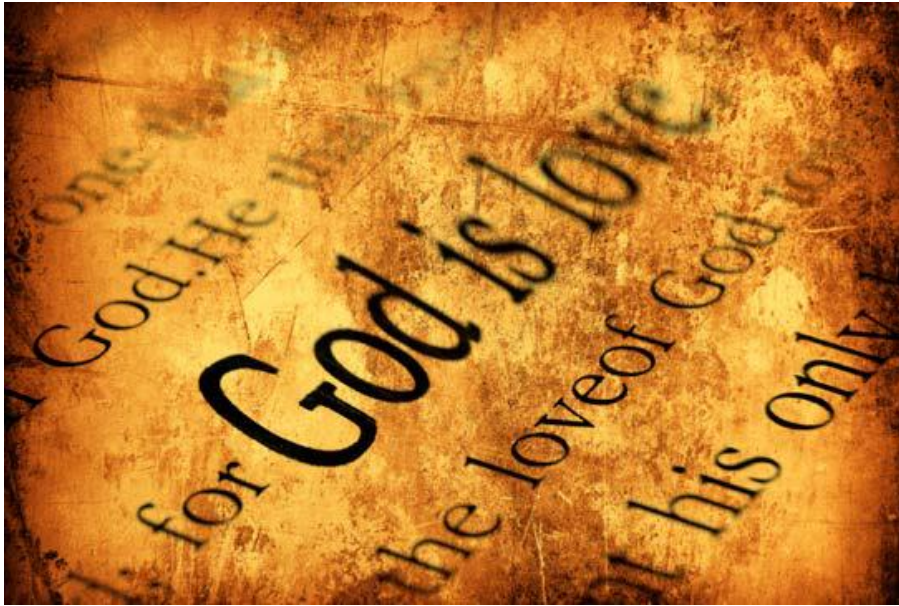


Barthol Chapel and Tarves Sunday 9 August 2020

Worship Materials



As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. (John 15:9-10)

INTRODUCTION

Several weeks ago I suggested setting apart a special space where you might spend time with God, both on Sunday mornings either on zoom or with the written worship materials from the web-site, and during the week.

In your worship space place the words "God is love". Each day this coming week, take the word 'LOVE' and find a story in the newspaper or on the internet or in a magazine that shows love in action.

Praise CH4 160 Praise my soul

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| <p>1. Praise, my soul, the King of heaven;
to his feet thy tribute bring;
ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,
who like me his praises should sing?
Praise him! Praise him!
Praise the everlasting King.</p> | <p>3. Father-like, he tends and spares us;
well our feeble frame he knows;
in his hand he gently bears us,
rescues us from all our foes.
Praise him! Praise him!
Widely as his mercy flows.</p> |
| <p>2. Praise him for his grace and favor
to our fathers in distress;
praise him still the same for ever,
slow to chide and swift to bless:
Praise him! Praise him!
Glorious in his faithfulness.</p> | <p>4. Angels, help us to adore him;
ye behold him face to face;
sun and moon, bow down before him,
dwellers all in time and space.
Praise him! Praise him!
Praise with us the God of grace.</p> |

The Word of God: 1 John 4:7-21

7 Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. 9God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. 10In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. 11Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. 12No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

13 By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. 14And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Saviour of the world. 15God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. 16So we have known and believe the love that God has for us.

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. 17Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgement, because as he is, so are we in this world. 18There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. 19We love because he first loved us. 20Those who say, 'I love God', and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. 21The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

Reflection

Six months ago, the chances are that Deep Chand would have gone about his work, without anyone ever noticing. Deep Chand is a wardboy in a hospital in South India. He is one of a whole army of wardboys. These wardboys are untrained and unqualified. They perform the most menial and the most vital of tasks in the hospital's emergency wards –from cleaning wards to taking sample to labs, from making sure that patients are fed to dealing with hospital waste. These wardboys are paid a pittance and some are at the mercy of unscrupulous contractors who hire them out – one form of modern day slavery.

In recent days the work of wardboys like Deep Chad has taken on a new significance. With the pandemic at its height in South India, doctors and nurses were run off their feet. And Deep Chand and hundreds like him took on yet another role, offering support to families and friends, awaiting news of relatives undergoing intensive treatment for Covid-19.

Every day, ward boys like Deep Chand are risking their lives in hospitals across India. Hundreds of them have been infected with the virus. Some have even died. Yet their contribution in the fight against Covid-19 is seldom mentioned. But this does not bother Deep Chand.

When he was told that he would have to work in the "corona ward" at the start of the outbreak in March, Deep Chand admits he was concerned. "I was terrified for my safety and that of my family." But then, he adds, he realised that he would not think

twice before going into the ward if one of his family members was sick. "Every patient is somebody's family." That thought drove him to start working in the ward in April, and since then he has never considered quitting.

