

Girls' Friendly Society- World Day of Prayers 2021

Saint Matthias Church - Lunsar

29th September 2021



Saint Matthias Church – Lunsar

**Recently inaugurated GFS Branch in the Northern part of
Sierra Leone**

The theme of the Day: “The Proof of Faith”

Prepared by: GFS Sierra Leone

The Diocese of Freetown and the North

Brief Information about Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone was since 1808 a British Crown Colony, the country gained independence in 1961. It has a population of 7 million people (census 2015), its capital city is Freetown, and the city is situated in North West of the country at the coast of the North Atlantic Ocean. Sierra Leone is a tropical country in West Africa, on the Atlantic coast between Guinea and Liberia. Apart from the hilly Freetown area and white-sand beaches, it is made up of mainly swampy coastal plains and plateaux, rising to uplands in the north east.

Background of GFS worldwide

As you are aware, the Girls Friendly Society (GFS) is an organization that aimed at moulding the morals and promoting the spiritual life of its membership. The GFS was founded in England some two and half centuries ago by Mary Elizabeth Townsend; firstly to stop delinquencies in girls and women.

This initiative needs to be applauded because it sets the pace for close collaboration between the girls and women and even between boys and men, as we have thought it fit to join forces with them for the effective implementation of God's word and execution of programmes and projects at national and international level which is in line with our motto: "Bear one another's Burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ." (Galatians 6:2).

GFS Sierra Leone

GFS was inaugurated in Sierra Leone some 51 years ago by a Mothers' Union Worker Mrs. Lucretia Gordon (of blessed memory) who joined forces with other seasoned Anglican women after she returned home from a meeting in England.

Because of their hard work and devotion to the Society, it spread almost all over the Anglican Churches in the country.

It was the first African country that hosted the World Council under the leadership of Mrs. Subuola Thompson who met her demise in March 2021. May her soul rest in perfect peace.

Order of the Service

Leader: The Lord be with you

All: And also with you

Leader:

Introductory sentence: Bless the Lord, all you his angels, you mighty ones who do his word (Psalm 103:20)

Opening Hymn no. 1

1. Jesus calls us o'er the tumult
of our life's wild restless sea;
day by day his voice still calls us
saying, 'Christian, follow me.'

2. As of old Saint Andrew heard it
by the Galilean lake,
turned from home and work and kindred,
leaving all for Jesus' sake.

3. Jesus calls us from the worship
of the vain world's golden store,
from each idol that would keep us,
saying, 'Christian, love me more.'

4. In our joys and in our sorrows,
days of toil and hours of ease,
Jesus calls, in cares and pleasures,
'Christian, love me more than these.'

5. Jesus calls us: by your mercies,
Saviour, may we hear your call,
give our hearts in glad obedience,
serve and love you best of all.

Leader: Beloved in Christ; we have come together to offer to Almighty God our worship, praise, and thanks giving, to confess our sins and to receive God's forgiveness, to hear and receive his proclaimed holy word, to bring before him our needs and the needs of the whole world, and to pray that in the power of his spirit, we may serve him and know the greatness of his love.

The Bible tells us not hide our sins from God our heavenly father, but to confess them with a repentant and obedient heart so that we may receive his forgiveness in our lives. Let us therefore sit or kneel to confess our sins to Almighty God.

A moment of silence may be observed

All:

Almighty God. Our heavenly Father, we have sinned against you and against our neighbours, through negligence, through weakness, through our own deliberate fault: by what we have done and by what we have failed to do. We are truly sorry and repent of all our sins. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, who died for us, forgive us all that is past; and grant that we may serve you in newness of life to the glory of your name, Amen!

The Forgiveness

If there is Bishop or priest pronounce the absolution:

Almighty God, who forgives all who repent, has mercy on you, Pardon and deliver you from all your sins, Confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, And keep you in life internal; Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen!

Or a leader may say the following prayers:

Merciful Lord, grant to your faithful people pardon and peace, that we may be cleansed from all our sins, and may be free to serve you with peace in our hearts, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our father in heaven, Hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the powers, and glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

Leader: O' Lord open thou our lips

All: And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Leader: Blessed are those who live in your house,

All: They will always be singing your praise

All Stand for the Psalm of the Day

Psalm 103: 19 – end

The Lord hath prepared his seat in Heaven:

And his Kingdom ruleth over all.

O praise the Lord, ye angels of His,

Ye that excel in strength:

Ye that fulfil His commandment,

and hearken unto the voice of His words.

