

Worship at Home

Sunday 20th March 2022

Prepared by Revd Stuart Innalls

Superintendent Minister
South Molton and Ringsash Circuit

As we come in quietness to Worship our Great and Almighty God, let us share together the words of Isaiah:

Reading: Isaiah 55 v 1 - 9

StF 6: Father we love you

**Father, we love you, we worship and adore you:
glorify your name in all the earth.
Glorify your name, glorify your name,
glorify your name, in all the earth.**

**Jesus, we love you, we worship and adore you:
glorify your name in all the earth.
Glorify your name, glorify your name,
glorify your name, in all the earth.**

**Spirit, we love you, we worship and adore you:
glorify your name in all the earth.
Glorify your name, glorify your name,
glorify your name, in all the earth.**

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Prayers of Praise and Thanksgiving

Father God, we come today knowing that despite various illnesses, troubles and problems, we have so much to praise and thank you for. We praise you for creation around us. Even in winter there is beauty in the bare branches of a tree. We also see the promises of spring. Reminding us that after

death there is new life. Snow drops, daffodils, buds awaiting the sunlight. Birds singing in the hedgerows. So, Lord accept our heartfelt praise. Even if we have been confined to our homes we thank you for warmth and comfort. Remembering that many parts of the world, they have not these comforts.

Prayers of confession

We confess Lord that we are not always as thankful as we should be. We take for granted your precious love and care for us. Also, the many blessings you have given to us. So, Lord forgive us when we are not thankful, when we forget. When we perhaps do not take the time to be quiet with you. We ask these prayers in the Name of Jesus. **Amen**

StF 20: Be still for the presence of the Lord.

**Be still, for the presence of the Lord,
the Holy One, is here;
come bow before him now
with reverence and fear:
in him no sin is found —
we stand on holy ground.
Be still, for the presence of the Lord,
the Holy One, is here.**

**Be still, for the glory of the Lord
is shining all around;
he burns with holy fire,
with splendour he is crowned:
how awesome is the sight —
our radiant King of light!
Be still, for the glory of the Lord
is shining all around.**

**Be still, for the power of the Lord
is moving in this place;
he comes to cleanse and heal,
to minister his grace:**

**no work too hard for him —
in faith receive from him.
Be still, for the power of the Lord
is moving in this place.**

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Dedication of our gifts and lives.

Lord, we bring to you our offerings, just a small part of what you give to us, asking that you accept these with our lives in your service. In Jesus name. **Amen**

Reading: Luke 13 v1 - 9

Reflection

When illness or disaster has come upon people down through the ages, sadly many have believed that it was because of the sin of the individual. It was and is a cruel and heart-breaking doctrine, as Job in the Old Testament well knew.

Often it is the greatest saints who suffer badly. Obviously as we look at life many disasters are brought about because of the sin and waywardness of individuals. Yet much suffering comes upon people who in no way deserve it. We do not know the answers to this. In some suffering it may be the frailty of human flesh. There are no answers, only the words of Jesus in St. John Ch.9. v. 1-3. when asked who sinned, this man or his parents. Neither, said Jesus.

Jesus also said in verses 2-5 of our reading. “Do you think these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other people from Galilee? Is that why they suffer? Not at all.”

Jesus was calling the people to repentance, just as He calls us all. Jesus came to offer us all forgiveness and new life in Him.

The story of the fig tree is a bit more puzzling. The fig tree occupied a specially favoured position. Fig trees grew among thorn trees and apple trees in vineyards. The soil was poor and shallow, so trees were grown where there was soil enough for them. The fig tree had a more than an average chance and had not proved worthy of it. It was taking nourishment from the soil but giving nothing in return.

The parable is speaking to us of the Gospel of a second chance. It is the way of Jesus to forgive if we repent and give another chance, forgiven by His Grace. If God's appeal and challenge come again and again in vain, we by deliberate choice have shut ourselves off from God. But Jesus is waiting, with open arms for each one to come to Him. To accept him as Lord and Saviour of our lives. He knocks on the door of our hearts and waits.

We can think of the lovely painting of Holman Hunt. The picture of Christ holding the light and knocking on the door. That door has no handle on the outside. Jesus waits for us to open the door of our hearts. What a transformation of our lives when we accept Him into our hearts. As an old Methodist Hymn says:

*Heaven above is softer blue
Earth below is sweeter green
Something lives in every hue
That Christless eyes have never seen.
Amen*

MP 748 What a wonderful change

What a wonderful change in my life has been wrought - Since Jesus came into my heart!
I have light in my soul for which long I had sought
Since Jesus came into my heart!

*Since Jesus came into my heart!
Since Jesus came into my heart!*

*Floods of joy o'er my soul like the sea billows roll,
Since Jesus came into my heart!*

I have ceased from my wand'ring and going astray,
Since Jesus came into my heart!
And my sins which were many are all washed away
Since Jesus came into my heart!

I'm possessed of a hope that is steadfast and sure,
Since Jesus came into my heart!
And no dark clouds of doubt now my pathway
obscure - Since Jesus came into my heart!

There's a light in the valley of death now for me,
Since Jesus came into my heart!
And the gates of the City beyond I can see,
Since Jesus came into my heart!

I shall go there to dwell in that City I know,
Since Jesus came into my heart!
And I'm happy, so happy as onward I go,
Since Jesus came into my heart!

*Rufus Henry McDaniel (1850-1940).
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Prayers of Intercession

As we hear of so many people in great need, so Lord we pray for the areas in our world where people live in poverty. Where there is hunger and lack of shelter. Where women and children live in fear.

God of love protect them. Lord hear our prayer

We pray for all who need hospital care and medicines. our hearts go out to them. We pray for peace in the troubled areas. For a greater sharing of the worlds resources.

God of love protect them. Lord hear our prayer

We pray for our own land, for those in authority over us. For a government that seems to be in turmoil. Lord in your wisdom, give guidance. We ask these things in the precious name of Jesus Christ. **Amen**

Time for silent prayer

The Lord's Prayer

MP 988: How deep the Fathers love for us

**How deep the Father's love for us
How vast beyond all measure,
That He should give His only Son
To make a wretch His treasure.**

**How great the pain of searing loss –
The Father turns His face away,
As wounds which mar the Chosen One
Bring many sons to glory.**

**Behold the man upon a cross,
My sin upon His shoulders;
Ashamed, I hear my mocking voice
Call out among the scoffers.**

**It was my sin that held Him there
Until it was accomplished;
His dying breath has brought me life –
I know that it is finished.**

**I will not boast in anything,
No gifts, no power, no wisdom;
But I will boast in Jesus Christ,
His death and resurrection.**

**Why should I gain from His reward?
I cannot give an answer;
But this I know with all my heart –
His wounds have paid my ransom.**

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Blessing

May the love and care of God our Father be around us.
May the peace of Jesus Christ surround each one.
May the inspiration of the Holy Spirit guard and guide us all. **Amen**

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