

ST NICHOLAS CHURCH, SIGHTHILL

05 September 2021

*Congratulations
Margaret Weston*

*25 years of dedicated service
as our Church Officer*

Call to worship based on Psalm 124

If the Lord had not been on our side
We would have been in big, big trouble
Where does our help come from?
Well, our help is in the name of the Lord.

Praise be to the Lord,
the Maker of heaven and earth,
The head of our church – who invites us to follow
Him as a people of power, a people of praise...

Song: For I'm Building a People of Power

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fAVdz4a7s6s>

For I'm building a people of power
And I'm making a people of praise
That will move thro' this land by My Spirit
And will glorify My precious Name

Build Your church Lord
Make us strong Lord
Join our hearts Lord through Your Son
Make us one Lord, In Your body
In the kingdom of Your Son

CCLI Song # 33801, Dave Richards
© 1977 Thankyou Music (Admin. by Integrity Music)

Opening Prayer and Lord's prayer

Our Father who is in heaven. Today we meet with mixed emotions. On the one hand we grieve the loss of our Chrissie - a beloved mother, mother-in-law, grandmother, relative and special friend to many in church and community. We keep family and friends in our thoughts and prayers. On the other hand, we celebrate Margaret's 25 years dedicated service as our church office. We are grateful for the many ways Margaret and her family have been (and continue to be) a blessing to many in church and community.

Heavenly Father, we are very much grateful for your love and care that you have given us. We are here

today to praise and glorify you for your empowering presence during good and difficult times. Thank you for the many and wonderful things that you have done to our lives. Thank you for your Love, for the gift of your Son, our Saviour, and for the Holy Spirit who teaches, enables and directs us. We are one loving family. We are united in spirit and purpose. We cry together, we celebrate milestones together we go forward together.

Lord God, You knew from the foundation of the world that we shall gather here and thank You. As Jesus said, we ask and it shall be given to us. Now we thank you that you are with us here and now. Help us to love and serve you more, to grow deeper in our love for you, closer in fellowship and wider as we share your good news, and Word and through our actions, with individuals, families and groups in our communities and beyond. In Jesus' name, Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Bible Readings: John 6:1-12

Sometime after this, Jesus crossed to the far shore of the Sea of Galilee (that is, the Sea of Tiberias), and a great crowd of people followed him because they saw the signs he had performed by healing the sick. Then Jesus went up on a mountainside and sat down with his disciples. The Jewish Passover Festival was near.

When Jesus looked up and saw a great crowd coming toward him, he said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?" He asked this only to test him, for he already had in mind what he was going to do. Philip answered him, "It would take more than half a year's wages to buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!" Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up, "Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?" Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." There was plenty of grass in that place, and they sat down (about five thousand men were there). Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish. When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, "Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted."

Reflection: *Now gather the leftovers,
so that nothing is wasted.*
- John 6:12-13 NLT -



The Revised Version correctly makes a very slight, but a very significant change in the words of this verse (vs12). Instead of 'leftovers' it reads 'broken pieces.' The change seems small and insignificant, but its effect is considerable. It helps to paint a better picture of the scene and to shed light on what Jesus asked His friends to gather up.

The general notion, I suppose, is that the 'leftovers or fragments' are the crumbs that fell from each man's hands, as he ate, and the picture before the imagination of the ordinary reader is that of the apostles' carefully collecting the debris of the meal from the grass where it had dropped. But I prefer the suggestion or notion that the 'broken pieces which remain over' are the unused portions into which our Lord's miracle-working hand had broken the bread.

The apostles collected these portions and put them away carefully for future use. You see they are the abundant provision which their Lord had made, beyond the needs of the hungry thousands. If this is true, then it teaches far more beautiful and deeper lessons than a common (though also valued) teaching against wastefulness.

I suggest that Jesus was not only concerned about avoiding waste or not leaving a mess. He wanted to leave an indelible memory on His 12 closest friends. Each, in effect, received a gift of one basket of broken pieces. Once Jesus returned to the Father, these men would be faced with impossible challenges. They would find themselves in situations they couldn't begin to handle on their own. This one memory would remind them again and again that the power was from Jesus, not from their strength or resources. They had picked up the broken pieces with their own hands. They had carried the baskets. They had seen the boy's picnic lunch that had fed the huge crowd. Those broken pieces would serve them well as the tangible grace of Jesus left for them to touch. Nothing could be a more powerful reminder that their meagre resources, touched with prayer, could meet the needs of others and much, much more.

Prayer for others

Heavenly Father, how we long for this – this peace that only you can give. Peace in Kabul, Afghanistan. We pray that your peace may wash over your people. We lift up many parts of Africa, Asia and the Pacific where Covid variants cause us to fear. May these strains be mild, and may the way to healing appear.

As we experience damaged homes, lives lost, and lives changed forever. After the Earthquake Tropical Storm in Haiti, we ask for loved ones to be together. As Hurricane Ida destroyed the homes, businesses, and took lives, we lift up your people in Louisiana, USA, and pray as more damage continues to arise. God, we lift up all the natural disasters that are to come this season, and pray that only you will continue to be our beacon, and as we

experience further devastation, turmoil, and hurt, may you be our peace and in you alone may we be immersed.

God of peace, there is so much more that we long to share, a world of trauma and hurt, but also things we don't understand: So much more that only you in your amazing peace can bear. We give it all to you in your gentle and kind hand. As we lift all of this, we lift to your our gratitude and love that only comes from you in your gentle peace from above. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Song: Great is Thy Faithfulness

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ErwiBz1QA4o>

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

Chorus

**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**

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
3. Pardon for sin
and a peace that endureth
Thy own dear presence
to cheer and to guide
Strength for today
and bright hope for tomorrow
Blessings all mine
with ten thousand beside

Sending and sang Amen

Loving God, we thank you for hearing our prayers, feeding us with your word, and encouraging us in our meeting together. Take use us to love and serve you, and all people, in the power of your Spirit and in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.