O praise the Lord, all ye His hosts:

Ye servants of his that do his pleasure.

O speak good of the Lord, all ye works of his,

in all places of his dominion:

praise thou the Lord, O my soul

ALL: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be, world without end, Amen.

Sit for the readings of His word

The Ministry of the Word

Old Testament

2 Kings 6:8-17

Elisha and the Syrians

8 Then the king of Syria warred against Israel, and took counsel with his servants, saying, In such and such a place shall be my camp.

9 And the man of God sent unto the king of Israel, saying, Beware that thou pass not such a place; for thither the Syrians are come down.

10 And the king of Israel sent to the place which the man of God told him and warned him of, and saved himself there, not once nor twice.

11 Therefore the heart of the king of Syria was sore troubled for this thing; and he called his servants, and said unto them, Will ye not shew me which of us is for the king of Israel?

12 And one of his servants said, none, my lord, O king: but Elisha, the prophet that is in Israel, telleth the king of Israel the words that thou speakest in thy bedchamber.

13 And he said, Go and spy where he is, that I may send and fetch him. And it was told him, saying, Behold, he is in Dothan.

14 Therefore sent he thither horses, and chariots, and a great host: and they came by night, and compassed the city about.

15 And when the servant [4] of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do?

16 And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.

17 And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.

The Reader: This is the word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to the Lord

New Testament

Revelation 12: 7 – 12: Michael, his Angels and the Dragon.

⁷ And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,

⁸ And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.

⁹ And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

¹⁰ And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

¹¹ And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

¹² Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhibitors of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

The Reader: This is the word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to the Lord

Hymn no. 2

1. O thou who camest from above
the fire celestial to impart,
kindle a flame of sacred love
on the mean altar of my heart.
2. There let it for thy glory burn
with inextinguishable blaze,
and trembling to its source return
in humble prayer and fervent praise.
3. Jesus, confirm my heart's desire
to work and speak and think for thee;
still let me guard the holy fire
and still stir up the gift in me.
4. Still let me prove thy perfect will,
my acts of faith and love repeat,
till death thy endless mercies seal,
and make the sacrifice complete.

All remain standing for the Gospel

The Gospel

Mathew 18: 1-6

1 At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?

2 And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them,

3 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

4 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

5 And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me.

6 But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

Reader: This is the Gospel of Christ

All: Praise to Christ our Saviour

Hymn 3

1. Nearer, my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee!
E'en though it be a cross that raiseth me,
Still all my song shall be, nearer, my God, to Thee.

Refrain: Nearer, my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee!

2. Though like the wanderer, the sun gone down,
Darkness be over me, my rest a stone;
Yet in my dreams I'd be nearer, my God, to Thee.
3. There let the way appear, steps unto Heav'n;
All that Thou sendest me, in mercy giv'n;
Angels to beckon me nearer, my God, to Thee.
4. Then, with my waking thoughts bright with Thy praise,
Out of my stony griefs Bethel I'll raise;
So by my woes to be nearer, my God, to Thee.
5. Or, if on joyful wing cleaving the sky,
Sun, moon, and stars forgot, upward I'll fly,
Still all my song shall be, nearer, my God, to Thee.
6. There in my Father's home, safe and at rest,
There in my Savior's love, perfectly blest;
Age after age to be nearer, my God, to Thee.

Sit for the sermon

Sermon:

Theme: The Proof of Faith

The APOSTLES CREED

All stand to recite the Apostles Creed:

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate
Was crucified, died and was buried.
He descended to the dead.
On the third day, he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
And is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

Leader: The Lord be with you.

All: and also with you.

Leader: let us pray

The intercession

One or two persons can be selected to intercede

Prayer of Saint Michael and All Angels:

Merciful Father, you have ordained and established in a delightful order the ministries of angels and humans; mercifully grant us that, as your holy angels serve and worship you in heaven, So by your appointment they may help and defend us here on earth; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

Let us pray for the church and the world and thank God for His goodness.

