

Church at home

East Leake Methodist Church 2021

Sit comfortably in a quiet place and prepare, start with a brief period of silence, turning your mind and spirit towards God. You may want to have a cross or candle in view as a focus.

Theme: Wisdom from God

Welcome:

**Father, as we prepare to come together
we thank you for your gift of life.
As we prepare to share in worship together
we thank you for the life that Jesus brings.
As we prepare to draw near to your throne
cleanse our hearts and minds:
that as we come together in Jesus' name
we may know the guiding presence of your Spirit.
Amen.**

Call Psalm 111 StF826

- 1 Alleluia. I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart,
in the company of the faithful and in the congregation.
- 2 The works of the Lord are great, sought out by all who delight in them.
- 3 **His work is full of majesty and honour
and his righteousness endures for ever.**
- 4 He appointed a memorial for his marvellous deeds;
the Lord is gracious and full of compassion.
- 5 **He gave food to those who feared him;
he is ever mindful of his covenant.**

- 6 He showed his people the power of his works
in giving them the heritage of the nations.
- 7 **The works of his hands are truth and justice;
all his commandments are sure.**
- 8 They stand fast for ever and ever; they are done in truth and equity.
- 9 **He sent redemption to his people; he commanded his covenant for ever;
holy and awesome is his name.**
- 10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;
a good understanding have those who live by it;
his praise endures for ever.

Worship:

[Hymn: Great are you Lord](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tv4Qgd3I57c>

Prayer of adoration

All-gracious God,
By your creative word you brought the world to birth;
In your generous love you made the human family,
that we might see your glory
and live forever in your presence.

This gift is so great and so wonderful.
Help us to ever remember
that this gift is not just for us,
but for all people;
not for us to give,
but for all to receive.

May your generous love be known in us,
that we may share the richness we already know,
in Jesus Christ our Saviour, **Amen.**

[Hymn: I've filled my day with details](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ay03Z6U4Y70>

Prayers: Thanksgiving, Confession

Loving God,
you have made a wonderful world,
full of plants that heal us, feed us and offer us beauty.
Thank you God, for all your gifts.
You have made a wonderful family,
full of people with different gifts, abilities and beauty.
Thank you God, for all your gifts.
You have made a wonderful church,
full of music, reflection, laughter and beauty.
Thank you God, for all your gifts.
You have given us Jesus Christ
full of love, generosity, holy anger and beauty.
Thank you God, for all your gifts.
You have given us the Holy Spirit
to fill our lives with love, courage, inspiration and beauty.
Thank you God, for all your gifts.
In the name of Christ,
Amen.

Loving God,
we respond to your amazing love
by serving you in all that we do.

But sometimes we feel tired
and when we do,
we ask that you will refresh us.
Sometimes we feel we have let you down
and when we do,
we ask that you will pick us up.
Sometimes we feel we have disowned you
and when we do,
we ask that you will put your gentle arms of love around us.
Then, when we are refreshed,
picked up and helped by you,
Lord, send us out into the community
to continue to serve you
in response to your amazing love. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

**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: God our Father](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EvF38rVh-sY>

[Word: Readings: 1 Kings 2:10-12; 3:3-14](#)

¹⁰ Then David slept with his ancestors, and was buried in the city of David. ¹¹ The time that David reigned over Israel was forty years; he reigned for seven years in Hebron, and thirty-three years in Jerusalem. ¹² So Solomon sat on the throne of his father David; and his kingdom was firmly established.

³ Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of his father David; only, he sacrificed and offered incense at the high places. ⁴ The king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the principal high place; Solomon used to offer a thousand burnt-offerings on that altar. ⁵ At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, 'Ask what I should give you.' ⁶ And Solomon said, 'You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart towards you; and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love, and have given him a son to sit on his throne today. ⁷ And now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. ⁸ And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people, so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. ⁹ Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil; for who can govern this your great people?' ¹⁰ It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. ¹¹ God said to him, 'Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches, or for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, ¹² I now do according to your word. Indeed I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you and no one like you shall arise after you. ¹³ I give you also what you have not asked, both riches and honour all your life; no other king shall compare with you. ¹⁴ If you will walk in my ways, keeping my statutes and my commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your life.'

Sermon: Wisdom of Solomon Witness:

Knowledge is knowing a tomato is a fruit, wisdom is not putting them under crumble with custard. A similar thing could be said of vegetables in cakes, but we'll not go there.

Wisdom, according to the dictionary, is the [ability](#) to use [your knowledge](#) and [experience](#) to make good [decisions](#) and [judgments](#).

Around 100 million years ago, humans walked on all fours and had large jaws. As it turns out, this vast jaw could accommodate 32 teeth easily; we still develop up to 32 teeth today, but the wisdom teeth either don't manifest or need to be removed if they do because they may complicate breathing and other critical human activities. Our ancestors used the four wisdom teeth to chew and grind leaves and roots. But after a mutation fashioned smaller jaws, brains started growing bigger and mankind began cooking and using cooking instruments like fire to soften food, making the third molars less required. Or at least that's how scientists believe it happened!

