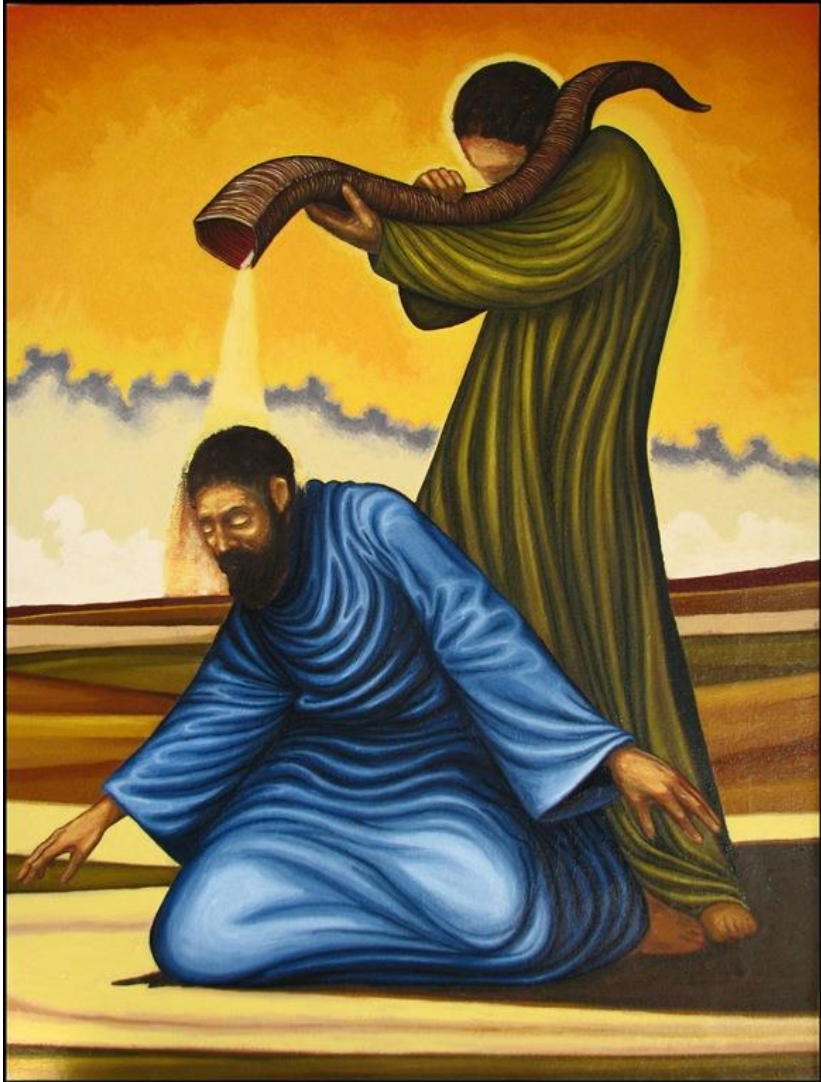




Chet Valley Churches  
**All Together Worship**  
16<sup>th</sup> August 2020



**Oil**

## **We Prepare for Worship**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you**

We are going to be using the psalms set for today as our scripture for worship. One of these has a repeated refrain:

Let the peoples praise you, O God;

**Let all the peoples praise you.**

*Psalm 67*

We will be using it throughout our service together with other parts of that psalm as we are instructed in our next hymn: the church with psalms must shout!

### **♪♪ Hymn: *Let All the World in Every Corner Sing***

Let all the world in every corner sing, my God and King!

The heavens are not too high, his praise may thither fly,  
the earth is not too low, his praises there may grow.

Let all the world in every corner sing, my God and King!

Let all the world in every corner sing, my God and King!

The church with psalms must shout, no door can keep them out;  
but, above all, the heart must bear the longest part.

Let all the world in every corner sing, my God and King!

