

Barthol Chapel and Tarves Sunday 23 August 2020 9.45am for 10.00 am

Order of Service



Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. (Matthew 16: 17-18 NIV)

Welcome and introduction

Hello and a warm welcome to all who are using these online worship materials. I am very pleased to share this opportunity for worship with you.

‘Praise be to the Lord, who has not let us be torn by their teeth. We have escaped like a bird from the fowler’s snare; the snare has been broken, and we have escaped. Our help is in the name of the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth.’ (Psalm 124: 6-8)

Praise – CH4 727 In the bulb there is a flower

1.

In the bulb there is a flower;
in the seed an apple tree;
in cocoons, a hidden promise;
butterflies will soon be free!
In the cold and snow of winter
there's a spring that waits to be,
unrevealed until its season,
Something God alone can see.

2.

There's a song in every silence,
seeking word and melody.
There's a dawn in every darkness,
bringing hope to you and me.
from the past will come the future,
but it holds, a mystery,
unrevealed until its season,
Something God alone can see.

3. In our end is our beginning;
in our time, infinity;
in our doubt there is believing;
in our life, eternity.
In our death, a resurrection;
at the last, a victory,
unrevealed until its season,
something God alone can see.

Word of God from Matthew 16: 13-20

Peter Declares That Jesus Is the Messiah (NIV)

¹³ When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say the Son of Man is?”

¹⁴ They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”

¹⁵ “But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?”

¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.”

¹⁷ Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. ¹⁸ And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever

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you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”²⁰ Then he ordered his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

Message

Jesus and His disciples are out on the road, making their way to Caesarea Philippi, a bustling port city the Galilee.

Jesus asks His disciples, “Who do people say the Son of Man is?”

They tell Him that people are saying all sorts of things—as people tend to do.

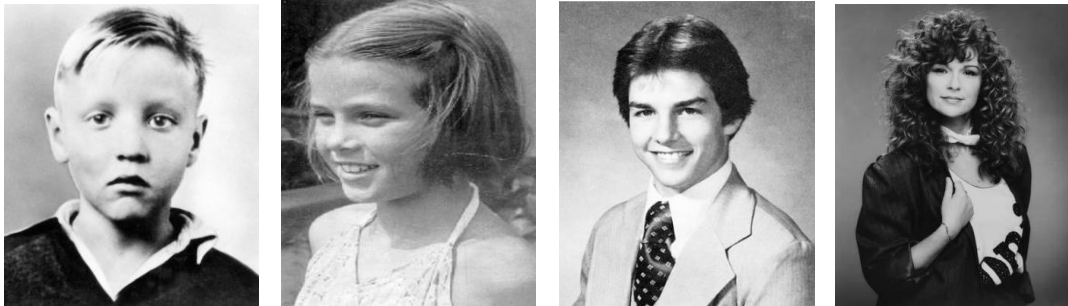
Some say He is John the Baptist, recently beheaded by Herod, come back from the dead. Others say He is the prophet Elijah—who was thought to return before the end times. Others say Jeremiah—another one of Israel’s prophets who had his own tensions with the authorities and suffered mightily for it.

It seems no one understands exactly what or whom they are witnessing. They’ve never seen something or someone like Jesus before.

But then Jesus turns the question to His disciples, and asks them a more direct question: “But what about you? Who do you say I am?”

It is clear there is some uncertainty for the people in Jesus’ day. To help us stand a little in the sandals of the people of the time, wondering about who the

Messiah will be, below are some pictures of some famous faces. Have a look at them and see if you can work out who the people are. Some may be more difficult than others.



You may have got all those correct or only some. The pictures are – from left to right of Elvis Presley, Grace Kelly, Tom Cruise and Julie Walters.

Regardless, you are in good company as the disciples only partly got it right when they answered Jesus' question about who Jesus was.

Peter was the first to speak up, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."

But what does it mean to call Jesus "the Messiah, the Son of the living God?"

Even though Jesus seems satisfied with Peter's response, Peter does not exactly know what it means to call Jesus the Messiah—definitely not at this point, at least. I mean, Jesus is not going to be the Messiah anyone expects.

The Messiah was not expected to be a healer or a person of wisdom.

The Messiah was one who was going to come like a warrior with a sword, taking down the oppressive powers. He was going to be one who purifies, burning away the bad and rotten parts of the world.

But instead, Jesus comes as a poor peasant, not a warrior. He sits with those considered 'unclean' and has meals with the sinners and tax collectors.

He did not topple and destroy the oppressive powers of the day in the manner that was expected, instead He is the one killed on a cross by the Roman regime.

Jesus knows He is not the kind of Messiah Peter is expecting. In fact, in the next couple of verses Jesus is going to call Peter "Satan."

Jesus tells His disciples that He must go to die in Jerusalem and Peter tries to tell Jesus that this cannot happen. Jesus is going to save the world, but not in the way anyone would think.

