

Worship at Home Sunday 13th June

Call to worship:

Psalm 92 1-4 and 12-15

It is good to praise the Lord and make music to your name,
O Most High, proclaiming your love in the morning
and your faithfulness at night,
to the music of the ten-stringed lyre
and the melody of the harp.

For you make me glad by your deeds, Lord;
I sing for joy at what your hands have done
The righteous will flourish like a palm tree,
they will grow like a cedar of Lebanon; planted in the house of the Lord,
they will flourish in the courts of our God.
They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green,
proclaiming, "The Lord is upright;
he is my Rock, and there is no wickedness in him."

Hymn:

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty – STF 88
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VGAArtkovZQ>)

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!
O my soul, praise Him, for He is thy health and salvation!
All ye who hear, now to His temple draw near,
Join me in glad adoration.

Praise to the Lord, who o'er all things so wondrously reigneth,
Shelters thee under His wings, yea, so gently sustaineth!
Hast thou not seen how thy desires e'er have been
Granted in what He ordaineth?

Praise to the Lord, who doth prosper thy work and defend thee!
Surely His goodness and mercy here daily attend thee;
Ponder anew what the Almighty can do
If with His love He befriend thee.

Praise to the Lord, O let all that is in me adore Him!
All that hath life and breath, come now with praises before Him!
Let the amen sound from His people again;
Gladly forever adore Him.

Prayer:

We do indeed praise you, our Lord the Almighty. We praise you and thank you for the wonder of creation which is all around us. The beauty of the world and all that is in it - the forests and trees, the sea and sand, the mountains and lakes, the flowers and fauna. The animal kingdom and your amazing creation of mankind with all their abilities. We praise you Father for the amazing abilities that you have given to the human race – abilities that can create many things and that can discover so much. Thank you Father God.

But we do know, Father, that we fail badly in our love for you and our love for the World - we pray for forgiveness for our overuse of the natural resources. Our disregard of your teachings to care as custodians for all that we have - our disregard for those who are suffering and our selfish concentration on ourselves. We fail by not using our abilities to do good but rather use them for personal gain – Father forgive us.

As we think of our failings we also remember what a wonderful God you are, how great is your patience, how forgiving you are and how loving you are. But mostly we thank you for your Son and our Saviour Jesus Christ. Thank you Father God.

Amen

Reading: Mark 4 verses 26-34

He also said, “This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come.”

Again he said, “What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds on earth. Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade.”

With many similar parables Jesus spoke the word to them, as much as they could understand. He did not say anything to them without using a parable but when he was alone with his own disciples, he explained everything.

Hymn;

Morning has Broken (STF 136)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e0TInLOJuUM>

Morning has broken like the first morning
Blackbird has spoken like the first bird
Praise for the singing
Praise for the morning
Praise for them springing fresh from the world

Sweet the rain's new fall, sunlit from heaven
Like the first dewfall on the first grass

Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden
Sprung in completeness where his feet pass

Mine is the sunlight
Mine is the morning
Born of the one light Eden saw play
Praise with elation, praise ev'ry morning
God's recreation of the new day

Morning has broken like the first morning
Blackbird has spoken like the first bird
Praise for the singing
Praise for the morning
Praise for them springing fresh from the world

Talk:

I was very excited when I saw the theme of this week's service. "The growing adventure".

I have always been amazed by nature. How do such beautiful, colourful and different flowers grow from little brown bulbs or from tiny brown seeds? Why are trees so wonderful and tall and each year have fresh leaves which last for the summer and then turn golden and brown and fall. I look at the wonder of nature in total amazement.

I then began to compare it to my own growth and adventure in faith and reading the words in Mark 4 verses 26 - 34 brought home to me how my own faith grew - just like a mustard seed.

When I was young and before I found my faith. I could never understand what life was about. Why are we here? What was the purpose of life? Why are our wonderfully creative complex bodies born and then wither away and die?

It was only after I lost my mother at the age of 15 when I began to search for and recognise God that I realised why I was here and what life was about - faith answered my question - what is the meaning and purpose of life.

My faith did not happen in a flash, it started by me opening my eyes, looking, listening, and seeking God and it grew until it was an intrinsic part of my life. Just like the mustard seed and the trees of Lebanon, my faith grew stronger and more visible in every aspect of my life.

But the slow growth of faith could not happen until I opened my heart and mind to God and then all the pieces of life's jigsaw fell into place.

Throughout that growth there have been wonderful instances of God's love and support and I regularly see miracles occurring as He leads me through my life of faith with love and patience, guiding me through decisions and forgiving me for my regular failings. Faith is a wonderful gift!

Every day I meet people who are searching and who feel lost - the answer is so close if only they open their lives to Father God and Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour who are here for

each and every one of us - whatever age we are - we can all open our hearts and minds to His love and the peace that knowing God brings.

Grasp life today with all its complexity and let God in and know His peace, His love and assurance for the future

Amen

Prayer:

Father God - thank you for faith which grows like a mustard seed and keeps growing and growing - thank you for the peace and joy that loving you brings and that blessed assurance that you are there for each of us at all times.

Help us Father God to use our faith to help others who are in war-torn countries or suffering from hunger or pain - show us how we can share with our brothers and sisters across the world to ease their suffering.

We pray for the needs of the World and the leaders of the different countries and pray that nations will come together and find solutions to the crises and the environmental problems, knowing your strength and your influence in the decisions that they make.

We bring our prayers to you for our own Country and leaders that they will make wise decisions as we move forward to deal with pandemics and climate change.

We bring to you all those who are suffering at this time from illness or bereavement, Father God let them know that you are very close to them.

We pray for all these things in and through the name of your son Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

Amen

Now let us pray the prayer that Jesus taught us:

Our father who art in heaven.....

Hymn:

Go forth and tell

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TjB8wTlGAgU>)

1 Go forth and tell! O church of God, awake!
God's saving news to all the nations take;
proclaim Christ Jesus, saviour, Lord, and king,
that all the world his worthy praise may sing.

2 Go forth and tell! God's love embraces all;
he will in grace respond to all who call:
how shall they call if they have never heard
the gracious invitation of his word?

3 Go forth and tell where still the darkness lies;
in wealth or want, the sinner surely dies:
give us, O Lord, concern of heart and mind,
a love like yours which cares for all mankind.

4 Go forth and tell! The doors are open wide:
share God's good gifts let no one be denied;
live out your life as Christ your Lord shall choose,
your ransomed powers for his sole glory use.

5 Go forth and tell! O church of God, arise!
go in the strength which Christ your Lord supplies;
go till all nations his great name adore
and serve him, Lord and king for evermore

Blessing:

And now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with each of us this day and forever more

Amen