



Service for the 3rd Sunday after Trinity, 28th June 2020

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

CALL TO WORSHIP: some verses from Psalm 89

89 O LORD, I will always sing of your constant love;

I will proclaim your faithfulness forever.

² I know that your love will last for all time,

that your faithfulness is as permanent as the sky.

¹⁵ How happy are the people who worship you with songs,

who live in the light of your kindness!

¹⁶ Because of you they rejoice all day long,

and they praise you for your goodness.

HYMN: Great is Thy faithfulness

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

1 Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father;
there is no shadow of turning with thee;
thou changest not, thy compassions, they fail
not;
as thou hast been thou forever wilt be.

2 Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,
sun, moon, and stars in their courses above
join with all nature in manifold witness
to thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love.
[Refrain]

Refrain:

Great is thy faithfulness!

Great is thy faithfulness!

*Morning by morning new mercies I see:
all I have needed thy hand hath provided,
Great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!*

3 Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,
thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide,
strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,
blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!
[Refrain]

T O Chisholm

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING & CONFESSION

Let us pray.

Welcome, Lord Jesus, to this time of worship. We gather in Your name to offer our thanks and praise. We are glad that You are here with us.

Through You, we welcome the One who sent You: we welcome God Himself. We pray that, in this time of praise, we shall know that Your Spirit is moving among us.

We welcome You, Lord Jesus. Guide us in our adoration so that all that is said and done may bring honour to Your name.

Gracious God, You are the source of all goodness. You cradle the present and future carefully in Your hands and You will give us all we need. We thank You for being with us and

caring for us at this time, when many people are facing difficulties. May we all find “strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow” as we praise You for the many blessings we receive.

One of those blessings is your word of forgiveness for the mistakes and failures we confess to You now.

For the unkind words we have used and the things we have failed to do:

Lord, please forgive us.

For our selfishness and greed, for our jealousy and pride:

Lord, please forgive us.

For the prejudice we carry and the way we accept the unacceptable:

Lord, please forgive us.

For the damage to our environment, our nation and the world:

Lord, please forgive us.

Compassionate God, hold us when we stumble and pick us up when we fall. Grant us the assurance of Your forgiveness and restore us to newness of life.

Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, **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: Jeremiah 28: 5-9

⁵ Then the prophet Jeremiah replied to the prophet Hananiah before the priests and all the people who were standing in the house of the LORD. ⁶ He said, “Amen! May the LORD do so! May the LORD fulfil the words you have prophesied by bringing the articles of the LORD’s house and all the exiles back to this place from Babylon. ⁷ Nevertheless, listen to what I have to say in your hearing and in the hearing of all the people: ⁸ From early times the prophets who preceded you and me have prophesied war, disaster and plague against many countries and great kingdoms. ⁹ But the prophet who prophesies peace will be recognized as one truly sent by the LORD only if his prediction comes true.”

REFLECTION I

How difficult it is to be a prophet, as this little “gem” from the Old Testament reminds us!

Hananiah was one of those prophets who liked to preach what he thought the people wanted to hear: good news to cheer them up. He gave them something to which they could look forward and, no doubt, the people liked to listen to him. However, in today’s world, it would probably be described as “fake news”: it was not a message from God.

Jeremiah, on the other hand, had preached judgement and disaster from the beginning of his ministry; a ministry which lasted about forty years. He was never popular with the people. He had a reputation for being a gloomy prophet.

But Jeremiah was a true man of God. He constantly used the phrase, “Thus says the Lord”, because he firmly believed that God was speaking to him. He reminded people of the covenant God had made with them so many generations earlier....

“The new covenant that I will make with the people of Israel will be this: ‘I will put my law within them and write it on their hearts. I will be their God and they will be my people.’ ”

This is a reminder to us today to listen to what God might be saying to us, even during a time when we can no longer meet as a church family in the usual way. We are still His people, held in a covenant relationship with God.

Although God never sends illness or suffering to His people, He does sometimes use it to show us new ways of living and behaving as His children in His world. The many acts of kindness we have seen remind us that this is so.

He speaks to us still through this worship, through the Bible and our prayers, as well as through the many broadcast and streamed services we can share. All that is needed is the listening ear and the understanding mind.

Let us pause for a hymn...

