



## Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> October

### PREPARATION

#### Welcome

Leader O Lord, open our lips  
**All and our mouth shall proclaim your praise.**  
Leader O God, make speed to save us.  
**All O Lord, make haste to help us.**  
Leader Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
**All as it was in the beginning is now  
and shall be for ever. Amen.**  
Leader Praise the Lord.  
**All The Lord's name be praised.**

#### Hymn     **518 O praise ye the Lord**

O praise ye the Lord!  
praise Him in the height;  
rejoice in His word,  
ye angels of light;  
ye heavens adore Him  
by whom ye were made,  
and worship before Him,  
in brightness arrayed.

O praise ye the Lord!  
praise Him upon earth,  
in tuneful accord,  
ye sons of new birth;  
praise Him who has brought you  
His grace from above,  
praise Him who has taught you  
to sing of His love.

O praise ye the Lord!  
all things that give sound;  
each jubilant chord,  
re-echo around;  
loud organs, His glory  
forth tell in deep tone,  
and sweet harp, the story  
of what He has done.

O praise ye the Lord!  
thanksgiving and song  
to Him be outpoured  
all ages along:  
for love in creation,  
for heaven restored,  
for grace of salvation,  
O praise ye the Lord!

## Opening activity – Relay race

### Confession

Leader The gospel calls us to turn away from sin  
and be faithful to Christ.

As we offer ourselves to him in penitence and faith,  
we renew our confidence and trust in his mercy.

**All Almighty God, our heavenly Father,  
we have sinned against you and against our neighbour  
in thought and word and deed,  
through negligence, through weakness,  
through our own deliberate fault.  
We are truly sorry and repent of all our sins.  
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, who died for us,  
forgive us all that is past  
and grant that we may serve you in newness of life  
to the glory of your name. Amen.**

### Absolution

Leader Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent,  
have mercy upon *us*,  
pardon and deliver *us* from all your sins,  
confirm and strengthen *us* in all goodness,  
and keep *us* in life eternal;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**All Amen.**

### Collect     *(Prayer for the day)*

Faithful Lord,  
whose steadfast love never ceases  
and whose mercies never come to an end:  
grant us the grace to trust you  
and to receive the gifts of your love,  
new every morning,  
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

### This time at home ~ Martin and Bernadette Whipp

### Hymn     **I'm gonna jump up and down**

|                                    |                             |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| I'm gonna jump up and down         | Gonna deafen the crowd      |
| Gonna spin right around            | I'm gonna send my praise to |
| I'm gonna praise Your name forever | heaven                      |
| I'm gonna shout out loud           |                             |

I will run this race and I will never  
stop  
I'll follow Jesus till the day I drop  
I can do all thing through Christ  
who strengthens me

When you've got such a lot  
When you've got not a lot  
WHAT? BE HAPPY!!!

## Bible Readings

*John 14:1-6* – Sue Harvey, St Peter's

<sup>1</sup>"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God ; trust also in me.  
<sup>2</sup>In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. <sup>3</sup>And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. <sup>4</sup>You know the way to the place where I am going."  
<sup>5</sup>Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?"  
<sup>6</sup>Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Reader     This is the word of the Lord  
All         Thanks be to God

*2 Timothy 4:6-18* – Helen Maguire, St Peter's

<sup>6</sup>For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure. <sup>7</sup>I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. <sup>8</sup>Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day--and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

<sup>9</sup>Do your best to come to me quickly, <sup>10</sup>for Demas, because he loved this world, has deserted me and has gone to Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia, and Titus to Dalmatia. <sup>11</sup>Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, because he is helpful to me in my ministry.

<sup>12</sup>I sent Tychicus to Ephesus. <sup>13</sup>When you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas, and my scrolls, especially the parchments.

<sup>14</sup>Alexander the metalworker did me a great deal of harm. The Lord will repay him for what he has done. <sup>15</sup>You too should be on your guard against him, because he strongly opposed our message.

<sup>16</sup>At my first defence, no one came to my support, but everyone deserted me. May it not be held against them. <sup>17</sup>But the Lord stood at my side and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. And I was delivered from the lion's mouth. <sup>18</sup>The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Reader This is the word of the Lord  
All Thanks be to God

Sermon Rachel Johnson

2. Tim 4.6-18, John 14.1-6

Can you think of a time when you've felt weary? Not the satisfying weariness you feel after an afternoon of gardening or a 5K run, but the sort of weariness where you wake up and wonder how you'll make it through another day of this pandemic let alone another 6 months, where you wonder if your hands will have the strength to make a cup of tea, where you count the minutes until your next dose of painkillers and even choosing what to have for lunch feels like too big a decision.

