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Service for the 12th Sunday after Trinity, 22nd August 2021

A warm welcome to all who share in worship with us today.

CALL TO WORSHIP

It is good to praise the Lord and make music to your name, O Most High, to proclaim your love in the morning and your faithfulness at night. (Psalm 92: 1-2)

HYMN: O worship the King

*If you would like to **sing** this hymn, click the icon on the webpage for organ accompaniment.*

1 O worship the King all glorious above,
O gratefully sing his power and his love:
our shield and defender, the Ancient of Days,
pavilioned in splendour and girded with praise.

2 O tell of his might, O sing of his grace,
whose robe is the light, whose canopy space;
his chariots of wrath the deep thunder-clouds
form,
and dark is his path on the wings of the storm.

3 The earth, with its store of wonders untold,
Almighty, thy power has founded of old;
hath stablished it fast by a changeless decree,
and round it hath cast, like a mantle, the sea.

4 Thy bountiful care, what tongue can recite?
It breathes in the air, it shines in the light;
it streams from the hills, it descends to the plain,
and sweetly distils in the dew and the rain.

5 Frail children of dust and feeble and frail -
in thee do we trust, nor find thee to fail;
thy mercies how tender, how firm to the end,
our maker, defender, redeemer, and friend!

6 O measureless might, ineffable Love,
while angels delight to hymn thee above,
the humbler creation shall struggle to raise
in true adoration their songs to thy praise.

Robert Grant

PRAYER

Let us pray

Dear Father, thank you for bringing us today to worship you and give thanks for your faithfulness and care in these difficult days. Together we bring our thanks and praise for the love that drew Salvation's plan and the grace that brought it down to Man.

Amen.

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 who 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.

SCRIPTURE READING

I Kings 2: 1-4

2 When David was about to die, he called his son Solomon and gave him his last instructions: ² "My time to die has come. Be confident and determined, ³ and do what the LORD your God orders you to do. Obey all his laws and commands, as written in the Law of Moses, so that wherever you go you may prosper in everything you do. ⁴ If you obey him, the LORD will keep the promise he made when he told me that my descendants would rule Israel as long as they were careful to obey his commands faithfully with all their heart and soul.

Thanks be to God.

HYMN: Dear Lord and Father of mankind

*If you would like to **sing** this hymn, click the icon on the webpage for organ accompaniment.*

1 Dear Lord and Father of mankind,
forgive our foolish ways!
Reclothe us in our rightful mind;
in purer lives your service find,
in deeper reverence praise.

2 In simple trust like theirs who heard
beside the Syrian sea,
the gracious calling of the Lord,
let us, like them, without a word,
rise up and follow thee.

3 O Sabbath rest by Galilee!
O calm of hills above,
when Jesus knelt to share with thee
the silence of eternity
interpreted by love!

4 With that deep hush subduing all
our words, and works that drown
the tender whisper of thy call,
as noiseless let your blessing fall
as fell your manna down.

5 Drop thy still dews of quietness,
till all our strivings cease;
take from our souls the strain and stress,
and let our ordered lives confess
the beauty of thy peace.

6 Breathe through the heats of our desire
your coolness and your balm;
let sense be dumb, let flesh retire,
speak through the earthquake, wind and fire,
O still, small voice of calm!

J G Whittier

SCRIPTURE READING

James 3: 13-18

¹³ Are there any of you who are wise and understanding? You are to prove it by your good life, by your good deeds performed with humility and wisdom. ¹⁴ But if in your heart you are jealous, bitter, and selfish, don't sin against the truth by boasting of your wisdom. ¹⁵ Such wisdom does not come down from heaven; it belongs to the world, it is unspiritual and demonic. ¹⁶ Where there is jealousy and selfishness, there is also disorder and every kind of evil. ¹⁷ But the wisdom from above is pure first of all; it is also peaceful, gentle, and friendly; it is full of compassion and produces a harvest of good deeds; it is free from prejudice and hypocrisy. ¹⁸ And goodness is the harvest that is produced from the seeds the peacemakers plant in peace.

Thanks be to God.

ADDRESS: *Mr Colin Hale*

A tale of Delay, Decision and Downfall

On Winston Churchill's 75th birthday, a photographer said "I hope that I will take your picture on your 100th birthday."

Churchill answered "I don't see why not, you look reasonably fit and healthy!"

DELAY - This was far from the case with King David. While he shivered (he needed a young lady, Abishag, to be his 'hot water bottle') and vegetated, there was a serious conflict in his family that would affect the nation.....

David's fourth son Adonijah decides he should be king so, with civil and religious leaders, he throws a party and claims the throne. But hearing what Adonijah has done rouses David and he's reminded that he promised Bathsheba that her son Solomon would be king after him. So a crowning ceremony takes place and David pronounces that Solomon is king.

