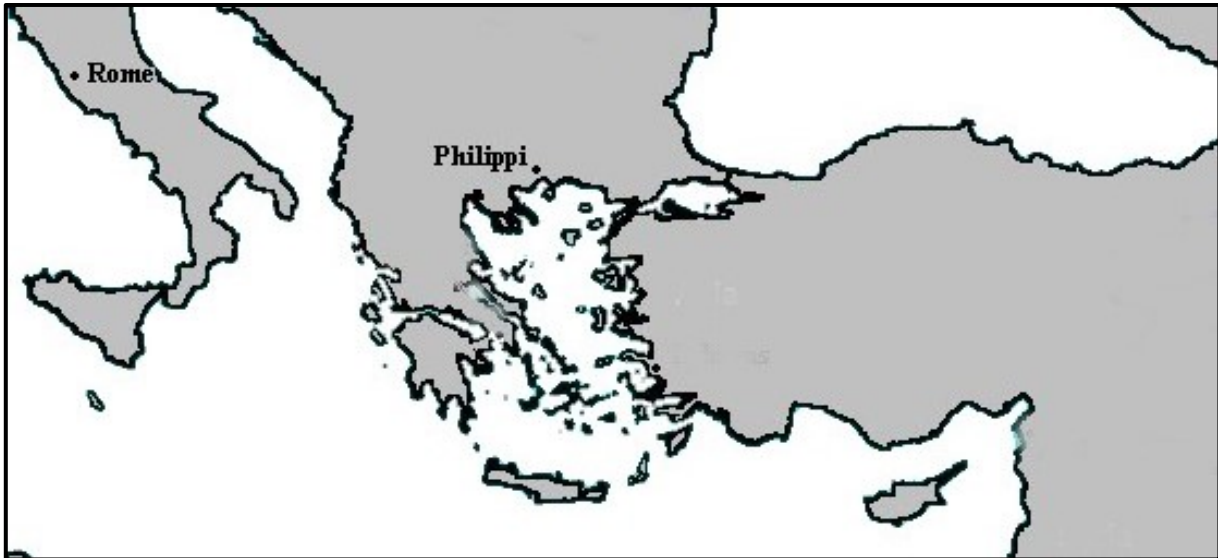


# A meditation on St. Paul's letter to the Philippians in the style of Taizé



## Introduction

*Paul's ministry in Philippi began when he and Silas met Lydia, whose household he baptised, and a small church began in her home. Later Paul was thrown out of Philippi after curing a slave girl of an evil spirit resulting in financial loss to her owner. Paul probably visited the Philippians twice more and had a great love for them. He particularly remarks upon their generosity in supporting other Christians.*

*The letter to the Philippians was written from prison (probably in Rome) and has four main themes. Firstly, "Rejoice": Christianity is not a religion of sorrow, it is a religion of joy and love. Secondly, "Fellowship": Paul writes much about sharing, and appreciates the way the Philippians share his troubles and share their money with others. Thirdly, "Unity": Paul urges the Philippians to stand together, with each being selfless in caring for others. He is also concerned about false preachers that might lead the Christians in Philippi away from the gospel. Lastly, "Relationship with Christ": Paul encourages the Philippians to do everything "in Christ", that is to say under Christ's control and in personal fellowship with Christ.*

*This heartfelt letter shows the deep love that Paul had for some of his dearest converts.*

Michael J de C Henshaw

# Chapter 1

Reader 1: **Philippians 1: 1,2**

Reader 2: **Philippians 1: 3-11**

Reader 1: **Philippians 1: 12-18a**

**Grace be unto you** (Philippians 1:2) M Henshaw

**Singers and Keyboard**

Grace be un - to you, and

Detailed description: This is the first system of a musical score for 'Grace be unto you'. It features a piano accompaniment with a treble and bass clef. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 100. The key signature has one flat (Bb) and the time signature is 3/4. The lyrics 'Grace be un - to you, and' are written below the treble staff.

peace, from God our Fa - ther, and from the Lord Je - sus

Detailed description: This is the second system of the musical score. It continues the piano accompaniment and the lyrics 'peace, from God our Fa - ther, and from the Lord Je - sus' are written below the treble staff.

Repeat 7 times      Last time

Christ — Christ —

Detailed description: This is the third system of the musical score. It features a piano accompaniment with a treble and bass clef. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 120. The key signature has three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics 'Christ — Christ —' are written below the treble staff. Above the first measure, there is a box labeled 'Repeat 7 times' with a double bar line and repeat sign. Above the second measure, there is a box labeled 'Last time' with a double bar line.

**Proclaim the love of Christ** (Philippians 1: 16-18) M Henshaw

Pro - claim the Christ of love; not a Christ of

Detailed description: This is the fourth system of the musical score. It features a piano accompaniment with a treble and bass clef. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 120. The key signature has three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics 'Pro - claim the Christ of love; not a Christ of' are written below the treble staff.