Let us pray:

### **The Collect for Purity—A Prayer of Preparation**

**Almighty God,  
to whom all hearts are open,  
all desires known,  
and from whom no secrets are hidden,  
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts  
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit  
that we may perfectly love you  
and worthily magnify your holy name  
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## **The Collect—A Special Prayer for the Day**

Lord of heaven and earth,  
As Jesus taught his disciples to be persistent in prayer,  
Give us patience and courage never to lose hope,  
But always to bring our prayers before you;  
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Let the peoples praise you, O God;  
**let all the peoples praise you.**

## **Confession—We Say Sorry to God**

Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,  
**for you judge the peoples with equity  
and guide the nations upon the earth.**

*Psalm 67*

God is our judge, and as we become aware of God's presence with us, we realise that we fall short of the life that he calls us to.

*A minister introduces a time of penitence.*

Jesus says, 'Repent for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand'. So let us turn away from sin and turn to the Lord, confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

*Then all say together*

**Father God**

**We ask you to forgive us  
For the things we have thought  
And the things we have said  
And the things we have done  
That do not please you.**

**We are sorry.**

**Help us to be more like Jesus:  
Ready to pray, ready to help others,  
Ready to do your will  
In all things, every day. Amen.**

Perhaps it's easy for us to say those familiar words and hear the absolution—words assuring us of God's forgiveness—without always stopping to think about them.

Today we are going to pause and listen to a song reminding us that we should open our lives to the cleansing that is free to us, but which cost Jesus his life...

### ♪ Hymn: *I Will Offer Up My Life*

I will offer up my life in spirit and truth,  
Pouring out the oil of love as my worship to You.  
In surrender I must give my every part.  
Lord, receive the sacrifice of a broken heart.

Jesus, what can I give, what can I bring  
To so faithful a friend, to so loving a King?  
Saviour, what can be said, what can be sung,  
As the praise of Your name, for the things You have done?

○ my words could not tell, not even in part,  
Of the debt of love that is owed by this thankful heart.

You deserve my every breath  
For You've paid the great cost.  
Giving up Your life to death, even death on a cross.  
You took all my shame away, there defeated my sin,  
Opened up the gates of heaven and have beckoned me in.

Jesus, what can I give, what can I bring  
To so faithful a friend, to so loving a King?  
Saviour, what can be said, what can be sung,  
As the praise of Your name, for the things You have done?

○ my words could not tell, not even in part,  
Of the debt of love that is owed by this thankful heart.

### **Absolution—The Minister Announces God's Forgiveness**

May the God of love and power  
forgive *us* and free *us* from our sins  
heal and strengthen *us* by his Spirit,  
and raise *us* to new life in Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Let the peoples praise you, O God;  
**let all the peoples praise you.**



We praise God in the words of the Gloria:

## **Peruvian Gloria**

Glory to God, Glory to God, Glory to the Father.

**Glory to God, Glory to God, Glory to the Father.**

To him be glory for ever. **To him be glory for ever.**

Alleluia amen. **Alleluia amen.** [x2]

Glory to God, Glory to God, Son of the Father.

**Glory to God, Glory to God, Son of the Father.**

To him be glory for ever. **To him be glory for ever.**

Alleluia amen. **Alleluia amen.** [x2]

Glory to God, Glory to God, Glory to the Spirit.

**Glory to God, Glory to God, Glory to the Spirit.**

To him be glory for ever. **To him be glory for ever.**

Alleluia amen. **Alleluia amen.** [x2]

## **Reading**

The reading is from one of the psalms set for the day: Psalm 133.

How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!

It is like the precious oil on the head, running down upon the beard,  
on the beard of Aaron, running down over the collar of his robes.

It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountains of Zion.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

## **Talk [Rev Alison]**

The theme of our service today is oil.

Did you hear something about oil in the reading?

*How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!*

*It is like the precious oil on the head, running down upon the beard,  
on the beard of Aaron, running down over the collar of his robes.*

I wonder if anyone has ever poured oil over your head?!