Adonijah's party comes to an abrupt end and he is in fear of his life. Solomon says that if Adonijah shows himself to be a worthy man, not a hair of his head will be touched.

Unfortunately, Adonijah doesn't give up the idea of the crown, so Solomon has him killed.

If only David had made it clear earlier who was to follow him, perhaps things would have turned out better. David died reminding Solomon to walk in the way of the Lord and Solomon's kingdom was established with opposition eliminated. All seemed well – but the devil was not far away!

Solomon makes an alliance with Pharaoh and marries his daughter. At the same time he allows pagan sites to be used for the worship of God. There's an old saying: It's alright to let birds fly over you, but don't let them nest in your hair. It would seem Solomon had a few twigs in his hair! Nevertheless, God is pleased to bless Solomon when he asks for a discerning heart to rule the nation. God blesses him with wisdom, riches and honour, and – if he walks in God's way – with a long life. So the land enjoyed a period of peace and happiness, all their needs being supplied.

DECISION - In the fourth year of his reign, Solomon begins his greatest project, the building of the temple. His father had bought the land and made preparations and plans for it, but he was not allowed to build it as he was a man of war. It was to be an epic construction.

We too have a task handed down from previous generations – that of building the Kingdom of God through the salvation that Jesus gives us. The task for Solomon was enormous, financially and in blood, sweat and tears: ours calls for no less.

At the same time that Solomon was building the temple, he was also building a palace for himself and one for Pharaoh's daughter. It took seven years to build the temple and thirteen years to build his palaces. Many chapters in this part of the Bible describe the temple and palaces – and their fabulous furnishings. Meanwhile, Solomon's riches and wisdom grew: the whole world acknowledged his greatness. The Queen of Sheba, among many other world leaders, flocked to see him and bring gifts.

DOWNFALL - Chapter 11 of the first book of Kings begins "King Solomon, however, loved many foreign women." They were from nations that the Lord had told the people not to marry and, as Solomon grew old, they turned his mind to worshipping other gods and even

sacrificing to the most evil one, Molech, which demanded human sacrifice. God said to Solomon “Since this is your attitude, you have forsaken me and my commands; therefore, I will take the kingdom from you.”

What a sad sequence of events! Because of David’s delay, it put the family in turmoil and tragedy. The decision was finally made that Solomon was king and he acquired wisdom, power and riches; but downfall happened when the world and its attractions became more important to him than the things of God.

This can happen to us too. The fervour of early days may diminish and the world may seem more attractive. But in the end Solomon lost everything. So let us keep in step with God, with our hand in His, for He will hold us fast.

PRAYERS of intercession

Let us pray to God, who alone makes us dwell in safety.

For those places in the world affected by troubles in addition to the global pandemic, for Afghanistan where a fragile peace is now descending into chaos and fear, for Haiti where over 2,000 have died in the earthquake and many are still waiting for aid, we pray that your light may illuminate their darkness and bring them hope.

Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

For the vulnerable and the fearful, for the gravely ill and the dying, we pray that they may know your comfort and peace.

Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

For our own church, for all of us going through these difficult times, we pray that we can sustain ourselves until fellowship comes to feel normal again.

We have difficult choices to make and know that each member of our fellowship sees things differently. We pray that we make the right decisions to allow us to worship more fully while at the same time protecting the vulnerable amongst us.

Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

For those who are leading our nation and shaping national and international policies at a time of great instability, we pray that they may make wise and considered decisions.

Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

For members of our own fellowship who are under strain coping with difficult times, we especially pray for:

T S, whose mother has recently died;

P G, who has been very unwell and whose options for treatment are very limited;

A P, who is unwell with heart problems;

J & D, as they embark on a new life away from Broadway.

Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

For ourselves in these times of anxiety and distress, we pray that you give us strength to comfort the fearful, to tend the sick, and to assure the isolated of our love, and your love.

Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer. Amen.**

HYMN: Now thank we all our God

*If you would like to **sing** this hymn, click the icon on the webpage for organ accompaniment.*

1 Now thank we all our God
with heart and hands and voices,
who wondrous things has done,
in whom his world rejoices;
who from our mothers' arms
has blessed us on our way
with countless gifts of love,
and still is ours today.

2 O may this bounteous God
through all our life be near us,
with ever joyful hearts
and blessed peace to cheer us;
and keep us in his grace,
and guide us when perplexed,
and free us from all ills
of this world in the next.

3 All praise and thanks to God
the Father now be given,
the Son, and him who reigns
with them in highest heaven,
the one eternal God,
whom heaven and earth adore;
for thus it was, is now,
and shall be evermore.

Martin Rinkart

BLESSING

Let us pray

The blessing of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be with each one of us, now and for evermore.

Amen.