

29th August 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: Creator God, you sustain all things by your Word, and you reveal your power among us through Jesus and your Holy Spirit. Help us see your power at work and submit to your authority, recognise your love, receive your mercy, know your forgiveness, and live in your life to the glory and honour of your name.
Amen.

Song:

How great the chasm that lay
between us, how high the mountain I
could not climb.

In desperation, I turned to heaven,
and spoke Your name into the night.

Then through the darkness, your
loving-kindness, tore through the
shadows of my soul.

The work is finished, the end is
written. Jesus Christ, my living hope.

Who could imagine so great a mercy?
What heart could fathom such
boundless grace?

The God of ages stepped down from
glory, to wear my sin and bear my
shame.

The cross has spoken, I am forgiven,
the King of kings calls me His own.

Beautiful Saviour, I'm Yours forever.
Jesus Christ, my living hope.

*Hallelujah, praise the One who set me
free. Hallelujah, death has lost its grip
on me. You have broken every chain,
there's salvation in Your name. Jesus
Christ, my living hope.*

Then came the morning that sealed
the promise, your buried body began
to breathe.

Out of the silence, the Roaring Lion
Declared the grave has no claim on
me.

Hallelujah, praise the One...

Read: John 12:20-50 – God is Glorified.

A summary of the talk given by Jonathan Rooke.

The crowd seem to want Jesus to fit into the box they have brought for him. Some want him to confirm that he is the nationalist leader who will drive out the Romans. Some people in the crowd, even some leaders, believe in him and have the beginnings of faith but are reluctant to openly follow Jesus because of the difficult changes required to follow Jesus. So for them, leaving the darkness and walking with Jesus in the light will mean some things in their life will need to be left behind. What the crowd do well is to ask the questions: Who are you? and What are you here for? and What does it mean for my life? We ask these questions when we are enquirers into the faith, when we become Christians for the first time and, then again, as we mature and grow as Christians, we are constantly asking these questions.

Jesus tells the crowd that changes that happen as a result of following Him may be difficult, but if they are made, then Jesus will bring them new life. He talks about the seed falling to the ground and dying and how that loss enables the seed to burst through the darkness of the soil into new shoots of new life. Jesus promises that if we turn away from unhelpful things in our lives, and instead set our sights on God we will gain life with God, and he promises eternal life.

Jesus reassures the crowd that He is the light and if they walk with Him, they will be walking in light, no longer engulfed by darkness.

He reassures them that they can be secure that when they see Jesus, they are seeing God. When Jesus speaks, they are hearing what God has told him. That's who he is. The crowd even hear thunder from heaven confirming Jesus as God's son.

He tells them that if they choose to become servants with him in faith then he will be with them. And he says "My Father will honour the one who serves me."

Change is difficult, but the reward of a deeper loving relationship with God is huge.

This passage shows Jesus signalling the love between Jesus and God and how Jesus wants to love us and bring us into that loving family circle. He is making God's love for us known. He is embodying it. He is not telling us about it. He is living it out. He is loving us in action. Jesus wants us to know that he loves us, and he wants us to allow ourselves to be loved by him. When we are growing in the security that he loves us, then we are more able to love those around us, and God's purposes will be fulfilled. He wants to love us so that love flows out from us to the world around us.

So, how do we travel with Jesus and make room for new and renewed life

in the love of God as the seasons of our life change?

Margaret Silf offers a useful picture to help us out. She describes our Christian spiritual life, our journey with God, as a journey in a small boat heading out into the open sea. We can't take with us all that we have in the boat otherwise it will be too difficult to sail in open water, so we have to prayerfully ask ourselves and God some questions:



- Where would you like to sail to?
- What is the most important thing to you?
- What is the deepest desire of your heart?
- What draws you closer to God?
- What tends to pull you away?
- What do you really need to carry with you through life?
- What is the baggage you are carrying that hinders your sailing or even stops you leaving the shore you are on?
- Can you keep only what is useful or what you cherish as beautiful.

- Can you let the rest go?
- What would Jesus be saying to you about where he wants you to go?
- What do you really need to be concerned with?

Jesus in our story today invites the crowd to keep moving on with him in their journey of love and unfolding faith. In this story I am moved by the fact John records Jesus saying “My soul is troubled’ – Our God knows how we might feel when we sail into difficult water. He offers a love that when we listen to it, receive it and rest in it, can generate power to do things, give us stamina and fortitude to act compassionately.

Margaret Silf urges Christians of all seasons of life to Let Go, to sail free and trust Jesus is who he says who he is, and confidently follow in his light.



Dear God, help us to listen, to receive, to allow ourselves to be loved by you, to know you, to trust you and to bravely follow you out onto new open water.

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: 13th after Trinity: *Almighty God, who called your Church to bear witness that you were in Christ reconciling the world to yourself: help us to proclaim the good news of your love, that all who hear it may be drawn to you; through him who was lifted up on the cross, 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 from Sunday 5th of September, we will begin livestreaming 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.