So much oil that it runs down your face, your beard if you have one, and  
even over your clothes. Eugh!

Doesn't sound very pleasant does it?

But in the old days, pouring oil on someone, anointing them, was something very special. Something which was holy. Something which said that this person has a special job to do for God—maybe it was being a priest, maybe a king.

Anointing is still important. When our queen, Queen Elizabeth II was crowned, she was anointed with oil to show that she had a special job to do; not oil poured over her but a small amount put on her head. When priests are ordained they have their hands anointed with oil to show that they have a special job to do; I still remember the smell of frankincense from the oil with which my hands were anointed.

In Jesus' time, putting oil on someone's head when they came to your house was a sign of hospitality to them, though I am not sure how much they used, or whether it did indeed run down their beards.

*How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!  
It is like the precious oil on the head, running down upon the beard,  
on the beard of Aaron, running down over the collar of his robes.*

The happy co-existence of people is likened to the action of precious oil. It is good and pleasant when kindred live together in unity. And we know that that is true, don't we? When families are in harmony—loving, caring and nurturing each other—it is a good and pleasant thing. When people work well together and co-operate, helping each other out when needed, as we've seen during lockdown, it is a good and pleasant thing. When those who are rich share with those who have little, in order that all may flourish, it is a good and pleasant thing.

Unity is so obviously a good and pleasant thing that you might wonder why we don't achieve it more often; why family members are at odds with one another; why communities break down; why countries are at war.

Why are we so rarely a people living together in unity?

What is it that makes us rub each other up the wrong way, causing friction between us?

What is the grit that stops the moving parts of our relationships from flowing freely?

Making bad choices, thinking that we are better than other people, being selfish and greedy, are some of the more obvious things that spring to mind.

But life's not meant to be like this, is it? What can be done to make things better?

Where can we find a model of how to do it well?

I don't think we have to look too far!

The best example we have of being together in unity is God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit; three parts united into one, each part in unity with the other.

But we are not God, though we are made in God's image, so where does that leave us?

Is this model totally out of reach; impossible to attain?

I think that Jesus knew how difficult it is for us to live together in unity because he prayed about it on the night before his crucifixion:

*"I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. (John 17:20-21)"*

Jesus wants us to have the kind of relationship with each other and with him that is in God the Holy Trinity. A continual outpouring and overflowing of love that is evident to all in the world.

He tells his disciples that he will send the Holy Spirit to be with them, to be their guide. It is the Holy Spirit who will help them to follow the example of Jesus' love, of God's love for everyone. Just as it was for his disciples then; it is for all people, at all times.

If we open our hearts and minds to the Holy Spirit, accept the Holy Spirit in our lives, then it is the Holy Spirit who will help us live together harmoniously, guiding our choices, reminding us not to get above ourselves, helping us to move away from being selfish and greedy.

Perhaps we could liken the Holy Spirit to oil making things work smoothly, removing the grit and dirt from our everyday lives, providing lubrication to prevent damage.

It made me think of the Tin Man in the Wizard of Oz. He had seized up in the rain and badly needed to be oiled. The relief he feels when Dorothy and the scarecrow oil his mouth and then arms and his elbows... The oil freed up his joints and allowed him to move smoothly once again.

We need the Holy Spirit to free us up. We need the Holy Spirit, God dwelling in us, so that we can become one with God, guided and encouraged to live out our lives in response to God's love and to make new disciples.

But being a Christian is not just about our individual endeavour, it is something that we do in community: spending time with God and spending time with each other.

Together we are to agree and live in peace with one another.

Together we are to live in grace and love and fellowship wherever we find ourselves; in our families, in our work, in our church councils.

Together we are to pray for these things, grace, love and fellowship, to abound for the common good worldwide.