When I read this passage from 2 Timothy that's how weary Paul seems to me. He's not the Paul who preached with such fire and passion, or the Paul who exhorted the Corinthians to run in such a way as to win the prize. He's not even the Paul who's torn between his desire to be with Christ and his desire to continue doing God's work on earth. This Paul is cold and lonely, stuck in a Roman prison cell and facing execution. All his zeal and energy have been poured out like a drink offering. Imprisonment and suffering never stopped him before but now he's almost empty. If we use Paul's analogy of a race, he's collapsed in an exhausted heap just before the finish line. How can he carry on? How do we carry on in the face of our own frailty, exhaustion, despair, depression, burnout? Isaiah writes 'those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength' but what does that look like?

Let's see what Paul's doing to combat his weariness. Firstly he looks back at his own life. Looking back can be bittersweet, can't it? A mixture of good memories and regrets and frustration at what we can't do any more. But as Paul looks back he's able to say, 'I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.' How wonderful to be able to say that. Doubtless he's made mistakes but he's remained faithful to Christ ever since that day on the road to Damascus and he can see how Christ has remained faithful to him. Paul is running this race in Christ's strength just as he always has done.

Next, Paul looks to his present situation and he does several important things here. First, he accepts that he can't carry on preaching and pastoring his churches- it's time to pass the baton on to Timothy. That's not to say his ministry is at an end but it has changed. Secondly, he asks for help. He doesn't let pride hold him back, he's not embarrassed to be vulnerable, he doesn't think that Timothy's got more important things to do, he needs help and he asks for it. And thirdly, he hands over the burden of his grievances and regrets to the Lord. All this reminds me of what Jesus said to those who are weary and

burdened – ‘come to me and I will give you rest’. It might sound strange to start talking about rest in the middle of a race but maybe that’s because we’re misunderstanding what this race is all about. Paul would be the first to say that the race isn’t about achieving great things and earning a prize – Jesus has already won that for us. The race is just another way of expressing the baptism charge – ‘remain faithful to Christ to the end of your life’. And part of being faithful means turning to Christ when we need rest.

Finally, Paul looks ahead to his future. For years he’s been longing to see Jesus face to face and now that prize is drawing closer. More than anything, it’s this vision of eternal life with Christ that gives Paul the hope he needs to carry on and finish the race. He knows that Christ has prepared a place for him and one day this prison cell will be a fleeting memory, nothing at all compared to the surpassing greatness of being with Christ. Hope is the lifeline that will take him safely over the finish line.

Fear, despair, guilt, regret – these things whisper to us ‘you can’t trust God’, ‘you’re useless, God doesn’t want you’, ‘covid-19’s never going to be over, might as well give up now’. They weigh us down and try to lure us out of the race and away from God. Paul whispers to us ‘bring those burdens to Jesus and he will take them from you’, ‘come to God in your weakness and he will give you the strength to get through today’, ‘fix your eyes on the hope God has promised and it will guide you home.’

One more thing before I finish; a few years ago I was watching Kingfield school sports day and the final race was twice round the sports field. As most of the children were heading into the home strait one girl was struggling; she’d fallen way behind. And her friend ran back to her, took her by the hand and they crossed the finish line together. May we be like those two girls, giving and receiving help, being Christ to each other and fixing our eyes on the hope that’s set before us.

### Hymn     **275 I heard the voice of Jesus say**

I heard the voice of Jesus say,  
‘Come unto Me and rest;  
lay down, thou weary one, lay  
down  
thy head upon My breast’:  
I came to Jesus as I was,  
weary, and worn, and sad;  
I found in Him a resting-place,  
and He has made me glad.

I heard the voice of Jesus say,  
‘Behold, I freely give  
the living water; thirsty one,  
stoop down and drink, and live’:  
I came to Jesus, and I drank  
of that life-giving stream;  
my thirst was quenched, my soul  
revived,  
and now I live in Him.

I heard the voice of Jesus say,  
'I am this dark world's light;  
look unto Me, thy morn shall rise,  
and all thy day be bright':  
I looked to Jesus and I found  
in Him my star, my sun;

and in that light of life I'll walk  
till travelling days are done.

