

know what you want us to do, help us to see and meet the needs of our neighbours. Give us strength and provide us what we need, so that what we do will be fruitful and bring glory to you.

Lord, in your mercy, **Hear our Prayer.**

Lord God, We pray for those who have been suffering from Covid-19. We ask you to ease their pain and heal the damage done to them in body, mind or spirit. Please be present with them through the support of friends and in the care of doctors and nurses, fill them with the warmth of your love now and always. We also pray for those who are unexpectedly mourning the loss of loved ones during the pandemic. We pray for them, to the mercy and protection of God.

Lord, in your mercy, **Hear our Prayer.**

Lord God, we pray for the people of our world who are being marginalized and suffering. Help us to remember those who are weary with the relentless struggle to keep alive; especially those in countries with little governmental stability. Please help those who can never look forward to a good meal and a comfortable bed, and those who barely have the necessities of life. We bring before you those countries and communities that you have placed on our hearts.

Lord, in your Mercy: **Hear our Prayer.**

Father God may the needs of our families, friends and neighbours be made clear to us today, and may we find that in our giving to them we grow closer to you. We thank you for those whose work sustains our country and the community in which we live.

Lord, in your Mercy: **Hear our Prayer.** Amen

Hymn: H&P 10 / StF 57 **Let all the world in every corner sing**

Blessing

May the blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, keep our hearts and minds in his love, now and forever. Amen

This worship sheet was prepared by Pastoral Worker, Tat Cheong Luk

Darlington District Worship at Home

Sunday 1st August 2021



Call to Worship

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever. Let Israel say: "His love endures forever." Let the house of Aaron say: "His love endures forever." Let those who fear the LORD say: "His love endures forever."
(Psalm 118 verses 1 to 4, NIV)

Hymn: H&P 55 / StF 85 **Praise the Lord who reigns above**

Prayers of Adoration, Thanksgiving and Confession

Loving Father, we come together to praise you, to thank you for your goodness and love, to confess our failings and to ask for your forgiveness. We give thanks that, despite not being able to gather in one place, we can share in this act of worship.

We praise you for all your blessings and mercy to us. Your grace, and love, surrounds each one of us. We are all your children, one family that has no divisions in your sight.

We thank you that your love endures even though so often we let you down, turning aside from the path you call us to follow. When we go through times of sadness and difficulty how easily we can doubt your presence at our side. When we enjoy times of happiness, we often forget to give you the glory.

Father, we ask for your forgiveness and are assured that if we do so with sincere hearts we will hear your loving words, "Your sins are forgiven."

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Bible Reading: [Ephesians 4 verses 1 to 16](#)

Hymn: H&P 778 **O God our father, who dost make us one**

Reflection

In the past 2000 years, disunity has always been one of the greatest challenges in churches. In Paul's teaching, unity of church is necessary because church is the body of Christ, which should not be divided. However, in this present crooked and perverse generation, unity of church can hardly be maintained. Therefore, Paul encourages us to "make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.". That is, to make every effort to keep the unity of church.

How could we keep the unity of church? First of all, we should have unity in the way we live. From verse 1 to verse 6, Paul highlights some basic attributes that Christians inherit from God. We should be humble, gentle, patient and bearing with one another in love. We should think of other's need, give priorities to others time and desire.

We may come from different ethnic groups, educated from different culture, living in different environment. If all of us serve the church whole heartedly and put up with others, we will become the witness of Christ and our community will be covered by the love and grace of God. This is the life worthy of the calling we received from God. It is essential for us to maintain our unity that God has given us through his Holy Spirit.

What is the meaning of church unity? Unity does not imply uniformity. It doesn't mean that everyone in the church should think the same, or to act alike. If we look at verse 7 to verse 12, Paul clearly states that God gives different gifts to his disciples, according to the measure of Christ's gift. God gives us ability to serve in church, some are ministers, some are teachers, some are stewards, or caretakers etc. With different gifts inherited from God, all of us work together in

different ministries. No one is more important than any others in the church as all our abilities are God's grace. We are the servant of God and our gifts are used to serve others in the church. We should devote our gifts, helping others grow in ministry and maturity for the benefit of the church. We work together to build the body of Christ, to equip the church to be the church, and make the church what Jesus wants it to be, for the glory of God. This is church unity.

Finally, we look at verse 13 to verse 16. Paul tells us that the ultimate goal for attaining church unity, is for the maturity for the body of Christ. Paul says it is necessary for us to grow into maturity. An immature Christian would not recognise those teaching with impure motive, and will easily be drawn away by false teaching. In contrast, the mature Christian will speak the truth, walk in truth and adhere to truth in a loving way. We would encourage each other, nurture each other, and finally grow together with the love of Jesus. In Christ, we are one family. This is church unity. Together, we will build the body of Christ.

Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

To God the Father who created the world, to God the Son who redeemed the world, to God the Holy Spirit who sustains the world; be all praise and glory now and forever.

Lord God, we pray that all who come into our church may renew their relationship with you. They may find in you rest, peace, strength, grace and most of all your abiding presence. Help us as a church that we may share our faith and the Gospel of Jesus Christ through our fellowship with those we love and live among us.

Lord, in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.'**

Lord God, we pray for our plans that are being made, as we ease our way out from the Covid restrictions. Lord, give us wisdom to