He adds that being in protective equipment for 10-12 hours is painful, but it's nothing "compared to what patients and their families go through". The other tough part of their job is seeing death so closely. Deep Chand says he feels distraught when a patient he has been caring for dies. "Sometimes patients die after spending more than two weeks with us. They almost become like our family," he says. But, he adds, he won't stop "until we defeat corona or it defeats me".

Deep Chand says he is not looking for special recognition. When one relative tried to phone to thank him for caring for his brother-in-law, Deep Chand quickly brought the call to an end, saying he was on duty but later texted back. That text read "You don't need to thank us". "Pray for us and all medical teams working in Covid-19 wards across the world". And he had a message too: "Please wear masks and follow physical distancing."

That story of Deep Chand and his care of and commitment to the patients and families in a South Indian hospital has been replicated in countless countries around the world, where medical staff have put the care of their patients before their own safety. It is a story of love in action.

This is the last in our series of services based on the key themes that occur in the First letter of John. And today we are focussing on love. The passage that Rob read for us earlier mentions the word love 27 times. It is love, love in action, that is at the heart of the Christian faith. In his letter John is constantly reminding his readers of the way in which God reveals his love for the world. At the heart of the biblical vision of a new creation is love. And that love is a gift from the God, whose very nature is love, self-giving, self-denying, sacrificial love.

There are many ways in which we experience love in our lives – in our family circle, from the true friends who support us unconditionally through good times and bad, and of course in our Church family. And surely all genuine love is a sign of God's gracious activity and presence in the world.

But the love which the author of 1 John has in mind, the love which enables the vision of a new creation to become a reality, has a specific focus and that focus is Jesus Christ. This is what John writes

"God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him."

Three times within the space of 3 verses John points to God sending his Son into the world – God sends his Son so that we might live through him. God sends his Son to be an atoning sacrifice for our sins. God sends his Son to be the Saviour of the world.

It is first and foremost in Jesus Christ that God makes known his love to the world. By rooting God's love in the sending of Jesus Christ the author reminds us that this love of God has a special quality to it. God loves us totally and unconditionally.

There is nothing we can do that will make God love us more. And there is nothing that we can do that will make God love us less.

But, as one commentator puts it, “God’s love reaches its intended goal only when it creates a community of continuing love – when it becomes God’s love among us.” Followers of Jesus are called to be the bearer of God’s love in and to the world. It is God’s purpose that we should live as his children in the world, loving others as God loves us. And today perhaps more than ever the world needs people who are prepared to love as God loves.

But loving others is not easy – sometimes it is a tall order to love even those we are close to. But God has taken our weakness into account and through his Spirit pours out his own love and goodness into our hearts and into the world. And when the words run out and contradict each other; and when all the attempted explanations are so obviously inadequate, it reminds us that love is not something to be talked about, but to be entered into: wildly and generously. It is to be given and received and celebrated: after all

“We love because God first loved us.”

Pointers for prayer

- Those suffering from or bereaved by the corona virus
- The NHS, its staff in hospitals and GP practices as well as the other emergency services and all care workers and volunteers
- The Government and Scottish Parliament and their advisers as they seek to guide us out of lockdown
- Those engaged in scientific research and development
- Businesses struggling and all who are facing redundancy and financial hardship
- Family, friends and neighbours, those most affected by the lock-down and those finding it difficult to move forward
- Those for whom shielding has paused
- Other people and situations who are in your hearts today
- Those in Beirut affected by the chemical explosion
- The Church that we might offer a faithful, loving witness to Christ through this time

Praise 425 The Saviour died but rose again

1 The Saviour died, but rose again
triumphant from the grave;
and pleads our cause at God's right
hand,
omnipotent to save.

2 Who then can e'er divide us more
from Jesus and his love,
or break the sacred chain that binds
the earth to heaven above?

3 Let troubles rise, and terrors frown,
and days of darkness fall;
through him all dangers we'll defy,
and more than conquer all.

4 Nor death nor life, nor earth nor hell,
nor time's destroying sway,
can e'er efface us from his heart,
or make his love decay.

5 Each future period that will bless,
as it has blessed the past;

he loved us from the first of time,
he loves us to the last.

Blessing

Notices

Next Sunday 9.45am Joint Worship (Service commences 10.00am)

Worship will be led by Christine McWhirter. If you would like to be added to the e-mail list for the link to Sunday's live worship gathering on zoom or join in on your landline please contact:

Rob e-mail sessionclerk@bartholchapel.org or Susanna Tel 851345 or e-mail sembichard@aol.com.

Pastoral Matters

The minister will be on holiday from 10- 31 August – emergency cover will be provided by Rev Dr Will Stalder Tel 806264

Care in the Community if you are aware of anyone in Tarves who needs help of any kind please contact Ruth 851887

Tuesday 11.00am Tarves Session Coffee Morning hosted by Susanna

A Week of Prayer for Church and Country Monday 17 to Saturday 22 August led by the Moderator – morning devotions, national gatherings in the evening with opportunities for individual and congregational participation.

Thursday 3 September 7.00pm Tarves Session meeting on zoom – link will be sent out nearer the time.