**Repeat 7 times**

con - ten - tion Christ is preached: Re - joice, Re - joice!

**Reader 1:      Philippians 1: 18b-26**

**Reader 2:      Philippians 1: 27-30**

**Meditation 1: Rejoice**

*Reader 1:       Despite hardship and imprisonment, Paul rejoiced. He gave thanks always that the gospel of Christ was preached.  
 Father, let me proclaim the gospel without fear. For all your goodness to me; for the privilege of worshipping you; for the gift of your Son, Jesus Christ;  
 Lord, I rejoice.*

**A period of silence is kept**

**Esteem others more highly than yourselves**   (Philippians 2:3)

$\bullet = 80$

Let no - thing be done through strife or vain - glo - ry;

**Repeat 5 times**

But hum - bly count oth - ers more high - ly than your - selves

In figure of man, our God we see (Philippians 2:8)

**Last Time**

ly than your - selves \_\_\_\_\_ *rall* In

Flute

fig - ure of man, our God we see;

Hum - ble, o - be - di - ent, hanged on a tree. In

Repeat 5 times

**Last time**

flute

tree *rall*

# Bow down at Jesus' name (Philippians 2: 10,11)

♩ = 64

Bow down at Je - sus' name, bow down at Je - sus' name. Let

ev' - ry tongue con - fess that Je - sus is Lord Bow

Repeat 5 times

Lord. To the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther.

Last time only

## Chapter 2

Reader 1: **Philippians 2: 1-11**

Reader 2: **Philippians 2: 12-18**

### Shine as lights in the world (Philippians 2:15)

Sung as a round

①

Group 2 starts here ②

Singers Group 1: Shine, shine, as lights in the world. Repeat 9 times

Singers Group 2: shine, as lights in the world. Shine,

Keyboard: Accompaniment for the round.

### Meditation 2: Fellowship and Unity

Reader 2: *God became man and dwelt on earth. Humbly, he died on the cross for my sins. I must not esteem myself more highly than others but follow Christ's example and serve my brothers and sisters.*

A period of silence is kept

♩ = 116

### Rejoice, Brethren, Rejoice (Philippians 3:1)

Flute: *mf*

Voices: *must keep strict time*  
*f* Re-joyce *mf* My bre-th-ren re-joyce

Keyboard: *f* *mf*

*Repeat 7 times*

The musical score consists of four staves. The top staff is a single treble clef line with a melodic line of eighth and quarter notes, starting with a dynamic marking of *f*. The second staff is a single treble clef line with a vocal line that begins with a rest and then has lyrics: "Re-joyce in the Lord; Re-joyce in the Lord." with a dynamic marking of *f*. The third and fourth staves are a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with a piano accompaniment of chords and single notes, also starting with a dynamic marking of *f*. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

# Chapter 3

Reader 1: Philippians 3: 1

Reader 2: Philippians 3: 2-11

Reader 1: Philippians 3: 12-16

## I want to know you Christ (Philippians 3:10)

♩ = 120

I want to know you Christ. The pow - er of your res - ur -

rec - tion. I want to share your

pain. and be - come more like you

Repeat 5 times

you


Last time



♩=112

## Look not behind (Philippians 3:13,14)

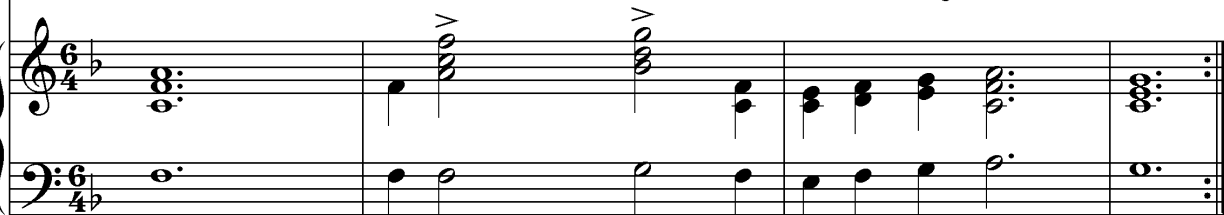
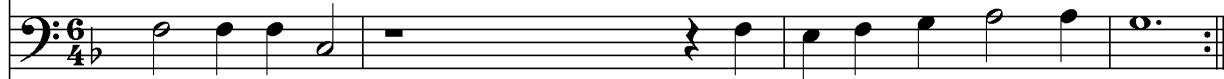
**Women & Flutes** **Repeat 7 times**



Run straight for the prize; God calls us through Je - sus Christ

**Men**

Look not be-hind God calls us through Je - sus Christ.



The musical score is written in 6/4 time with a key signature of one flat (Bb). It features three parts: Women & Flutes (treble clef), Men (bass clef), and Piano accompaniment (grand staff). The lyrics are: 'Run straight for the prize; God calls us through Je - sus Christ' for the Women & Flutes part, and 'Look not be-hind God calls us through Je - sus Christ.' for the Men part. The piano accompaniment provides harmonic support with chords and a bass line.