Words by Horatius Bonar  
Music by John Bacchus Dykes

Creed      *(We declare our faith by saying the Apostle's Creed)*

**All      I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Prayers ~ Geoff Pugh, St Peter's

**Heavenly Father,** We praise and thank you for the blessings you have brought to us through your holy church, our church of England, For our fellowship in Christ with you and then with one and other, for the teaching of the scriptures and for the preaching of your word, through so many online resources now, but especially from our own parish ministry, Rachel today, Jonathan and Sam so often, and our occasional preachers and worship leaders. May they feel our thanks and your blessing on them.

**Lord, In your mercy,  
hear our prayer**

**Lord God,** We are in times of great uncertainty and anxieties which are affecting all our lives. We pray that you help us, through the Inspiration of the Holy Spirit, so that we are strong, as was St Paul though his life and journeys, when facing daily stressful situations, however trivial some are. Help us to be kind to each other, to put away from ourselves thoughts or actions of malice, or bitterness, or thoughtless complaint;  
Lord, when necessary, please help us to forgive each other, as you forgive us through the sake of your son, sacrificed for us on the cross.

**Lord, In your mercy,  
hear our prayer**

**Lord God**, There is little relief to our anxieties as we look outside our country to world events. We pray that you may have mercy on our distracted and suffering world, that you will direct the counsels and support of all who are working towards the removal of the causes of strife and suffering, in healthcare or under the dictates and policies of national governments. May everyone be helped to recognise and work towards your kingdom of righteous peace and love.

**Lord, in your mercy,  
hear our prayer**

**Lord God** you are the creator for new ways of life, you are the restorer of lost times currently much destroyed by the pandemic We ask for your care and compassion for all those suffering or anxious about their future education, work or employment,,. We pray this morning especially for all those committed to governing our nation, in these turbulent times. We ask that you bless them with special gifts of wisdom and understanding so that in their deliberations they may consider all matters calmly, act wisely and strongly, and uphold what is right and just in your sight.

**Lord, in your mercy,  
hear our prayer**

**Lord and Heavenly Father**, whether as a virtual or physically real church gathered in your presence this morning, particularly we pray for the families and friends who are suffering the recent bereavement of *Tricia Wright, John Taylor and Kenneth Purser*

All of us today will know people who are perhaps friends, or acquaintances, or are family who are suffering with crises in their lives, which may be epidemic related or otherwise, or with illness. We particularly pray today for *Eileen and Peter Bliss, John Hunter, Catherine McCormack (daughter of Doreen McKinnon, Olive Park and Joy Storkey*. In a moment of silence, we hold before you these, and others suffering who are known to us personally.

*Silence*

**Lord God**, your love and care for them is infinitely greater than ours: may they be comforted and given patience, healed if it is your will, or strengthened in coping with their needs or sufferings, in the knowledge of your love and the comfort and joy of your everlasting glory.

**Lord in your mercy,  
hear our prayer**

**Lord God**, you have given us the comfort of our friends and families; look in love on those from whom we are currently separated, especially in these times. Protect them, keep them from harm or being afraid, and prosper them; in your own good time may we be re-united in fellowship with them.

**Lord in your mercy,  
hear our prayer**

## The Lord's Prayer

**Leader** Concluding our prayers, now let us all say together the prayer that our Saviour and Lord taught us:

**All** **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.**

## Notices

### Hymn     **51 Be thou my vision**

Be Thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;  
naught be all else to me, save that  
Thou art –  
Thou my best thought, by day or by  
night,  
waking or sleeping, Thy presence my  
light.

Be Thou my wisdom, Thou my true  
Word;  
I ever with Thee, Thou with me, Lord;  
Thou my great Father, I Thy true son;  
Thou in me dwelling, and I with Thee  
one.

Be Thou my battle-shield, sword for  
the fight,  
be Thou my dignity, Thou my delight.  
Thou my soul's shelter, Thou my high  
tower:

raise Thou me heavenward, O Power of  
my power.

Riches I heed not, nor man's empty  
praise,  
Thou mine inheritance, now and  
always:  
Thou and Thou only, first in my heart,  
High King of heaven, my treasure  
Thou art.

High King of heaven, after victory  
won,  
may I reach heaven's joys, O bright  
heaven's Sun!  
Heart of my own heart, whatever  
befall,  
still be my vision, O ruler of all.

Words selected and edited by Eleanor Hull  
Music arranged by Martin Shaw

Worshipping ▶ Loving ▶ Sharing ▶ Growing



## Blessing

*This or another blessing may be said*

**Leader** Go forth into the world in peace; be of good courage;  
hold fast that which is good; render to no one evil for evil;  
strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak;  
help the afflicted; honour everyone; love and serve the Lord,  
rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit;  
and the blessing ...

**All** **Amen.**