Here's a story from that fractured country, Lebanon; a country that has had more than its fair share of division and conflict. I am sure we've all heard about the terrible explosion in the port in Beirut causing such devastation and destruction; not a bomb this time just gross negligence in a country riddled by government incompetence and corruption. Well, lots of people came to help clear up. One group particularly caught my attention. All women, they are members of the Tripoli cleaning squad just up the coast from Beirut. Here's what they had to say when they arrived to help:

"We remain united no matter how much they try to separate us. Muslim, Sunni, Shia, Druze, Christian... we're all one band."

Isn't that fantastic?

*How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!  
It is like the precious oil on the head, running down upon the beard,  
on the beard of Aaron, running down over the collar of his robes.*

Maybe today we might say:

How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity! It is like spilled oil on a wet road making beautiful rainbow patterns, shimmering and bright with colour.

Amen.

*Pause*



Just like any machine, we need to be oiled continually to keep us working well. We need constantly re-filling with the Holy Spirit to help us live in unity, and so we sing:

### ♪ **Hymn: Spirit of the Living God**

**Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.  
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.  
Melt me, mould me, fill me, use me.  
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.**

**Spirit of the Holy One, wash over me.  
Spirit of the Holy One, wash over me.  
Cleanse me, touch me, break me, heal me.  
Spirit of the Holy One, wash over me.**

Let the peoples praise you, O God;  
let all the peoples praise you.

### **Creed: We Say What We Believe**

*The minister introduces the creed*

**We believe in God the Father,  
From whom every family  
In heaven and on earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son,  
Who lives in our hearts through faith,  
And fills us with his love.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit,  
Who strengthens us  
With power from above.**

**We believe in one God,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

### **We Pray Together [Rev Alison]**

Today in our prayers when I say: Loving God,  
please respond: pour out your Spirit upon us  
Loving God, **pour out your Spirit upon us**



We pray for the world and give thanks for the way that countries have supported each other in times of crisis and disaster. We pray for those countries that are ambitious for power, land and resources at the expense of others. We pray that they will grow in unity.

Loving God, **pour out your Spirit upon us**

We pray for families and give thanks for the love, care and nurture that may be found in them. We pray for those families where there is abuse, neglect and conflict. We pray for harmony and reconciliation.

Loving God, **pour out your Spirit upon us**

We pray for those who are sick and give thanks for the skill and kindness of doctors, nurses and other care workers. We pray for those places where hospitals have been destroyed or overwhelmed with patients. We pray for generous giving and aid to be forthcoming.

Loving God, **pour out your Spirit upon us**

We pray for your church and give thanks for the many ways in which it has responded to the challenges of lockdown. We pray for those that find it hard to work together co-operatively. We pray for your loving presence guiding us.

Loving God, **pour out your Spirit upon us**

Uniting our prayers with the whole company of heaven as Jesus taught us so we pray:

**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 power and the glory  
Are yours, now and for ever. Amen.**



Let the peoples praise you, O God;  
**let all the peoples praise you.**

Our final hymn sums up how it is when we are at unity with one another:

### ♪♪ **Hymn: We Are One in the Spirit**

We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord.  
We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord.  
And we pray that all unity may one day be restored.

*And they'll know we are Christians, by our love, by our love.  
Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.*

#### **Repeat**

We will walk with each other, we will walk hand in hand.  
We will walk with each other, we will walk hand in hand.  
And together we'll spread the news that God is in our land.

*And they'll know we are Christians, by our love, by our love.  
Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.*

### **Blessing**

The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you.  
The Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you  
And give you peace.

And may the blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
be upon you and those whom you love, now and forever more.

**Amen.**

### **The Dismissal**

God, our God, has blessed us.  
**May God continue to bless us;**  
**let all the ends of the earth revere him.**

*Psalm 67*

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
**In the name of Christ. Amen.**

*How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!  
It is like spilled oil on a wet road, making beautiful rainbow patterns,  
shimmering and bright with colour.*

