

Stokesley Methodist Church



Sunday 13th May, 2018

Welcome to Worship

10.30am Morning Worship led Arthur Noble

6.00pm Town Close with Rev Andrew Robinson

A Gathering Prayer from the Roots Resources

Called together, we gather to worship, greater than the sum of the parts:

together supporting, protecting and upholding each other;
bound together by our truth, our faith, our belief in God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Bless us, God, as we worship, as we pray, praise and sing, as we read, hear, learn, as we grow and share.

Bless us, God.

Lord God, we cannot fathom the height and the depth and the breadth of your being, and yet, if we hold fast to your truth, revealed in Jesus Christ, we shall see more clearly and know more surely that you are our God.

Amen.

Lectionary Readings:

Acts 1 v15-17, 21-26 Matthias Chosen to Replace Judas

"Then they prayed, 'Lord, you know everyone's heart. Show us which of these two you have chosen to take over this apostolic ministry ...'"

Psalm 1

"Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked ... He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season."

1 John 5 v9-13 Faith in the Son of God

"He who has the Son has life ..."

John 17 v6-19 Jesus Prays for His Disciples

"While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me.... My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one."

Jesus' Prayer

Before his arrest, Jesus prays for his disciples that they may be one as he is one with the Father. He asks that they may be protected from the evil one, and sanctified in the truth.

When you were a child you probably played tag with your friends. One person is picked to be "it." The other children run away from the person who is "it", trying not to get caught. When the person who is "it" is able to catch and touch (tag) another player, then that person becomes "it."

A relay race is a race in which team members tag each other with a baton. The first runner starts the race, running as fast as he or she can. At a certain mark on the race track, the first runner passes a baton or tags the next runner, who runs until it is time to

pass the baton or tag the next team member. This continues until a runner from one of the teams reaches the finish line.

You may have seen a similar thing happen at the start of the Olympic Games. A torch is held high above the head of a runner. The torch is passed from runner to runner as it travels through the towns and villages of the country in which the Olympic Games are held.

Before Jesus returned to be with God he spoke with God, in the form of a prayer, and said, **“As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world”** (17:18).

Jesus is speaking about his disciples and all of us who want to follow him and learn about his teachings. Jesus prays to God in this way: I came into the world to tell others about your love and now my disciples must carry on.

Popsicle is a brand name in the U.S. The patent has been sold; the frozen treat on a stick may be known by a different name in other countries.

Have you ever enjoyed a Popsicle treat? That’s a fun thing to do, especially on a warm summer day.

Would it surprise you to know that an eleven year old boy invented the Popsicle? The boy was stirring a fruit-flavoured powder into a cup of water with a stick. He left the mixture out on the porch overnight and the next morning he found that what he had blended together was frozen to the stick. He tasted it and found that he liked it. He made more and shared them with his friends. When he was an adult he remembered that special treat and began making Popsicles and selling them. Millions and millions of Popsicles have been sold since that time.

Having a frozen treat on a hot summer day is enjoyable, but it is joy that doesn’t last. When we eat the last bite of a Popsicle we

have only the stick left; just as if we leave a Popsicle out of the freezer it melts and is gone.

In our lesson for today Jesus talks about joy that lasts. He says, **“I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them.”** (17:13).

Jesus offers us his Spirit of Love which stays with us always. His love causes us to feel joy that is complete - gives us what we need to feel satisfied.

Who will testify to the truth of the resurrection of Jesus and his gospel? In the Gospel reading, it is Jesus himself who has made God known in the world; now it is the disciples who must continue it. In Acts, Matthias joins the twelve to continue their mission; and in 1 John, the author claims that he has received God’s testimony that he now passes on.

We are disciples of Jesus. We are asked to touch others with God’s love; to pass on the baton and the torch of love. Tag, you’re it!

Sending Out Prayer

As we leave this sacred space and take ourselves and your truth, O God, into the secular, messy, mixed-up world:
be our strength and our guide.

Amen.