

HYMN

O God beyond all praising, we worship you today
And sing the love amazing, that songs cannot repay
For we can only wonder at every gift you send
At blessings without number and mercies without end
We lift our hearts before you and wait upon your word
We honour and adore you our great and mighty Lord

Then hear, O gracious Saviour, accept the love we
bring,

that we may know your favour, may serve you as our
King

And whether our tomorrows be filled with good or ill
We'll triumph through our sorrows and rise to bless
you still

To marvel at your beauty and glory in your ways

And make a joyful duty our sacrifice of praise

© Michael Perry (Jubilate Hymns)

Hymns for Today's Church 36

Sunday 2nd August 2020

“Never again shall they feel hunger or thirst; because
the Lamb who is at the centre of the throne will be
their shepherd and will guide them to springs of the
water of life.” Rev 7: 16,17

PRAYER

Almighty God, your Son Jesus Christ fed the hungry
with the bread of his life and the word of his
kingdom. Renew your people with your heavenly
grace and in all our weakness sustain us by the true
and living bread, Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who
lives with you and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit
one God, now and for ever. Amen

HYMN: O God beyond all praising

SCRIPTURE : Isaiah 55: 1-3

“Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters;
and you who have no money, come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk without money and
without cost. Why spend money on what is not
bread, and your labour on what does not satisfy?
Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good and your
soul will delight in the richest of fare. Give ear and
come to me, hear me, that your soul may live.

REFLECTION

In a society where just about everything costs money, it seems unrealistic to think that it is in anyway whatsoever possible for those who are thirsty and who have no money to “Come, buy and eat, wine and milk without cost!

In our calculating minds and in our cost effective ways of working, such sums do not add up. Yet, scripture reminds us time and time again that God’s gifts of goodness and grace, forgiveness and peace, are free.

Jesus paid the price, such was the length and breadth, depth and height of his love for each and everyone of us. All who come to the table will be fed, and they need not bring a purse with them. What they must bring are open hands—ready to receive and grateful hearts - willing to offer praise.

Our ways are not God’s ways. God’s kindnesses are unfailing. Our kindnesses often have hidden “strings” attached.

“Come, all who are thirsty, come to the waters.” We are the thirsty. We are the ones who long for that life giving water and life saving bread. “Come.” Jesus says, “Come and be filled.” Seek the Lord while he may be found, call on him while he is near.

PRAYER

Thank you Lord God

For the many gifts you daily bestow upon us.

Thank you for the blessings that flow into our lives like, pure, clean, water running in a stream.

Blessings we often take for granted or worse fail to recognise.

The gift of every new morning

The gift of family and friends

The gift of daily food and shelter

The gift of faith and Christian friendships

Gifts that enrich our lives, deepen our understanding of you and draw us closer to others.

As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater,

Gracious God, do not let your daily gifts and blessings return to you empty, instead let them accomplish what you desire and achieve the purpose for which you sent them.

Amen.

HYMN: CH4: 458

At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow
Every tongue confess him, King of glory now
Tis the Father's pleasure, we should call him Lord
Who from the beginning was the mighty Word

Brothers, sisters, name him, with love strong as death
But with awe and wonder and with bated breath!
He is God the Saviour, he is Christ the Lord
Ever to be worshipped, trusted and adored

In your hearts enthrone him; there let him subdue
All that is not holy, all that is not true
Let his grace support you in temptation's hour
And his will enfold you in its light and power

In his father's glory, Christ shall come again
Angel hoist proclaiming his return to reign
For all wreaths of empire meet upon his brow
And our hearts confess him King of glory now

Caroline Maria Noel (1817-1877)

Sunday 9th August 2020

“The life I now live is not my life, but the life which
Christ lives in me.” Galatians 2:20

PRAYER

Almighty God, you sent your Holy Spirit to be the life
and light of your Church. Open our hearts to the
riches of your grace, that we may bring forth the
fruit of the Spirit in love, joy and peace; through
Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you
and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.
Amen

HYMN: CH4:458: At the name of Jesus

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 105: 1-5

Give thanks to the Lord, call on his name; make
known among the nations what he has done.
Sing to him, sing praise to him; tell of all his
wonderful acts.
Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who
seek the Lord rejoice.
Look to the Lord and his strength, seek his face
always.
Remember the wonders he has done, his miracles,
and the judgements he pronounced.

REFLECTION

“Seek his face always, remember the wonders he has done.” Reading those beautiful words from Psalm 105 makes me look more closely at a lovely picture of my late mother, that sits upon my desk.

Day by day it’s on the desk but in the busyness of daily work, there are times when I hardly notice it.

