for ourselves and sincerely seeking forgiveness.

When we are truly repentant, we want to learn and grow from our mistakes. David begs God to change His heart and restore their relationship: "Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit to sustain me", as written in verses 10 - 12 of the Psalm.

David also emphasizes that without a repentant heart, even his good works would mean nothing. We might be able to pretend we are sorry for a while, but eventually, our real feelings always show. We can only hide for a while.

In order for new attitudes and actions to last, we have to start with a change of heart. In our Gospel Reading, John the Baptist, was proclaiming to the people that if they would repent, to change the direction of their lives, God would forgive their sins.

We have a very different understanding of forgiveness than God does. We understand forgiveness as excusing someone for a fault or an offence against us.

For God, forgiveness is all of this, but so much more. For God, forgiveness is the casting away of our sins. God removes our sins completely, God is able to forget it ever happened. We may forgive someone, but we can never forget the pain they caused, the tears you shed, the hopes that were crushed. But God forgives and forgets. God allows us a fresh new start, God keeps no records of our sins. Having confessed our sins and 'repented' we have turned around and re-directed our lives back to our Father.

Jesus himself in our Gospel reading, tell us to repent and believe the GOOD NEWS. When our hearts are aligned with God's, our actions will be too. And when that happens, God works through us to share His message of salvation with others and His Kingdom will come.

My Friends, sometimes it's easier to ignore a problem than to address it. So like David, is there any sin in your life that you are trying to cover up with busyness or good works?

When was the last time you asked God to change your heart or give you a fresh perspective? Take a few minutes to ask God to show you anywhere your heart is not aligned with His. You might need some time - make the time for God to heal you.

Remember Jesus' words to us: The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!" It begins by turning around and following him, owning our sin and truly repenting.

Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me and heal me, I am truly sorry **Amen**

### **Prayers of Intercession:**

Have mercy on us, O God, according to your loving kindness; in your great compassion, hear our prayers.

We pray for the whole church, all leaders and ministers and all the holy people of God.

Wash us through and through and cleanse us from our sin.

We pray for our nation, for all the nations of the earth and for all who govern and judge. Purge us from our sin. And we shall be pure.

We pray for those who hunger, those who thirst, those who cry out for justice, those who live under the threat of terror and those without a place to lay their head. Make them hear of joy and gladness, that those who are broken may rejoice.

We pray for those who are ill, those in pain, those under stress and those who are lonely. Give them the joy of your saving help and sustain them with your bountiful Spirit.

We pray for those who prepare for baptism and we pray that we all might be given the grace and strength to repent and grow closer to you, O God. Create in us clean hearts, O God and renew a right spirit within us.

We pray for those who have died and who have entered into the land of eternal Light and your abiding peace. Cast them not away from your presence and take not your Holy Spirit from them.

Lord Jesus, it was your will that your Father's House would be a place of prayer for all people; grant us the strength and wisdom to be a people consumed with prayer and zeal for you, this day and always. **Amen**

