

Sunday 18th October 2020

The paper-version Service

The church is meeting on paper, online and on Sunday at 9.30am in the Building

All of our services are online www.goodshepherdfourmarks.org.uk but this weekly sheet captures our Sunday service for those without internet.

To Begin: Find a Bible. If safe, perhaps light a candle. Find a comfortable place 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 modern song from this Sunday's Service set out below.



Opening Prayer: Father God, we thank you that you reach toward us, desiring to give us good gifts. We are not worthy of you, but you still offer your love to us. Help us today to receive your grace, your forgiveness and your very self in the person of the Holy Spirit. May we walk forward full of your Spirit, living to your praise and glory. **Amen**

Song:

Our Father high above
Hallowed be Your name
Reveal to us again who You are
All things are possible
God of the miracle
Oh, let Your will be done

Help us to love as You have loved us
Now come and build Your throne
As we go where You go
God our deliverer

We pray, for heaven...

*We pray, for heaven
Here today, Your Kingdom
To reign always
Here on earth as in heaven
Here on earth as in heaven*

Yours is the kingdom
The power and glory
Now and forever, Amen
Yours is the kingdom
The power and glory
Now and forever, Amen, Amen

You give us all we need
Forgive us everything

Read: Luke 11:1-13

What are the core skills? (A summary of the talk given by Jonathan Rooke).

Persist: Jesus in our passage is encouraging his disciples to persist in prayer and he teaches a habit of prayer.

Jesus is encouraging us to welcome into our lives those who need hospitality, to go to God in prayer and ask for the resources we need to practically love the visitor. When we do not have what our visitor needs, when we can't feed him or her from our own resources, we can go to God and ask. Jesus gives us good news. If God has told you that you are the one to help, then come to God and he will give you the bread and the fish. God will give you what you need to minister to the needs of the other.

But sometimes, the problems of others are very big, very complex and we seem to have to persist and keep knocking at the door. Jesus assures us that God will eventually respond. Jesus in verse 8 emphasises "I say to you, Ask and it will be given to you; search and you will find; knock and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks the door will be opened." Jesus seems to tell us - Do not give up. God is the parent who knows and loves you. What else



could he possibly do except give you what you need. God does not withhold good things or give bad things.

When we pray for others and for ourselves, we need to ask God for things that God wants to give. We need to spend our time asking what God wants for us and for others. As we mature in our relationship with God, we spend more of our prayer time asking him what he desires and less time telling God what we desire. We ask - What is it that you want, God? and listening for his answer.

Shape our prayers to what God desires: In our passage Jesus reassures us that God will give good gifts, eggs, and fish, if we persist because God loves us. What he will give us is the Holy Spirit. We should pray for the Holy Spirit to act.

When I pray, sometimes I decide what is really important to pray for. I often tell God what the problem is. I then instruct Him on how to solve it. I then advise him on what resources he needs to get out of his store of good things to give me

in order to bring about the desired outcome in the manner I have decided is the best way forward. And I give him a timescale in which to complete the task I have set for Him.

Sometimes, I am peaceful, I close my eyes, I sit upright, I try close down all the insistent voices in my head and I ask God, what is it that you want? How can I bless you? Where are you already in the world? What can I do with you, with the people who I come across? I try to breathe in the Holy Spirit and invite the Holy Spirit to flow through my day, my decisions, and my giving.

We need to ask what God's will is and pray for that.

Trust: Yancey says that God values the kind of faith that stays faithful, that trusts in God when 'everything fuzzes over, when God stays silent, when the fog rolls in.' Most of us have prayers for others that God does not seem to answer. God stays silent. Now what do we think and do?

Yancey calls these 'Fog times.' Nothing is working according to formulas and Jesus' promise that the father will give us the good things seem disheartening. When signs of God's concern seem obscured in a hard mist, Christians need to trust. It is less a childlike trust and instead a hang-on-at-any-cost trust. It is faith. Yancey calls it fidelity. Fidelity is a

learned trust, that out beyond the perimeter of fog, God still reigns, he has not abandoned us, he is not deaf to our prayers, no matter how it may appear. Fidelity is a trusting faith, toughened through testing and persistence. It's what we grow into. We keep trusting. Especially in the fog.



If we have longstanding, wearying, unanswered-yet, prayers, for ourselves, for our neighbour and those we love deeply – and we probably do – let us this week persist in praying them. Let us invite, in a refreshed way, the Holy Spirit inside our prayers. And as Paul says in Romans 26, Let's trust that "the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words."

Dear Lord, help us to persist in our prayers for others, shape our prayers to the shape of what you desire and keep trusting.

Prayers: Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. (Philippians 4:6)

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



Collect for 19th after Trinity: O God, forasmuch as without you we are not able to please you; mercifully grant that your Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts; 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: If you know of others who'd like to receive this, or you'd 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.

APCM: We held our APCM on Tuesday of this week. We want to thank all who have served us: Lynn Vine and Chris King-Smith, our church wardens; Paul Dorey, Helena Hunt, Alison Frater, Chris McGrath and Tim Littlewood, our PCC members; and Howard Short, Janet Foster and Frank Maloney our Deanery Synod reps. We thank God for them and thank God for those who have stepped forwards: Andy Walters and David Duffin our new church wardens; Timothy James, Howard Short, Jill Williams, David Williams, Bob Meekums, Abi Mezzullo, and Rich Gillard as PCC members; and Janet Foster, Mike Saltmarsh and Pam Maloney our Deanery Synod Reps.

Please be praying for our new leadership team.