They are called wisdom teeth because of the belief of the connection between brain size and the ability to use intelligence and knowledge wisely. Having worked at LU for 27 years I can tell you there is no link at all between accumulated knowledge and the ability to make a sensible decision.

We all have knowledge and we all have experience, but tying the two together into a rational resolution for the benefit of all is a rare and infrequent occurrence. You need only look towards our government to have that ratified as fact. Although our leader's choices can have major consequences, we, individually are not shielded from acts of stupidity based on knowledge and experience. I once had a tattoo with the name of my 1st wife on it, knowing full well: 1 - it hurts, 2 – it's expensive and 3 – the tattoo will last for ever!

After King David died Solomon became king, and in true human and normal tradition he either had killed or exiled anyone who could be a threat to his throne, including his half-brothers and priests. He took an Egyptian wife to make friends with Pharaoh and started to build the Temple. He wanted to please God and follows God's ways as his father had.

Gibeon: The remains of Gibeon are located on the southern edge of the [Palestinian](#) village of [al-Jib](#) north of Jerusalem. It's a huge mound off the 436 to Menahem and as there is little vegetation, there must be astounding views of the whole area from the top.

This is where Solomon went to give sacrifices to the Lord. A thousand burnt sacrifices. But God didn't appear during the sacrifices.

God's laws said that the Israelites could make sacrifices only in specific places. This was to prevent the people from instituting their own methods of worship and allowing Pagan practices to creep into their worship. But many Israelites,

including Solomon, made sacrifices in the sounding hills. Solomon loved God, but his act was sinful. It took the offerings out of the watchful care of priests and minister loyal to God and opened the way for false teaching to be tied to these sacrifices.

God appeared to Solomon to grant him wisdom, but at night in a dream, not during the sacrifices. God honoured his prayers but did not condone the sacrifice.

God's offer of anything was a bit 'gene in the bottle giving three wishes'. *'Ask what I should give you'*. Solomon must have thought he struck gold! However, he was already quite wise to realise he was young and too inexperienced to rule the nation of Israel. Position and power he now had but experience and discernment was what he lacked. So that is what he asked for: *Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil; for who can govern this your great people?*

Because he had put his God first and his people next, God granted him great wisdom and riches and honour, and a long life. You have to think though that wise choices are likely to lead to good health, wealth and happiness. With God's gift of wisdom Solomon led a righteous life, ruled the nation of Israel, built the Temple of Jerusalem, wrote Ecclesiastes and Song of song as well as many of the proverbs and a couple of Psalms.

His only real weakness was for marrying pagan women and allowing them to influence his loyalty to God. Just because you can marry someone, doesn't mean you should. Generally speaking King Solomon is remembered as a great and wise King and a great man of God.

It would be great to think that the first thing people in power asked for is wisdom. Prime Ministers, Multinational CEOs, Methodist Conference Presidents and the like, could all benefit from thinking of God first, the people second and themselves last. This is the way we are taught by Jesus and with wisdom, it is the better way, the happier way and the loving way. And we can lean on the Spirit for help, discernment and wisdom.

As Charles Wesley puts it:

*Happy are they who wisdom gain,
thrice happy who that quest retain;
they own, and shall for ever own,
wisdom, and Christ, and heaven are one.*

Amen.

[Hymn: StF 500 Happy are they who find the grace,](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9g2SyzZpL0w>

Prayers: Intercession

As children of the kingdom

Let us make our prayers to the eternal God who loves us.

We pray for your kingdom to come in the worldwide communities of those who believe in Jesus Christ - May our lives enthrone him

Spirit of the living God

May your kingdom come

We pray for your kingdom to come in the nations of the world and in their leadership;

For God's values to take root and grow

For each person to be respected as a beloved child of God.

Spirit of the living God

May your kingdom come

We pray for your kingdom to come in our homes and families, our neighbourhoods and places of work, in all thinking, all speaking and all action.

Spirit of the living God

May your kingdom come

We pray for your kingdom to come in all hospitals and surgeries, and in every place of pain and sadness.

Spirit of the living God

May your kingdom come

We pray for your kingdom to come in the final stages of earthly life, in the journey through death, and in the awakening to eternal life.

Spirit of the living God

May your kingdom come

We thank you for making us, and redeeming us, opening wide to us the gates of heaven.

Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your son our saviour, Jesus Christ. **Amen**

[Hymn: StF 545 Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x3jtklzbApA>

Blessing and Grace: Ephesians 5: 15-20

¹⁵ Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people but as wise,

¹⁶ making the most of the time, because the days are evil.

¹⁷So do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts, ²⁰giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

May the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,

The love of God,

And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,

Be with us all, ever more. Amen.