HYMN: God be in my head

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

1 God be in my head,
and in my understanding;

4 God be in my heart,
and in my thinking;

2 God be in mine eyes,
and in my looking;

5 God be at mine end,
and at my departing.

3 God be in my mouth,
and in my speaking;

from a Book of Hours, 1514

SCRIPTURE READING: St Matthew 10: 40-42

⁴⁰ “Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me, and anyone who welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. ⁴¹ Whoever welcomes a prophet as a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward, and whoever welcomes a righteous person as a righteous person will receive a righteous person’s reward. ⁴² And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is my disciple, truly I tell you, that person will certainly not lose their reward.”

REFLECTION II

Just as Jeremiah had a hard time getting his message across, so Jesus warned His disciples that they would not always be welcomed when they went out to witness to Him in the world. We know from their experiences, described in the Acts of the Apostles, how hard it was for them to preach their message and to grow as the church. But as David Adam reminds us “Not all doors are closed to Jesus: many long to hear the good news”.

The church today is proof that the disciples succeeded in their message and a reminder to us that we also have good news to share with others, even during the Coronavirus pandemic. We do our part now by seeking ways of helping those whose lives have been affected, not only by illness and the loss of loved ones but also through anxiety about their work, their businesses and their livelihood. Part of our mission will be to ask, who are the “little ones” in our lives at the moment? Who are most in need of our care and help at this time? Much more than a cup of cold water may well be needed in many situations. Although we cannot solve all problems, we can still find ways of helping others. In this way we shall be listening to what God is saying to His people today.

In one of the books I have been reading during this time of isolation, I was reminded of a phrase I first heard some years ago...

“We are not here simply to exist. We are here in order to become – to become the children of God.”

When Matthew speaks of rewards, it does not mean we shall be especially favoured for any good that we might try to do; but it does mean that we shall learn a little more about the God who loves us and calls us to follow Him. We shall become more like the children He wants us to be. And for this we can say “Thanks be to God”.

Amen.

HYMN: Help us to help each other

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

1 Help us to help each other, Lord,
each other's cross to bear;
let each his friendly aid afford,
and feel another's care.

2 Touched by the lodestone of thy love
let all our hearts agree;
and ever toward each other move,
and ever move toward thee.

3 To thee, inseparably joined,
let all our spirits cleave;
O may we all the loving mind
that was in thee, receive.

4 This is the bond of perfectness,
thy spotless charity.
O let us still, we pray, possess
the mind that was in thee.

Charles Wesley (*altd*)

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Let us pray.

Holy Lord God, we come to You now with our prayers for the world You love and came to save. Though the world may often reject You, You never fail to believe in us all. You love us with tenderness.

We pray that You will guide the leaders of the nations and communities in the way of peace and goodwill.

We pray for all who seek to bring unity and harmony to our world.

Many countries are still finding it difficult coping with the problems of the pandemic. We

pray that this may be a time of sharing and caring for all people throughout the world. We pray for the Church, that it may be a holy church, a serving church. May we reveal Your love through our care for, and our acceptance of, others.

We remember all who are so much in need, at this time, of forgiveness and welcome. We pray for all who are ill, for the dying and the bereaved. We thank you for all who lovingly look after them and minister to them. We pray that they may be given strength for each day.

We pray for our own families and friends, for members of our congregation and for all who are in special need at this time.

We remember all whom we have loved, who now live in God's nearer presence. May we be found worthy to share with them the joys of His eternal kingdom.

Loving God, hear our prayers as we pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

HYMN: All my hope on God is founded

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

1 All my hope on God is founded;
he doth still my trust renew.
Me through change and chance he guideth,
only good and only true.
God unknown,
he alone
calls my heart to be his own.

2 God's great goodness aye endureth,
deep his wisdom, passing thought:
splendour, light, and life attend him,
beauty springeth out of naught.
Evermore
from his store
new-born worlds rise and adore.

3 Still from earth to God eternal
sacrifice of praise be done,
high above all praises praising
for the gift of Christ his Son.
Christ doth call
one and all:
ye who follow shall not fall.

Joachim Neander, *tr* Robert Bridges

BLESSING

May the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, rest upon us and remain with us and all whom we love, this day and for evermore.

Amen.