**Home Service Sheet for 1st August 2021              (Prepared by Mrs Sue Wiggins)**

**Call to Worship:                             Psalm 113:1-6**

[1](https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/explore-the-bible/read/eng/NIV/Ps/113/#PSA.113.1!f.1)Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord, you his servants; praise the name of the Lord.

2Let the name of the Lord be praised, both now and for evermore.

3From the rising of the sun to the place where it sets, the name of the Lord is to be praised.

4The Lord is exalted over all the nations, his glory above the heavens.

5Who is like the Lord our God, the One who sits enthroned on high,

6who stoops down to look on the heavens and the earth?

God of love and mercy, You are the one who deserves our praise and thanks. Help us to have some idea of just how wonderful You are as we sing to You. Let us understand something new about You as we come to read and think deeply about Your Word. Prepare our hearts to hear and to learn. Reveal Yourself to us Lord we pray. Amen

**Hymn:                                                From The Sun's Rising** (Graham Kendrick)

<https://youtu.be/LMyXjDAFcqc>

From the sun's rising unto the sun's setting
Jesus our Lord shall be great in the earth
And all earth's kingdoms shall be his dominion
All of creation shall sing of his worth

*Let every heart, every voice*
*Every tongue join with spirits ablaze*
*One in his love, we will circle the world*
*With the song of his praise*
*O, let all his people rejoice*
*And let all the earth hear his voice!*

To every tongue, tribe and nation he sends us
To make disciples to teach and baptise
For all authority to him is given
Now as his witnesses we shall arise

Come let us join with the church from all nations
Cross every border throw wide every door
Workers with him as he gathers his harvest
'til earth's far corners our Saviour adore

**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 that 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.

**Bible Reading:                                2 Samuel 11:1–12:15** (David and Bathsheba)

This story is a well known one. David gave in to temptation, committed adultery with Bathsheba, and then tried to cover up his sin by having Uriah, Bathsheba's husband, killed in battle. How many of God's commandments did David break in this episode in his life?

God, however, had blessed David with Nathan. Nathan's name means gift of God. He was a necessary and helpful gift from God to David. We first hear about Nathan in 2 Samuel 7:1-17 when David wanted to build a temple for God. In verse 3 Nathan tells David to go ahead but he had not consulted God. In verse 4 we read 'That night the word of the Lord came to Nathan ...' and Nathan was obedient to 'report to David all the words of this entire revelation.' (verse 17) So Nathan could make mistakes but he was honest enough to admit them and correct them when God showed him. And David knew this.

Through Nathan, God confronted David with his sin of coveting another man's wife, committing adultery with her, then, after being told she was pregnant, arranging her husband's death in battle when he couldn't get Uriah to sleep with Bathsheba so he would think the child his own. How did Nathan show David the seriousness of what he had done?

With a story about a rich man taking a poorer man's pet sheep to kill to provide dinner for a visitor even though the rich man had plenty of sheep of his own. David was very indignant about the rich man's behaviour and said he deserved to die and should pay fourfold for the sheep he had taken. So Nathan had led David to pronounce judgment against himself.

In confronting David's multiple sin – coveting, lust, theft, adultery and murder – Nathan was able to help David see his own wrongdoing by showing him that he would not have tolerated such actions from anyone else.

In 2 Samuel 11:25, David's response to Uriah's death seems flippant and insensitive. We know how David had grieved deeply for Saul, his enemy. He showed no grief for Uriah, but Uriah's behaviour showed him to be a good man with strong spiritual character. So why this apparent hard heartedness? Because David had become hardened to his own sin.

It is easy to become hardened to sin. The more you try to cover up a sin the more insensitive you become to it. The only way out of the cycle of sin is repentance. Confess your wrong actions to God before you forget they are sins. But Jesus paid the price for our sins. When we return to God, accept His forgiveness and change our ways, He gives us a fresh start.

David's repentance allowed Nathan to comfort him with the reality of God's forgiveness, and at the same time remind him of the painful consequences his sin would bring. David and Bathsheba's child died. David's behaviour made it difficult for him to condemn some behaviour in his own family. We have to accept that our wrongdoings bring consequences. If a court of law finds you guilty you have to pay the price demanded. The important thing is to have your relationship with God restored.

Nathan's approach helps us to judge our actions. How often do we make choices that we would condemn others for making? It is helpful to ask ourselves how God and others see our actions. Unfortunately we have a huge capacity to lie to ourselves. God still provides two safeguards against self deception – His Word and true friends. You are holding God's Word. Let it speak to you about yourself, even if the truth is painful.

If you don't have a friend like Nathan, ask God for one. And ask God to make you a suitable 'Nathan' for someone else to speak God's truth to in love.

**Prayers of Intercession**

Father God, You love us enough to show us where we go wrong. Help us to see our behaviour as You see it. Reveal our sins and bring us back into a right relationship with You. Thank You for the confidence we have in Your forgiveness. David had broken so many of Your commandments yet You forgave him. Nothing can separate us from Your love if we repent and let You change us. Keep us close so that we hear and obey your voice as Nathan did.

Make us Your instruments, Father. All around the world the sun is setting in one place as it rises in another. We are part of a worldwide family singing Your praise and worshipping You. We pray that our family will grow. We pray that Jesus’ Name will be great in the earth and that we will be ready to speak the Gospel whenever and wherever we are able.

Make us Your instruments, Father, to bring comfort for those who are struggling. The sick and grieving, those fighting addictions, people who are in debt, those out of work, those with family problems. Show us where and how we can help.

We pray that decision-makers, local, national and international, will focus on the best way forward and not be distracted into criticising one another. Help those in power to see the world as You see it and let that view influence their actions. Amen

**Blessing**May each one of us know God's forgiveness and love as we forgive and love those around us. Let us walk in Christ's footsteps remembering how He taught us to live. Amen.