

6th May 2021

The paper-version Service



To Begin: Find a Bible and a comfortable place. If safe, light a candle and read prayerfully through the service. If you have access to worship music, choose a song and listen to it as you begin or read, or even sing, the song from this Sunday's Service set out below.

Opening Prayer: Almighty God our Heavenly Father, thank you that you come out of your way to meet us where we are. Help us to receive the grace upon grace that you offer us, and to drink deeply from the springs of living water that you share with us, that today we might worship you in Spirit and truth, to the glory of your name. **Amen**



Song:

You were the Word at the beginning
One With God the Lord Most High
Your hidden glory in creation
Now revealed in You our Christ

What a beautiful Name it is
What a beautiful Name it is
The Name of Jesus Christ my King
What a beautiful Name it is
Nothing compares to this
What a beautiful Name it is
The Name of Jesus

You didn't want heaven without us
So Jesus, You brought heaven down
My sin was great, Your love was
greater
What could separate us now

Read: John 4:1-42.

What a wonderful Name...

Bridge:

Death could not hold You, the veil
tore before You
You silenced the boast, of sin and
grave
The heavens are roaring, the praise
of Your glory
For You are raised to life again
You have no rival, You have no equal
Now and forever, Our God reigns
Yours is the Kingdom, Yours is the
glory
Yours is the Name, above all names

What a powerful Name it is...

God is for the whole world: A summary of the talk given by Howard Wright.

We continue our series through John's Gospel and as Timothy said last week, John gives us clues about what the point of his whole gospel, and here, this story, is about. Our passage concludes, *'...this man really is the Saviour of the world.'* God is in the business of drawing all things back to himself, under his rule and reign, and nothing will stop this process, but we'd best be careful that we don't miss out!

All are invited: Derrick White, Baptist pastor wrote that the woman in this story, was an ethnic, domestic, moral, social, and spiritual nobody. Yet we're told that Jesus 'had' to go through Samaria, and as there was no practical need to do so – most Jews, and all Rabbis went around – this was just to talk to her!

There was no love lost between the Samaritans and the Jews. The Samaritans were a mixed-race people, who had mingled their inherited religions with following God. What they claimed as true religion the Jews despised as impure. Additionally, the Samaritans had obstructed the building of the temple in Jerusalem and constructed their own version on mount Gerizim.

But Jesus met her on her patch, and in his vulnerability, he asks for a drink. This is outrageous for their culture. Most Jews would have rather died of thirst than defile themselves in sharing a drinking cup with a Samaritan, woman, or immoral person, and this character was all three!

I'm sure we don't have any prejudices to worry about, but just to check! Who would we think twice about sharing a drink with?

Jesus is in the business of bringing all back together. He reaches out and invites all into his family regardless of race, creed, sexuality, gender or even morality – he wants us all to be transformed into his likeness as children of the Kingdom of God.

Read Galatians 3:28

Jesus goes out of his way for the nobodies, and he dies for the anybodies who will believe in him.

Leave behind your bucket and receive his Spirit: Jesus offered this woman living water, and so refreshing was this drink that she abandoned her water jar and ran to the town.

She had to let go of old ways to receive. We can but guess what these old ways were for her, guilt, shame, inadequacy just for starters – she

perhaps started striving for the best but had now sunk low.

Many of us need to let go of these same things, but we might also have habits, prejudices, bitterness, and appetites that we harbour that we need to let go of. Read Jeremiah 2:13. Don't search in the wrong places – leave your bucket and receive from Jesus.

Jesus is offering a new way to God and offering God himself, by the Holy Spirit, to live in us. As he said at the temple festival recorded in John: read John 7:37-39.

The encounter with God is by Spirit and truth. The woman told the truth about herself and her husbands and current live-in lover. She did not pretend, and she received grace upon grace and forgiveness. And you can too!

Respond to God today, seek his forgiveness and receive his Spirit.

Share your story: Jesus goes to where the woman is – he leaves his comfort zone. He didn't 'have' to go through Samaria, but he chose to! Jesus does what he sees his Father doing.

We are invited to be witnesses to what God has done, and is doing for us in Jerusalem, Samaria, and the end of the earth (Acts 1:8). To go to the anybodies and the nobodies, to the

least, the last and the lost – the 'other than us' – and share our story. If there is a God who loves me, even me, despite knowing 'everything I ever did,' why would I not respond in this way?

Jesus asks for the woman's help, with vulnerability not with condescension – we too can invite others to join in. To join us and join in, and especially as we begin to open events moving forwards.

Jesus offers the living water only when invited – the conversation might have closed before then and Jesus would not have forced his way in. Read Revelation 3:20. He is willing to give his life on the cross for us – he loves us all that much – so much, that he will not force us. It's God's kindness (says Romans 2:4) that leads us to repentance – it's our reflection of his kindness that might lead others to Jesus.

As we exit the pandemic and things begin to restart, we'll need all of us to join in – and for some of us this will be outside our comfort zone. But we are invited to invite others in with kindness.

Talk to any of our leaders or me if you'd like to be involved in future events and sharing this Jesus, who loves us in spite of knowing everything we have ever done!

Prayers: Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. (Philippians 4:4-6)

- Pray for this day, and the coming week.
- Pray for justice, mercy, peace, and hope.
- Pray for individuals, for neighbours, for family and friends.
- Pray for the Church.



Collect: 1st after Trinity: O God, the strength of all those who put their trust in you, mercifully accept our prayers and, because through the weakness of our mortal nature we can do no good thing without you, grant us the help of your grace, that in the keeping of your commandments we may please you both in will and deed; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**



The Lord's Prayer: 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.**

Blessing: Trinity Sunday: God the Holy Trinity make us strong in faith and love, defend us on every side, and guide us in truth, peace and power; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among us and remain with us always. **Amen.**

The Notices: We are now holding ticketed and socially distanced services in the building on Sundays at 9.30am. Further information on our website or by ringing our vicar, Howard.

If you know of others who would like to receive this, or you would rather not receive it; or if you find yourself isolated and not able to get neighbours, friends, or family to help, then ring Howard, 01420 563344.

