**Westfield 10.30am 16th May 2021 Kath**

Call to worship Psalm 13 v 5 “ I have trusted in your steadfast love, my heart shall rejoice in your salvation. I will sing to the Lord, because he has dealt bountifully with me “

MP 1105 See what a morning

See, what a morning, gloriously bright,

with the dawning of hope in Jerusalem;

folded the grave clothes,

tomb filled with light,

as the angels announce Christ is risen!

See God's salvation plan,

wrought in love, borne in pain,

paid in sacrifice,

fulfilled in Christ the Man,

for He lives: Christ is risen

from the dead!

See Mary weeping, 'Where is He laid?'

as in sorrow she turns

from the empty tomb;

hears a voice speaking,

calling her name;

it's the Master, the Lord

raised to life again!

The voice that spans the years,

speaking life, stirring hope,

bringing peace to us,

will sound till He appears,

for He lives: Christ is risen

from the dead!

One with the Father, Ancient of days,

through the Spirit,

who clothes faith with certainty,

honour and blessing, glory and praise

to the King crowned

with power and authority!

And we are raised with Him,

death is dead, love has won,

Christ has conquered;

and we shall reign with Him,

for He lives: Christ is risen

from the dead!

Stuart Townend and Keith Getty © 2003 Thankyou Music CCLI 150801

Opening prayer

Loving God, we worship you alone this morning

We bring our gifts and we bring ourselves.

We bring our hopes and we bring our fears,

we bring our experiences of this last week.

It’s hurts and it’s delights

We bring our thoughts of those for whom we want to pray particularly today.

These include

Our families and friends,

those living near to us and those far away.

We bring all we have done this week and all we failed to do.

We bring our relationships with each other in Westfield fellowship

and with the wider church family in Wyke

We lay all these and our unspoken prayers before you.

If anything we bring is good in your sight - affirm and bless it

If anything is lacking in purpose and truth - enlighten and guide us.

Bring us all as we worship together in spirit wholeness of spirit, mind and body

We ask these things through the precious name of our Saviour, your Son Jesus Christ as we say the prayer Jesus taught us ……

Lord’s Prayer & Mission Prayer

MP 746 What a friend we have in Jesus

What a friend we have in Jesus,

all our sins and griefs to bear!

What a privilege to carry

everything to God in prayer!

O what peace we often forfeit,

O what needless pain we bear -

all because we do not carry

everything to God in prayer!

Have we trials and temptations?

Is there trouble anywhere?

We should never be discouraged:

take it to the Lord in prayer.

Can we find a friend so faithful

who will all our sorrows share?

Jesus knows our every weakness -

take it to the Lord in prayer.

Are we weak and heavy-laden,

cumbered with a load of care?

Precious Saviour, still our refuge!

Take it to the Lord in prayer!

Do Thy friends despise, forsake thee?

Take it to the Lord in prayer!

In His arms He'll take and shield thee,

thou will find a solace there.

JOSEPH SCRIVEN (1819-86) CCLI 150801

John 17:6-19

Acts 1:15-17, 21-26

**Prayer is vital**

The step into the Christian way of life

is about putting past behind and beginning again.

One door must close before another can be opened

That is what happened at the Ascension of Jesus.

After the numerous appearances to the disciples

and many other followers

there had to be a point at which the earthly ministry of Jesus came to a close.

A time and place when he finally left his people

so that the building of the church

through the ministry of his followers could begin.

Our first reading is before the Ascension.

It takes place in the Upper Room.

Jesus has washed his disciples feet.

He has shared the bread and wine

and used them as symbols of his body and blood.

He has told them what will happen to him

but how that will be a victory over sin and death

not a defeat and failure.

Then we read part of his prayer for the disciples.

Jesus knew both the value of prayer and the power of prayer

and the piece we read includes

prayer of thanksgiving,

prayer for unity,

prayer for protection,

and prayer for strength and courage.

The Thanksgiving is for all who have responded to his word,

who have listened to his teaching,

believed in him

and committed themselves to follow him.

They are to be his continuing presence in the world.

The prayer for unity is essential for the future role of the disciples.

They need to be one

so that they will remain together until Pentecost,

encourage and support one another

and have the same desire and purpose to spread the Good News.

The prayer for protection

is to help them cope with the loss of his departing

and the lack of his physical presence with them.

He knows they will be exposed to the world’s hatred,

as is about to be clearly seen

in his arrest, trial and crucifixion,

because they do not belong to the world.

A picture of them being in the world

but not of it.

Evil is real in our world

but they were called to bear witness

to the power of his love

and to the truth seen in Jesus Christ

and so speaking out about the right and wrong ways to live.

The prayer for strength and courage

was to enable the disciples

to cope with the horror of the next few days

and then have the faith to step out into the world

ready to face what ever will be set against them.

In praying for the disciples

Jesus is entrusting them to God

but he is also preparing them

by again telling them what lies ahead.

It is a road Jesus himself has already travelled

and they will need all the help God can give them

to travel it themselves.

The Acts reading today

follows Jesus Ascension

and having lost one of the original twelve disciples

with Judas taking his own life

there is a need to find a replacement for him.

In a way twelve is a symbolic number

linking them with the past and the twelve tribes of Israel

electing another

would give them the security of feeling

they were a complete number again.