So, even though Peter gets it right that Jesus is the Messiah, Peter's vision of the Messiah was wrong. I can relate to being wrong every so often, how about you?

Let me ask you two questions - how many of us know all there is to know about Jesus? How many of us have all the answers?

We might have some of the answer—that is, that Jesus is Lord, the Son of the Living God, the Saviour, the Messiah.....but what does that actually mean?

Paul said to the Corinthians: “For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror, then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.”

The Christian Faith is a journey—an exciting journey of getting to know who God is. We learn more and more as we put our faith into practice.

Peter was still learning – his vision of the Messiah was one who would come and challenge the Roman rulers to the battlefield with swords and shields. Peter had to learn that was not the way it was going to be, and that takes time.

It is the same way with our friends or co-workers. At first, we only know them in a very shallow and superficial way. As we spend time with them though, in relationships, we come to know them pretty well.

It’s the same with Jesus. The more time we spend with Him, the more we are in service for Him, the more we come to learn about Him.

Today I invite us all to ask ourselves the question Jesus asked His disciples so long ago: “Who do YOU say Jesus is?”

I don't just mean, "what do the Creeds say about Jesus?" Or... "Who have other people told me Jesus is?" I am asking - "who do YOU say Jesus is?"

We might say, like Simon Peter, that Jesus is the Messiah, Son of the Living God. Or that Jesus is Lord, or that Jesus is the Second Person of the Trinity.

There are several ways to answer the question. One way I would like us to think about briefly is, 'who do I say Jesus is by how I live my life?'. By declaring that Jesus is the Messiah is a good step in the right direction, but it is only the start of the journey. It's a minute to hour, to day to week, to month to life journey. And I will be the first to admit, more often than not—my faith looks pretty dim. Jesus knows this, that is why He had to come and die. That is why we are to confess our sins. That is why we are to turn from our sins and turn toward Christ. Who is Jesus Christ for us today? What does it mean to follow Jesus when someone is thirsty?

What does it mean to follow Jesus when someone needs clothing or is in prison or sick?

We might add: "What does it mean to follow Jesus during the COVID-19 Pandemic?"

"What does it mean to follow Jesus during this time of racial unrest?"

“What does it mean to say Jesus is my personal Lord and Saviour, my example, my brother and friend?”

It reveals how we will live and what we will stand up for. It guides our decisions and determines the actions we take and the words we speak. It discloses the depth of our motivation and commitment to following Him

When Jesus asks us who we say He is, I don't think Jesus is asking us to just parrot back the answers we've heard or read. Maybe that is why He pushed the disciples to move from what they are hearing around them to what they are hearing within themselves.

Each of us must answer for ourselves. It is not, however, a theology or Bible exam. If anything, it is an examination of our own lives. We need to pray, be moved by God through Christ and the Spirit.

Here's the thing friends, it's ok to realise we **don't have all** the answers, and we need to be brave enough to acknowledge to others that we don't have all the answers, especially at this time as we slowly emerge from the restrictions. As we move forward it may be the case, we have more questions than answers. That is ok!

Secondly, it is okay to **never have** all the answers. The very best thing we can do is to put our trust in God, talk to Him in prayer, allow ourselves to be moulded as we need to be moulded and enjoy our journey of faith. Amen.

Pointers for prayer

- Those suffering from or bereaved by the corona virus
- All key workers, those adjusting to working from home and those who are returning to their workplace
 - The governments in England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland and their advisers as they seek to guide us out of the restrictions
- Those who are taking some time for holidays, especially remembering Alison and Sean as they take their holidays
- The pupils and staff of schools as they return to their school life routine • Businesses struggling and all who are facing redundancy and financial hardship
- Family, friends and neighbours, those most affected by the restrictions and those finding it difficult to move forward
- Those who have lost a loved one during the pandemic
- Those affected by the train derailment at Stonehaven
- Those in Beirut affected by the chemical explosion
- Churches as each take difficult decisions whether to re-open for worship and how best to implement health and safety measures
- The Church that we might offer a faithful, loving witness to Christ through this time.

Praise – CH4 167 Guide me, O thou great Jehovah (line marked with * is repeated)

1.

Guide me, O thou great Jehovah,
pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but thou art mighty;
hold me with thy powerful hand;
Bread of heaven, Bread of heaven,
*feed me till my want is o'er.

2.

Open now the crystal fountain
Whence the healing stream doth flow;
let the fire and cloudy pillar
lead me all my journey through:
strong Deliverer, strong Deliverer,
*be thou still my strength and shield.

3.

When I tread the verge of Jordan,
bid my anxious fears subside!
Death of death, and hell's
destruction,
land me safe on Canaan's side!
Songs of praises, songs of praises,
*I will ever give to thee.

Blessing

May God be gracious to us and bless us. May God's face shine upon us as we go out from here to make God's ways known upon the earth to praise God in our homes and in our streets to bring God's gladness and joy to our nations and neighbours.

And so, may the blessing of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, be with us all, now and forevermore, Amen.