### Meditation 3: In Christ

*Reader 2: Lord, strengthen my faith, that I may think, and speak, and act in Christ. Help me to run the straight race in the knowledge that Christ has made me his own.*

**A period of silence is kept**

# Chapter 4

Reader 1: Philippians 4: 1

Reader 2: Philippians 4: 4-9

Reader 1: Philippians 4: 10-20

## Always rejoice in the Lord (Philippians 4:4) To be sung as a round with two groups

Group 1 start                      Group 2 start

Al - ways Re - joice in the Lord \_\_\_\_\_ Al - ways Re - joice

♩ = 120

in the Lord \_\_\_\_\_ A - gain I say Re - joice \_\_\_\_\_

Repeat 7 times

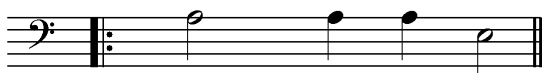
(Group 2 finish)

Re - joice \_\_\_\_\_

The following chant is unaccompanied,  
but the keyboard may give the  
first note of each phrase if required

**Recte face ice (do what is right)** (Philippians 4:8,9)

Cantor

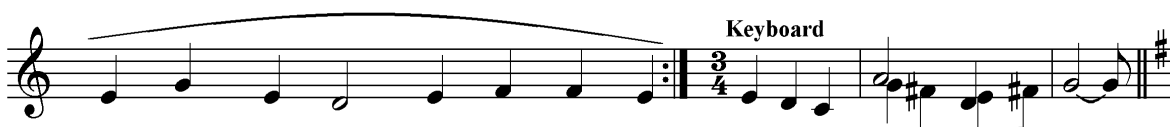


1. Whatsoever things are true
2. Whatsoever things are honest:
3. Whatsoever things are just:
4. Whatsoever things are pure:
5. Whatsoever things are lovely:
6. Whatsoever things are good:

Response



Which ye have heard and learned and re - ceived;



Do this, and God shall go with you.

**Whoever is kind to the poor** (Proverbs, 19:17)

Flute

Repeat 7 times

Who - ev - er is kind to the poor, the Lord shall re - ward \_\_\_\_\_. Who-

Last time

ward \_\_\_\_\_

## The peace of God (Philippians 4:7)

♩ = 120

The peace of God, which pass-eth all un-der-stand-ing, shall

Repeat 5 times

keep your hearts and minds through Je - sus Christ

### Prayers

Reader 1:

*Let us pray*

All:

*Loving Father, to worship you is joy, to serve you is fulfilment. We rejoice in the fellowship we experience through belonging to the Christian family. Help us to be selfless in our love for one another, so that we may act in unity for the furtherance of the gospel. We thank you for the example of the Philippians: their joy, their fellowship, and their unity. We pray that we will take to heart the encouragement of Paul to live in Christ: to think, to act, and to speak in Christ. For the sake of him, who died for us,  
Amen*

*Our Father, which 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 them 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.*

Reader 2:

**Philippians 4: 21-23**

The grace of Jesus Christ be with you (Philippians 4:23)

♩=124

The grace of Je - sus Christ be with you, A - men, A - men

The grace of Je - sus Christ be with you, A - men

Grace, grace, the grace of Christ, A - men

Repeat 5 times

A - men

End of meditation service, people depart in silence

## Notes

This meditation was first celebrated at St. Mary's, Wymeswold Church (UK) on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2019.

It comprises the whole of St. Paul's letter to the Philippians, which includes many beautiful phrases ideal for chanting. The chants emphasise the emotions and meaning of the bible verses. Churches may wish to link it to a bible study to consolidate the themes and lessons in the letter.

The chants should be accessible to choirs of modest ability and can also be sung in unison if preferred; by repeating the chants, it is intended that members of the congregation can choose to join in or simply listen. Where woodwind or strings are available, they may play the melody or extemporise; in three of the chants, a separate part for flute is included. Any keyboard instrument may be used – we chose piano – but should not be played too loudly.

Because it is quite tricky to count the number of repetitions, we usually have the woodwind silent during the final repeat to signal to the singers that it is the last.

In the round, *Shine as Lights in the World*, Group 1 begins and sings nearly the whole chant before Group 2 begins. They then sing the round just two beats apart. Both groups should sing it nine times, meaning that Group 2 complete the piece by singing the round on their own.

For the unison round *Always Rejoice in the Lord*, small notes are provided as harmonic options to the higher notes. The groups sing separated by one bar.

The readings have been set according to the verse numbers in the English Standard Version of the bible; slight adjustments for readers 1 and 2 may be needed for other translations.

The service, with meditative silences, lasts about 65 minutes.

**The music in this service is dedicated to the memory of Wendy Irene Henshaw.**