When I do look at the picture, my own face lights up for I recall a lovely woman who had a heart of gold and a tremendous sense of fun. What joy it brings to me, especially on hectic days, to recall those beautiful attributes my mum possessed and to remember the wonderful things she did for me and others too.

Do we “Seek the face of the Lord, always?” Do we “Remember the wonders he has done?” Or has God become a bit like some pictures of people we have known and loved - that might well sit on our desk but have sadly been overlooked?

Take a few moments, read scripture, open your heart to God. Think about the wonders he has done and find the inner strength this brings to you. Pray about those things that are blurring God’s face in your mind’s eye and trust in the power of the Spirit to restore your relationship with God.

PRAYER

Gracious God, the life I live now should indeed not be my life but the life Christ lives in me.

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, understanding, tolerance and self control. These qualities become real in my life when Christ enters in. For through his guidance, I am encouraged to think before I speak; consider the needs of others as much as my own needs, make time to listen and be more willing to forgive.

Without Christ in my life, these fruits of the Spirit, qualities, attributes, could well be missing for my life would probably be directed by my needs and by my desires.

Thank you Lord Jesus for the newness of life you bring to me. Thank you for opening my heart to your grace. Thank you for the ways in which I can, and do, look to you for strength, day by day.

Be my light in life, Lord. The lamp that guides my way. Be always in my life so that I will daily tell of your wonderful acts, reveal your life in me through everything I say and do, and make your name known among the nations.

Amen.

HYMN: CH3: 130

Lord, thy word abides
And our footsteps guide
Who its truth believes
Light and joy receives

Who can tell the pleasure
Who recount the treasure
By thy word imparted
To the simple-hearted

Word of mercy, giving
Succour to the living
Word of life supplying
Comfort to the dying

O that we, discerning
Its most holy learning
Lord, may love and fear thee
Evermore be near thee!

Henry Williams Baker, 1821-77

Sunday 16th August 2020

“It was not to judge the world that God sent his Son,
but that through him the world might be saved.”

St John 3:17

PRAYER

Almighty God, you have poured into our hearts the Spirit of your Son from whom the Word brings life in all its fullness. Teach us to speak confidently about our faith. Make us heralds of the Good News. Let your Word fill our conversations and be like a lamp that guides us and others, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen

HYMN: CH3: 130 Lord, thy word abides

SCRIPTURE: Romans 10: 9-11

If you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead; you will be saved.

For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.

As the scripture says, “ Everyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame.”

REFLECTION

What was that you were saying?

Think about the things you talk about; the people you talk about, the issues you talk about, the problems you talk about... think about all the things you talk about, day by day.

How often does the name of Jesus, the work of Jesus, the power of the Spirit, the presence of God, the teachings of Jesus, cross your lips and enter into your conversations?

Confession is good for the soul!

Be honest in your answer.

The truth is more likely to be that we talk about the weather, politics, sports, food, television programmes, etc. much more than we talk about our faith, our Church and our trust in God.

Scripture reminds us that, "It is with your mouth that you confess and are saved."

We seem to use our mouths for everything except confessing Jesus Christ as our Saviour and Lord.

Be bold, set yourself a challenge and see if you can bring the name of Jesus; the love of God and the strength of the Spirit into your conversations.

PRAYER

Words, words, words.

Sometimes too many of them, when we have said more than was needed.

Sometimes too few, when we don't know what to say.

Let it be your Word that is on our lips, Lord God.

Help us to use words of scripture to bring comfort and care to others.

Help us to use words of scripture to learn from our mistakes and so discover how to change our ways.

Help us to use words of scripture to draw others into the family of faith so that they too might know your love, acceptance and blessings.

When our words offend, forgive us, Lord.

When our words uplift others in spirit, help us hear you say, "well done good and faithful servant."

When our words praise your Holy Name, let the whole world rejoice.

Search me, O God, and know my heart. See, if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. Amen

HYMN: CH4: 559

There is a Redeemer, Jesus, God's own Son
Precious Lamb of God, Messiah
Holy One

Thank you, O my Father
For giving us your Son
And leaving us your Spirit
Till your work on earth is done

Jesus, my Redeemer, name above all names
Precious Lamb of God, Messiah
Once for sinner's slain
Thank you, O my Father...

When I stand in glory, I will see his face
And there I'll serve my King for ever
In that holy place
Thank you, O my Father...

Melody Green (b.1946)

Sunday 23rd August 2020

"We know that the Son of God has come and given us understanding to know the true God. "

1 John 5:20

PRAYER

Almighty God, you have taught us that without love all our doings are worth nothing. Send your Holy Spirit, and pour into our hearts, that most excellent gift of love through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen

HYMN: CH4: 559: There is a Redeemer

SCRIPTURE: Mathew 16: 13-15

When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?"

