



NORTH CHESHIRE
METHODIST CIRCUIT

HOME WORSHIP – JULY 2026

HYMN:

Come, you thankful people, come

Singing the Faith 123

Video: <https://bit.ly/STF-123>

Come, you thankful people, come,
raise the song of harvest home!
Fruit and crops are gathered in
safe before the storms begin:

God our maker will provide
for our needs to be supplied;
come, with all his people, come,
raise the song of harvest home!

All the world is God's own field,
harvests for his praise to yield;
wheat and weeds together sown
here for joy or sorrow grown:

first the blade and then the ear,
then the full corn shall appear —
Lord of harvest, grant that we
wholesome grain and pure may be.

For the Lord our God shall come
and shall bring his harvest home;
he himself on that great day,
worthless things shall take away,

give his angels charge at last
in the fire the weeds to cast,
but the fruitful ears to store
in his care for evermore.

Even so, Lord, quickly come —
bring your final harvest home!
Gather all your people in

free from sorrow, free from sin,

there together purified,
ever thankful at your side —
come, with all your angels, come,
bring that glorious harvest home!

OPENING PRAYERS

As you sit here in this space you call
your own ready to meet the living God
remember...

You are connected to people of faith
worshipping in different ways and
places.

You are part of a community of saints
that have worshipped for generations.
You are joined with others across the
world choosing to do the same.

Here in this special space where God
has been for all time you are free to
worship,

So, take a moment and give thanks in
the quiet places of your heart,

For all you have

All you are

And all you might be.

Pause

If you feel able speak the following,
*All I have, all I am and all I might be I
offer to you as I worship – today and
always.*
Amen.

You may now wish to say the **Lord's
Prayer** in a version or translation with
which you are comfortable.

READING

The Parable of the Sower

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea.

Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach.

And he told them many things in parables, saying: "Listen! A sower went out to sow.

And as he sowed, some seeds fell on a path, and the birds came and ate them up.

Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil.

But when the sun rose, they were scorched, and since they had no root, they withered away.

Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them.

Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

If you have ears, hear!

Hear, then, the parable of the sower.

When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path.

As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and

immediately receives it with joy, yet such a person has no root but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away.

As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of this age and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing.

But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.

RESPONDING TO THE READING

Jesus tells a story about a farmer scattering seed. Some falls on the path. Some on rocky ground. Some among thorns. Some on good soil, where it grows and flourishes beyond expectation.

It's tempting to hear this parable as a test: What kind of soil am I? Am I getting it right? Am I fertile enough? Productive enough? Faithful enough? But perhaps there is another way of hearing this story.

Notice how extravagantly the sower scatters the seed. There is no careful measuring, no checking first whether the ground deserves it. The seed falls everywhere: on the receptive and the resistant, on the prepared and the unprepared.

This is what grace looks like.

God's love is not rationed out to those who have earned it. The seeds of hope,

compassion, truth, and transformation are scattered widely and generously.

Again and again, God keeps sowing. At the same time, Jesus invites us to pay attention to the conditions of our own hearts and lives.

There are times when we become like the path: worn down by life, unable to receive anything new. There are times when our enthusiasm springs up quickly but struggles to survive when life becomes difficult.

There are times when the worries of the world, the demands of work, fear about the future, or the pursuit of success choke out what matters most. And there are times when we become good soil, not because we are perfect, but because we have made space for grace to take root.

The encouraging thing is that soil changes: a hard path can be softened, rocky ground can be cleared, thorns can be cut back. This parable is not about labelling people as permanently fruitful or permanently lost. It is about recognising that spiritual growth is a lifelong process.

This passage invites us to resist a culture obsessed with instant results. Seeds grow slowly. Justice unfolds gradually. Compassion deepens over time.

Faith is often less about dramatic moments and more about the daily work of tending the garden of our lives.

So today, you might like to reflect on these questions:

- What kind of soil does your heart most resemble at this point in your life?

- What "thorns" might be crowding out joy, peace, or compassion?
- What practices might help you become more open to the seeds God is continually planting?

And perhaps most importantly, remember this: the sower never stops sowing. Even when we feel distracted. Even when we feel weary. Even when we think we've missed our chance.

God continues to scatter grace with astonishing generosity.

May you trust that seeds of love are being planted within you, may you find the courage to tend them with patience, and may your life bear fruit that brings healing, justice, and hope to the world.

HYMN:

Deep in the shadows of the past

Sing the Faith 463

Video: <https://bit.ly/STF-463>

Deep in the shadows of the past,
far out from settled lands,
some nomads travelled with their God
across the desert sands.

The dawning hope of humankind
by them was sensed and shown:
a promise calling them ahead,
a future yet unknown.

While others bowed to changeless
gods,
they met a mystery,
invisible, without a name:
'I AM WHAT I WILL BE';

and by their tents, around their fires,
in story, song and law,
they praised, remembered, handed on
a past that promised more.

From Exodus to Pentecost
the promise changed and grew,
while some, remembering the past,
recorded what they knew,

or with their letters and laments,
their prophecy and praise,
recovered, kindled and expressed
new hope for changing days.

For all the writings that survived,
for leaders, long ago,
who sifted, copied, and preserved
the Bible that we know,

give thanks, and find its story yet
our promise, strength and call,
the model of emerging faith,
alive with hope for all.

BLESSING

If you need to be comforted this week,
may you find the Spirit of God to hold
you.

If you need to be encouraged, inspired
and challenged, then may you hear the
words of the Christ inviting you to be
uncomfortable, in the service of the
Kingdom.

May you know the Creator God close
by, accepting you, just as you are, we
pray

Amen.

Our thanks to Twelve Baskets, for the
provision of this worship resource for use at
home and in church.

Insert CCLI number:

If you no longer wish to receive these
services, please contact Rae Denley-
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