Almighty God as we pray in faith through your Son Jesus Christ, we give you thanks and praise as we celebrate another World Day of Prayer. Father I come against all evil in your Church and I pray that you make it perfect in your love. Give strength and wisdom to all Bishops, Archdeacon, Deans of the Cathedrals and all other Deans and Canons, Priests and Deacons, Lay Readers, Parish workers, and the various Organisations of the Dioceses worldwide. Bless the efforts of the Clergy as they try to spread your word in the different parts of the world. Lord in your mercy **hear our prayer**

I pray specially for the GFS World President, Mama Thembeke and the rest of the Executive Members who are up keeping the Organisation. Give wisdom, strength and courage to them as they labour in your Vine Yard. I pray also for the different national executive members, that you bind them with the cord of love that cannot be broken. I pray that together they will continue to be devoted to their callings. Give grace to this gathering that they may live to serve you in righteousness throughout their lives. Lord in your mercy **hear our prayer**

Let us pray for the Heads of States of our different countries

Lord I lift **our countries up to you**; I pray for your divine direction over all those in authorities especially our Leaders and their assistants so that they may be able to serve their nations with passion and integrity. Give vision to the Mayors, Cabinet Ministers, Senators and Parliamentarians so that they will work with one mind for the development of their countries. Lord I pray that every power working against the peace and successes of our nations be frustrated in the Mighty name of Jesus. Lord in your Mercy **hear our prayer**

Let us pray for all those celebrating joyous occasions

Father, I bring before you all those **celebrating birthdays, wedding anniversaries or any joyous occasion** this month, I pray that you grant them all the good things that will bring them happiness so that they may continue to love and serve you all the days of their lives. Lord in your **Mercy hear our prayer**

Let us pray for the sick and suffering

Father of all Mercies, into your hands I commend the **sick and suffering**, Lord we know that you are the great physician and the mighty healer, stretch out your healing hands upon the sick and restore their health again. I pray in a very special way for the eradication of the different types of diseases that are destroying the world especially the COVID-19. I pray that you grant wisdom, skills, sympathy and patience to the Doctors, Nurses and other health workers, as they work to bring relief to the sick and suffering.

Remember O Lord all those who are disabled in life's race, those who lie in pain, the blind, the deaf, the dumb, the hungry and the homeless, and all others not mentioned here. Give them courage and hope in their troubles and bring them the joy of your salvation. Lord in your Mercy **hear our prayer**

Let us pray for the dead

I commend into your gentle keeping all your servants who have **left this earth**, especially members of Girls Friendly Society, according to your promise grant them Oh Lord refreshment, light and peace.

We give you thanks and praise for all those departed souls, we love to be with them, but you love them most, and we are consoled to know that they are with you in paradise where we hope to meet with them again. Lord in your mercy **hear our prayer**

Rejoice in the fellowship of all your Saints, we commend ourselves and all Christian people to your unfailing love.

Merciful Father accept this prayer for the sake of your son our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ

Offertory Hymn no. 4

Lord, accept the alms we offer,
Tokens of our love to thee;
Out of grateful hearts we render
This our act of charity;
Even though full well we know
All we have to thee we owe.

Use them, Father, to thy glory,
Teach us fully how to give,
For his sake who leaving heaven
Gave us all that we might live:
All we have could not suffice
To repay his Sacrifice.

Now the priest upon the altar
Doth present the bread and wine,
To become, in wondrous manner,
For our souls the food divine:
Soul and body by thee fed,
Praise we give for daily bread.

With our alms and our oblations
Take, O Lord, our prayers of love;
Make thy Church in fullest concord
Serve as one, below, above;
And in fellowship complete
Reach at last thy mercy-seat.

Prayers for the gifts

Announcements

Blessings/Benediction

The Peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds, in the knowledge and love of God and of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be with you and remain with you always. Amen.

Priest/Leader:

Go in Peace to love and serve the Lord.

ALL: In the name of Christ. Amen.

Closing Hymn no. 5

1. Forth In Thy Name, O Lord, I Go,
My Daily Labour To Pursue;
Thee, Only Thee, Resolved To Know,
In All I Think Or Speak Or Do.
2. The Task Thy Wisdom Hath Assigned
O Let Me Cheerfully Fulfil;
In All My Works Thy Presence Find,
And Prove Thy Good And Perfect Will.
3. Preserve Me From My Calling's Snare,
And Hide My Simple Heart Above,
Above The Thorns Of Choking Care,
The Gilded Baits Of Worldly Love.
4. Thee May I Set At My Right Hand,
Whose Eyes My Inmost Substance See,
And Labour On At Thy Command,
And Offer All My Works To Thee.
5. Give Me To Bear Thy Easy Yoke,
And Every Moment Watch And Pray,
And Still To Things Eternal Look,
And Hasten To Thy Glorious Day;
6. For Thee Delightfully Employ
Whate'er Thy Bounteous Grace Hath Given,
And Run My Course With Even Joy,
And Closely Walk With Thee To Heaven.

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St. Michael and All Angels Day - September 29, 2021