They replied, "Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

"But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?"

Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

REFLECTION

Talk about being put on the spot? Jesus does not miss the mark when he asks a very searching and significant question. “But what about you, he asks Simon Peter, “Who do you say I am?”

What would your reply have been if Jesus had asked you the very same question, “Who do you say I am?”

What does Jesus really mean to you?

What does your faith really mean to you?

What does the Church really mean to you?

Never mind what others say or think. What do you honestly say and think? How important is your faith, your Church, your God?

Are all of these a one day (Sunday) wonder?

Are all of these vital to your daily living and ultimate life everlasting OR are all of these only important when you are put on the spot?

Putting someone on the spot can seem challenging but it can rightly force a person to really explore and evaluate what is important in their day to day life.

Jesus hoped his work was not in vain, time was running out. Did people (especially those close to him) truly believe that He was the Son of God?

PRAYER

Almighty God, in our hearts, we confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

Sunday by Sunday, at home or in the church, we sing the praise of Him who died, rose, and lives to reign forever.

But in our day to day living we tend to crowd Christ out of our lives, with all the other things that seem to “take priority” and claim our attention.

Forgive us Lord, if you have become a bit like an item hidden at the bottom of our bag!

Forgive us, Lord, if you have become like “a forgotten hero” or a “long lost relative!”

Forgive us, forgive us, forgive us.

Almighty God, You are the Creator, the Redeemer and Upholder of all that is and ever shall be.

Lord Jesus, You are the Son of God.

The Way, the Truth and the Life.

Holy Spirit you are the light on the water and the wind in our hair, the ‘Ruach’, the breath of life.

Without you we are nothing. With you we have everything we need. Amen.

HYMN

The journey of life
May be easy may be hard
There'll be danger on the way
With Christ at my side
I'll do battle, as I ride
'Gainst the foe that would lead me astray

My burden is light
And a song is in my heart
As I travel on life's way
For Christ is my Lord
And he's given me his word
That by my side he'll stay

Will you ride, ride, ride, with the King of Kings
Will you follow my leader true
Will you shout Hosanna, to the lowly Son of God
Who died for me and you?

Words: Valerie Collison

Sunday 30th August 2020

"Humble yourself under God's mighty hand, and he will lift you up." 1 Peter 5:6

PRAYER

Almighty God, you are the giver of all good things. Graft in our hearts, such love for your name. Deepen our faith, nourish us with all goodness and grant us the strength we need, daily, through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives with you and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit one God, now and for ever. Amen

HYMN: The Journey of Life

SCRIPTURE : Matthew 16: 21- 24

"Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things. Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. "Never, Lord!" he said. "This shall never happen to you." Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Out of my sight, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men.

Then Jesus said to his disciples, " If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it.

REFLECTION

The first time I endeavoured to climb a really high mountain in Scotland, as I puffed and panted my way to the 4,000m summit. I said to Jim, “Phew! This is really hard work.” To which he replied, “ The hills are full of demands and delights! Over the years I spent on the hills, I definitely sampled both.

The same can be said about life. Our journey through life brings: challenges and opportunities; joys and sorrows; ups and down, delights and despair....

Jesus had no easy ride through life either. In fact when I reflect upon the example set by Christ, I sometimes think, “Gosh what am I complaining about?

None of us are wrapped in cotton wool. None of us avoid the bumps or battles of life. None of us should think that it will be “plain sailing.” The seas of life can be smooth but they can be stormy and dangerous too.

Our faith does not promise us an easy path through life. What our faith promises us is that we have Christ by our side, always. Christ is made real to us, in the hands of those who care and support us, in the tough times. Christ is made real to us in the lives of those who rejoice with us and celebrate with us in the good times. Christ is with us, every step of life’s way.

PRAYER

If this is a good day, Lord help me to use it wisely and well.

If this is a difficult day, Lord, help me not to lose faith.

Whatever each new day brings, Lord, remind me that it is a gift, and also a promise, for Christ said, “Lo, I am with you always to the end of time.”

Forgive me, Lord, when I grumble and complain, thinking I should be any better off than others.

Forgive me, Lord, when hardships, suffering, sadness, confusion or dismay, with life’s events, cause me to doubt your word or turn from your way.

Thank you, Almighty God, for understanding my nature. Thank you for drawing even closer to me when the road is rough, and thank you for showing me that with Christ by my side, there is nothing I need fear.

Fill my heart, O God, with the certainty of your presence, so that every step of every day, whether easy or hard, is a step taken in faith, hope and love.

These things I pray, trusting in the power of your Holy Spirit, who lifts me up. Amen