We are reminded here that although we always focus on the twelve

there are many more followers of Jesus

and the Acts passage tells us of 120 gathering together

and Peter standing up to explain what must happen.

There is the need for a replacement

but it cannot be just anyone.

The person must have been a witness to the resurrection of Jesus,

i.e. been there at one of his appearances,

and also been a part of the group

following and listening to the teaching of Jesus

from the very beginning when John the Baptist began preparing the way.

He must also have been part of the group for the whole time,

the whole three years of Jesus ministry,

right up to the point of his Ascension.

So they are looking for someone who is a believer

and has had the experience of travelling with Jesus

and learning from him.

It was essential for the ongoing unity of the disciples

that the person had been with them

and shared many of the experiences with them.

Two men were proposed,

Joseph and Matthias.

What a task to decide which one would take on the important role.

How did they decide?

They prayed just as Jesus had taken time out to pray

when ever he had important decisions to make.

It was not a matter of deciding who they liked best

or who they thought might be best

but who God was calling to that task.

They were led to choose Matthias

but that is not about Joseph not being good enough.

We are all called to serve God with the particular gifts He has given us.

That does not make one more important than another

but each person taking different responsibilities

and with his past experience I am sure

Joseph would continue to use his gifts for the glory of God

and the building of the church.

So we are reminded this morning of the importance of prayer.

Not only in building up our relationship with God

but in seeking to find his will

as we make the decisions about the direction and work of our church.

That direction involves all of us,

in our personal and private times of prayer,

in the wider prayer life of the whole church

and in our shared prayer in worship.

We too should offer our prayers of thanksgiving

for all God’s goodness to us.

We too should offer prayers for unity

that we might find and follow the way God has set for us together.

We too should offer prayers for protection

as we have to stand up against the challenges evil brings in our world.

And, we too should offer prayers for strength and courage

that each one of us might be able

to step forward into where God is leading our individual lives.

We are in the world, and it can be no other way,

but we are not of the world

so our task is to show it how it can change for the better.

We are not all called to the same tasks

but we can and must pray for each other

that we will use our gifts

in continuing to be a part of the church of Jesus Christ

building his kingdom here on earth.

God answers faithful and honest prayer

and gives us all we need to be his people.

Prayer definitely makes an enormous difference

so we need it

and our world earnestly needs our prayers too.

MP 567 Prayer is the soul’s sincere desire

Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,

uttered or unexpressed,

the motion of a hidden fire

that trembles in the breast.

Prayer is the burden of a sigh,

the falling of a tear,

the upward glancing of an eye,

when none but God is near.

Prayer is the simplest form of speech

that infant lips can try;

prayer the sublimest strains that reach

the majesty on high.

Prayer is the contrite sinner's voice,

returning from his ways;

while angels in their songs rejoice,

and cry, 'Behold, he prays!'

Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,

the Christian's native air,

his watchword at the gates of death;

he enters heaven with prayer.

No prayer is made on earth alone;

the Holy Spirit pleads;

and Jesus on the eternal throne,

for sinners intercedes.

O Thou by whom we come to God ,

the life, the truth, the way,

the path of prayer Thyself hast trod;

Lord, teach us how to pray!

James Montgomery (1771-1854)

Prayers of Intercession

We voice our cares and concerns, Our hopes and thanks

Knowing that God always listens to our prayers

And answers in His time and His way

Father God We pray that you will make yourself known through us

To all those Who pass by our church day by day

Who we meet as we go about our daily activities

The world goes from one crisis to another

Help us to be part of helping the sense of truth and justice

Be part of everyday decision making

Help us play our part in bringing peace to your world

Instill in our hearts your voice to lead and direct our thoughts and actions

Father God

Help us to take more seriously

Our responsibility to help each other move forward in faith

We pray for each person in our fellowship

And for our friends and family members

Some who know you

Others who have drifted away or never known you

Give us the right words to plant seeds of love for you

Some in our community are going through difficult times

We pray for your comfort, reassurance, healing and peace of mind

For one another sharing this service at home and for those we name in our hearts.

Father God Even as we pray now

There will be those in our community

 journeying through death to eternity with you

We pray for them and their loved ones

And for those who have recently died

Help all those who grieve to know they are upheld in prayer

We thank you for all who have helped us know you and drawn us closer to you along our individual faith journeys

We offer our prayers in the name of your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ

Amen

MP 1016 When the music fades

When the music fades,

all is stripped away

and I simply come;

longing just to bring

something that's of worth,

that will bless Your heart.

I'll bring You more than a song,

for a song in itself

is not what You have required.

You search much deeper within

through the way things appear,

You're looking into my heart.

*I'm coming back to the heart of worship,*

*and it's all about You,*

*all about You, Jesus.*

*I'm sorry, Lord,*

*for the thing I've made it,*

*when it's all about You,*

*all about You,Jesus.*

King of endless worth,

no-one could express

how much You deserve.

Though I'm weak and poor,

all I have is Yours,

every single breath.

I'll bring You more than a song,

for a song in itself

is not what You have required.

You search much deeper within

through the way things appear,

You're looking into my heart.

*I'm coming back to the heart of worship,*

*and it's all about You,*

*all about You, Jesus.*

*I'm sorry, Lord,*

*for the thing I've made it,*

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