

12th September 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, 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.**

Song:

When peace like a river,
Attendeth my way,
When sorrows,
Like sea billows roll;
Whatever my lot,
Thou hast taught me to say,
"It is well,
It is well, with my soul."

*It is well, with my soul,
It is well,
It is well, with my soul.*

My sin, O the bliss
Of this glorious thought,
My sin not in part
But the whole
Is nailed to the cross
And I bear it no more.
Praise the Lord,
Praise the Lord, O my soul!

*It is well, with my soul,
It is well,
It is well, with my soul.*

And Lord haste the day
When my faith shall be sight,
The clouds be rolled back
As a scroll;
The trump shall resound
And the Lord shall descend,
"Even so" it is well
With my soul

*It is well, with my soul,
It is well,
It is well, with my soul.*

Read: John 13:31-14:14– God is Way, Truth & Life.

A summary of the talk given by Howard Wright.

Through the first half of his book John has carefully revealed Jesus as God, Messiah and King, and challenging us to believe. In this part of the book, Jesus with both an intimacy and a haste draws the disciples together, and prepares them for his coming death, and the implications of his resurrection and ascension.

Jesus has just washed his disciple's feet and now warns them that he will be leaving them but that in the meanwhile – there's a new command, love one another.

This is not a new commandment, but a new take on a current one: see Leviticus 19:18. Jesus, adds, love, as I have loved you.

How has Jesus loved us? Well, he has just washed disciple's feet, and he is about to be glorified (see 13:31-32) but this will be through crucifixion. We are supposed to love like this!



Like any classic bloke, Peter only hears Jesus' first comment, and in response to the announcement that he is leaving, asks, 'where are you going?'

Now, the disciples were probably still confused. Is Jesus going to gather troops for the new kingdom's assault. And 'why can't we come now? We've given up everything and followed you for three years — we don't want to miss out.'

Jesus points out they really can't come and as an aside warns Peter of his impending failure. He then makes plain his departure telling them of his return to his Father, and how that this is to prepare their future place, their home, their real home.

He tells them, that they know the way, and now Thomas, following Peter takes his turn at asking a silly question – 'we don't know where you're going how can we know the way?'

Jesus' response is staggering. John has prepared us for this though his Gospel, but this statement is still the philosophical and religious equivalent of an atomic bomb. Read John 14:6. There are so many implications in Jesus' statement:

Is Jesus deluded, mad, or arrogant? Well, no, he'd healed the sick, raised the dead, delivered the most brilliant moral teaching, and he's just, in an act of extraordinary kindness and servitude, washed the disciple's feet.

So, if Jesus is not deluded, mad, or arrogant, this is a statement that pins us to the wall with no escape or wriggle room – we must believe in him and follow, or we are rejecting him and the home he has for us.

Jesus is God, mighty God among us. Read Colossians 1:15-20.

Do we understand this? There is no negotiation here. This is not elitist, a just for few kind of thing, as Romans puts it, has made himself plain to us all.

And it is not intolerant – anymore than the truth always is. And it is fair to all other world views and religions, each claim to be true and unique, but there is only one who is the truth, just like there is only one answer to $2 + 2 =$ four, by the way!

Now Philip joins in with the daft questions that disciples ask and says: 'show us the Father.' Philip's question arises from a struggle to believe and understand

the magnitude of who Jesus is and so Jesus makes it even more plain. 'Philip, come on, you know! The Father and I are one – I am God among you, the Word, become flesh.'

Jesus challenges Philip and therefore us, as does the whole Gospel of John, and indeed the whole Bible, to believe. 'Believe and do greater things' he says.

Do we, will we believe? Will we follow the way, believe, and live in the truth, and receive the abundant life of God?



Jesus offers such hope, a future which transforms our present. Believe, receive, and live in love, or reject and lose direction, lose connection, home, and life itself. Do you know the Father, because there is a home for you.

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: 15th after Trinity: *God, who in generous mercy sent the Holy Spirit upon your Church in the burning fire of your love: grant that your people may be fervent in the fellowship of the gospel that, always abiding in you, they may be found steadfast in faith and active in service; 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 to be declared over yourselves, COGS, the communities around us and our whole nation. 'The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face towards you and give you peace.' (Numbers 6:24-26 NIV).

The Notices: We are now holding services in the building on Sundays at 8am. and 9.30am. And we are now live streaming the 9.30 service. This Paper Service will continue for the moment but will now become available the week after the service, rather than the week before.

Further information is on our website or by ringing our vicar, Howard. 01420 563344.

