



## Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> June 2021

### 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Trinity - Morning Worship

#### Welcome

#### The Greeting

We come from scattered lives to meet with God.

**All**            **Let us recognise his presence with us.**

As God's people we have gathered:

**All**            **let us worship him together.**

#### Hymn        **949 Thy Kingdom come, O God**

Thy kingdom come, O God,  
thy rule, O Christ, begin;  
break with thine iron rod  
the tyrannies of sin.

Where is thy reign of peace  
and purity and love?  
When shall all hatred cease,  
as in the realms above?

When comes the promised time  
that war shall be no more,  
and lust, oppression, crime  
shall flee thy face before?

We pray thee, Lord, arise,  
and come in thy great might;  
revive our longing eyes,  
which languish for thy sight.

Men scorn thy sacred name,  
and wolves devour thy fold;  
by many deeds of shame  
we learn that love grows cold.

O'er lands both near and far  
thick darkness broodeth yet:  
arise, O Morning Star,  
arise, and never set!

#### Opening activity        *'Hope for the future video'*

#### Confession

Leader        God shows his love for us in that,  
while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.  
Let us then show our love for him by confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

Wash away all my iniquity  
and cleanse me from my sin.

Lord, have mercy.

**All**            **Lord, have mercy.**

Against you, you only have I sinned

and done what is evil in your sight.

Christ, have mercy.

**All Christ, have mercy.**

Create in me a pure heart, O God,  
and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

Lord, have mercy.

**All Lord, have mercy.**

**Absolution** *(we are reminded that God forgives all who repent)*

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

**All Amen**

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

O God, the protector of all who trust in you, without whom nothing is strong,  
nothing is holy: increase and multiply upon us your mercy; that with you as our  
ruler and guide we may pass through things temporal that we lose not our hold  
on things eternal; grant this heavenly Father, for our Lord Jesus' Christ sake,  
who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now  
and for ever.

**Everyday Faith** Audrey Clark ~ St Marks

**Hymn**      **633 Thank you, Jesus, Thank you**

Thank you, Jesus, thank you, Jesus  
Thank you, Lord, for loving me [x2]

You went to calvary  
There you died for me  
Thank you, Lord, for loving me [x2]

You rose up from the grave  
To me new life you gave  
Thank you, Lord, for loving me [x2]  
Thank you, Jesus, thank you, Jesus  
Thank you, Lord, for loving me [x2]

## Bible readings

### *Isaiah 43.16-21 – Mick Moore, St Mark's*

<sup>16</sup>This is what the Lord says- he who made a way through the sea, a path through the mighty waters, <sup>17</sup>who drew out the chariots and horses, the army and reinforcements together, and they lay there, never to rise again, extinguished, snuffed out like a wick: <sup>18</sup>"Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. <sup>19</sup>See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland. <sup>20</sup>The wild animals honour me, the jackals and the owls, because I provide water in the desert and streams in the wasteland, to give drink to my people, my chosen, <sup>21</sup>the people I formed for myself that they may proclaim my praise.

### *Luke 5.33-39 – Tamara Pike, All Souls*

<sup>33</sup>They said to him, "John's disciples often fast and pray, and so do the disciples of the Pharisees, but yours go on eating and drinking."

<sup>34</sup>Jesus answered, "Can you make the guests of the bridegroom fast while he is with them? <sup>35</sup>But the time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; in those days they will fast."

<sup>36</sup>He told them this parable: "No one tears a patch from a new garment and sews it on an old one. If he does, he will have torn the new garment, and the patch from the new will not match the old. <sup>37</sup>And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the new wine will burst the skins, the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. <sup>38</sup>No, new wine must be poured into new wineskins. <sup>39</sup>And no one after drinking old wine wants the new, for he says, 'The old is better.' "

## Sermon – Jonathan

### **"See I am doing a new thing" – Isaiah 43 – Sunday 27 June**

Do you like new technology? Are you waiting for the latest Apple iPhone? Are you looking forward to a bigger, flatter, clearer smart TV with internet connection so you can watch this online service on the biggest screen possible? Are you in love with your new revolutionary Dyson vacuum cleaner? Each provides you with a new quicker, easier, better, more efficient way of doing something.

