

Informal Morning Service

Tuesday 26 May 2020

Great is the Lord and worthy of all praise.

Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom, thanksgiving and honour, power and might, be to our God for ever and ever Amen.

Together we pray:

Lord, direct our thoughts, teach us to pray, lift up our hearts to worship you in Spirit and in truth, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Confession

Jesus says, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand. So let us turn away from sin and turn to him, confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

Almighty God, long-suffering and of great goodness: we confess to you with our whole hearts our neglect and forgetfulness of your commandments, our wrong doing, thinking, and speaking; the hurts we have done to others, and the good we have left undone. O God, forgive us, for we have sinned against you; and raise us to newness of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Absolution

May the Lord enrich us with his grace, and nourish us with his blessing; may the Lord defend us in trouble and keep us from all evil; may the Lord accept our prayers and forgive us all our sins, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Saviour. **Amen.**

Collect

Gracious Father, by the obedience of Jesus you brought salvation to our wayward world: draw us into harmony with your will, that we may find all things restored in him, our Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Reading

Psalm 100 1-5

O be joyful; in the LORD, all the earth; serve the LORD with gladness; and come before his presence with a song. Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and bless his name. For the LORD is gracious and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.

Pause for Thought

The book of Psalms is an amazing book of songs and prayers to God. On Sunday Jill encouraged us to have prayerful conversations with God. The book of Psalms is a good place to start that prayerful worship, adoration and calling out to God.

Psalm 100 starts out by calling us to joyful – O be joyful in the Lord, all the earth; serve the Lord with gladness and come before his presence with a song.

If you can remember before we all went into lockdown, we used to meet together for things like sporting events. When we go to a sporting event, you will see many ways of sharing that event with each other. At football and rugby there are songs sang that share the joy of watching their team together. At birthdays we sing birthday songs with gladness, when we pass tests we celebrate together in the success.

There are lots of things to be thankful and joyful for. But here in this psalm we are reminded to be joyful in all that God gives us.

The psalmist reminds us that we are God made and God owned. God made us to think and sing, to create and build, to praise and love. We are made in the image of God; we are built with the same creativity and our desires should be to share the same characteristics of God.

The bible makes a lot of comparisons about sheep and shepherd, that Jesus is the shepherd and we are his sheep. A shepherd's main job is the safety and wellbeing of the flock that means there are three things that shepherds do for their sheep, they feed them, they keep them safe, and they keep them healthy.

A good shepherd is always watching over them, God ensures we have good things to eat, the Bible is the good food we need to consume to understand fully how much God cares for us. When we know God, we know that his care for us was there before we were born and even knows how many hairs we have on our head.

A good shepherd keep the sheep safe, God wants us to be people of joy and peace, over the last few weeks we have been looking at how even when Jesus was about to leave, he reminded the disciples and us that we were not going to be alone or be abandoned. In having the joy and peace of God in our lives we are kept safe from the rigours and hardship that others face. Our outlook at these times is different, because we know that we are not alone and are safe in the hands of our loving father.

A good shepherd keeps his sheep healthy; I remember visiting a field in Devon one spring, that we were going have camp on in the summer. As we drove around the field working out where the tents would be placed that summer, I spotted a sheep well and truly tangled in the wire fence that went around the field. I got out of the car and made reassuring noises to the sheep that I wasn't going to harm him. I then spent the next 10 minutes untangling the sheep from the fence. I did that for two reasons, one to keep the sheep safe, but more importantly to keep him healthy. A trapped sheep will very quickly give up the will to live and die. God doesn't want us to be in that position, God gives us knowledge, and helps us to make choices that steer us away from things that aren't good for us. Just like the sheep stuck in the fence that I was able to release, So God wants us to be released from the things that ties us up, that make us worried or anxious. As the sheep bounded away it gave little leaps of joy as it joined the flock.

Those same leaps of joy, is how God wants us to enter his gates and his courts, with thanksgiving and praise. This is something that is really cool. In school at the end of

collective worship we use the words - God is Good – all the time, all the time - God is good. Hopefully the children go back to class knowing that we have a good God. The psalm talks about his faithful love lasting forever. Gods love never ends.

We see that never ending love in the life of Jesus and his death on the cross, his death sets up a second chance for us all to praise and worship our God. To live our lives as God intended us to do, to live in joy and gladness.

As we go about today, let us remember to do so with the joy, gladness, and peace that God wants for us and others.

Let's Pray

Lord, you are amazing. You created this world we live in. You give us the air that we breathe, the food we eat, and the knowledge to help us be more like You. We thank You and praise You for keeping us safe, for showing us the difference between right and wrong, and for forgiving when we hurt others or make wrong choices and when we totally mess up. You are our Good Shepherd, Lord, and we thank You for loving us and not leaving us alone. Help us to enter your courts with joy and take your peace and joy out into our community. We love You and we ask these things in Jesus' name, amen."

Please sit or kneel to as we use the words of our reflective pray

Lord God make your ways known upon the earth: **your saving power among the peoples.**

Renew your church in holiness: **and help us to serve you with joy.**

Guide the leaders of this and every nation: **that justice may prevail throughout the world.**

Let not the needy be forgotten: **nor the hope of the poor be taken away.**

Make us instruments of your peace: **and let your glory be over all the earth.**

A moment of silent prayer we lift to you all those that need to know your love at this time.

Lord, we ask you to accept all our prayers and answer them for your glory. **Amen.**

Eternal God, our beginning, and our end, be our starting point and accompany us in this day's journey. Scatter our darkness and open our eyes to praise you for your creation and to see the work you set before us today. Take us and use us to bring to others the new life you give in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

And now may the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, be amongst us and remain with us always Amen

Go in Peace to love and serve the Lord In the name of Christ. Amen.