



The Central Norfolk Methodist Circuit

Sunday 14th September 2025: 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Theme for today is "Searching and finding"

Prepared by Mrs Avril Temple

Opening Words

Mighty God we have gathered once again to worship you. You are with us every moment of the day, your hand upon us, your arms around us. Open our hearts to your presence now. **Amen.**

Hymn STF 36 There's a quiet understanding.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PPUIaYanq9Q>

There's a quiet understanding
When we're gathered in the Spirit
It's a promise that He gives us
When we gather in His name
There's a love we feel in Jesus
There's a manna that He feeds us
It's a promise that He gives us
When we gather in His name

And we know when we're together
Sharing love and understanding
That our brothers and our sisters
Feel the oneness that He brings

Thank You, thank You, thank You, Jesus
For the way You love and feed us
For the many ways You lead us
Thank You, thank You, Lord
Thank You, thank You, Lord
Thank You, thank You, Lord

Prayer

Living and gracious God, we offer you our praise and worship, seeking your mercy and guidance. Whether we are in church, chapel or at home may we offer to you all that we are today, rejoicing in all that you have given us. Thank you for your creation, for family, friends and friends in our Christian community. **Amen.**

Almighty God, as we pray, we acknowledge that we make mistakes. We remain silent when we should speak up for you. We at times follow our own way and fail to listen to you. Forgive us, for upon your forgiveness we depend. We ask our prayers through Jesus Christ, your son and our saviour. **Amen.**

Hymn STF 323 I will sing the wondrous story

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HQLLcxbOH4A>

I will sing the wondrous story
Of the Christ who died for me
How He left the realms of glory
For the cross of Calvary

*Yes, I'll sing the wondrous story
Of the Christ who died for me
Sing it with the saints in glory
Gathered by the crystal sea*

I was lost, but Jesus found me
Found the sheep that went astray
Raised me up and gently led me
Back into the narrow way

Yes, I'll sing the wondrous story

He will keep me 'til the river
Rolls its waters at my feet
Then at last He'll bring me over
Saved by grace and victory

*Yes, I'll sing the wondrous story
Of the Christ who died for me
Sing it with the saints in glory
Gathered by the crystal sea*



Reflection

Can you recall a time when you lost something precious, or perhaps you got lost, driving down country lanes where signposts are few. Today with Sat Nav it's less likely to happen. I do have a Sat Nav, but much prefer a map. (One of my favourite books is a World Atlas with very detailed maps)

I can recall all too vividly when I took my God daughter and her mother to King's Lynn. While shopping for a new winter coat for her mother, she disappeared. Shop assistants looked everywhere with us, even out in the street. It was only a few minutes before she was found, hiding behind a rack of long coats up against a wall. The relief was enormous, but it proved to me that you can't take your eyes off a four-year-old even for a nanosecond.

In this reading from Luke Jesus tells a parable about a sheep who wanders away and gets lost. The shepherd leaves the other 99 and goes to find her. Jesus follows this up with a parable about a woman who loses a silver coin. One tenth of most probably her wedding dowry, the coins were often worn on the forehead, held in place by a head covering. She too searches high and low.

In Sunday School we sang a chorus, 'She lost it, she lost it, that little piece of silver wherever could it be? Under the carpet, down by the door, into the cupboards, all over the floor. She found it, she found it, how happy she would be and happy all the children found by thee.' (With appropriate actions of course)

In the parables great celebration and rejoicing happens when that which is lost is found. Jesus said there is joy in heaven when one sinner repents and returns to God. There is misery in being lost but there is joy in being found.

God is always searching for us, waiting to rejoice in our homecoming whoever we are.

The religious leaders and teachers in our reading really resented the fact that Jesus spent time with those on the edge of society. The neglected, those who had made mistakes and those who felt themselves to be lost. Jesus however teaches that we are all worth searching for. God longs to find us and spend time with us.

- Do we sometimes hide from God, make ourselves unavailable?
- Do we sometimes think that we don't need God and go our own way?

But God never gives up on us. God searches for each of us. We are all precious to Him. As the shepherd searched for the sheep, like the lady turning her home upside down to find her coin, God comes to find us because He has a lasting and unrelenting love for each and every one. He gave His son Jesus Christ to die on the cross to save us all.

Thank you, God, for searching for us, lifting us up and carrying us home.

Hymn STF 466

Have faith in God, my heart <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=siDkWdf7MP8>

Have faith in God, my heart,
Trust and be unafraid;
God will fulfil in every part
Each promise he has made.

Have faith in God, my soul;
His cross forever stands;
And neither life nor death can pluck
His children from his hands

Have faith in God, my mind
For when your light burns low;
God's mercy holds a wiser plan
Than you can fully know

Lord Jesus, make me whole;
Grant me no resting place,
Until I rest, heart, mind, and soul,
The captive of your grace.

Prayers of intercession

Lord of all, we bring to you the people and family of our churches and circuit, its ministers and office holders, the fellowship we enjoy.

We remember the sick, lonely, anxious and those who are mourning. Lord of all, teach us that you value everyone. Help us to see beyond the barriers that keep us apart.

Lord of all, we bring to you our fractures world broken by wars, injustice, oppression and the poverty and needs of so many. Things we take for granted, food, water and shelter.

Lord of all, we bring to you those who strive to bring justice and peace, the promotion of dialogue and reconciliation. May the fears and suspicions that divide us be overcome. Lord of all, hear our prayers. **Amen**

The Lord's prayer

Hymn STF403 God is Love, his the care,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q2l4wHr6wAc>

God is love: his the care,
tending each, everywhere,
God is love, all is there!
Jesus came to show him,
that we all might know him!

Refrain:

Sing aloud, loud, loud!
sing aloud, loud, loud!
God is good! God is truth!
God is beauty! Praise him!

None can see God above;
neighbours here we can love;
thus may we Godward move,
finding him in others,
sisters all and brothers.

[Refrain]

Blessing

Gracious God, thank you that you search and find us, that we are all precious to you.

As we go into the world help us to walk in your way, matching our steps to yours.

Wherever you lead give us faith and strength to follow.

Amen.

Jesus came, lived and died,
for our sake, crucified,
rose again, glorified;
he was born to save us
by the truth he gave us.

[Refrain]

To our Lord praise we sing,
light and life, friend and King,
coming down, love to bring,
pattern for our duty,
showing God in beauty.

[Refrain]