Or do you dread being told by your child or grandchild to get a new phone or TV or vacuum cleaner when you have only just got used to how the current one works, and you preferred the one before that which was simpler!

We all react differently to new things: either with excited anticipation of change, improvement and novelty or with dread of the comfortable familiar disappearing and having to exert ourselves with adjusting to the new, or a mix of both.

Our current sermon series title, 'The new normal' reflects a phrase that has been in use for many months now as the world thinks about life post-pandemic. I wonder what reaction the phrase stirs up in you? Excitement, fear, uncertainty? We heard some hopes for the future in our opening activity that relate to this new normal. I'm sure many would like everything to go back to how things were before we ever heard of COVID-19. Others

undoubtedly would like to forge ahead into a new future where we can put into practice lessons from the effects of the pandemic to make the world a better place.

I'm sure these thoughts were in the minds of the Jewish exiles in Babylon as they heard from their prophets like Isaiah, Jeremiah, Zechariah and Haggai who spoke of God returning them to their homeland. Last week we heard how Jeremiah gave encouragement to these exiles that for the duration of their time in Babylon they should settle down, enjoy life there, be a blessing to the people around them. But now those years of being in the midst of the crisis of exile are coming to an end and God is stirring things up. As we heard 2 weeks ago from Mick Isaiah prophecies that God will use the heathen Persian King Cyrus to bring about his purposes to restore the Jews in exile to their homeland.

And in today's reading from Isaiah 43 God is preparing them for this latest exodus by using imagery from the first exodus from Egypt to the Promised Land.

*<sup>16</sup> This is what the LORD says –*

*he who made a way through the sea, a path through the mighty waters,  
<sup>17</sup> who drew out the chariots and horses, the army and reinforcements together, and they lay there, never to rise again, extinguished, snuffed out like a wick:"*

God grabs their attention to listen to his words through Isaiah by referring to his miraculous deeds for the Israelites 1000 years earlier when he parted the Red Sea to rescue them from the pursuing Egyptians. This event is the major miraculous event in Israel's history recalled many times throughout the Old Testament, such as in Psalm 77, to remind the Israelites of God's power to rescue them and his favour upon them. Remembering how we came to faith or when God has spoken to us or miracles he has done in our life as Marsha spoke about last week similarly strengthens our faith in times of trouble or doubt. But then God dramatically says in v18 "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past", before preparing them for their future by saying in v19 "See, I am doing a new thing". Despite the fact that the past glories of God have often sustained them God is telling his people in exile not to dwell on that past, not to live on the wonderful stories of yesteryear, but to be prepared for a new thing that he will do, a second exodus, this time from Babylon back to the Holy Land. The past can teach and illustrate, but must not limit or bind. God is revealed in the past, but is more than the past revealed. He always has new good things in store.

And what a thing it will be. Like dry riverbeds in the hot, barren wilderness being filled with refreshing life-giving water, God will bring forth new life and hope from a dry and hopeless place. Like wild animals honouring God so will unlikely people, far from God, honour him through their actions.

And he does this because as v20-21 says he loves them, they are his chosen people, his children, and he wants to give them hope and a good future. But ultimately he wants his people, his children to proclaim his praise.

However, he recognises that they might miss this new thing, this upcoming return from exile as a new work of God – "Do you not perceive it?" – v19. This prophecy is there to prepare them so that they won't miss this as God's great work for them his chosen people. They have not been forgotten, God has great things in store, they should be expectant! But the emphasis on a 'new thing' prepares them for something different, not a return to their old ways back in their former land. They need a new mindset, a new way of thinking and being, a 'new normal'.

Jesus' little parable in Luke 5 of garments and wineskins says something similar. You don't tear a new garment in order to use it as a patch for an old one, that's a waste and won't work. Similarly you don't put new wine that is fermenting into an old wineskin that has lost its elasticity or it will burst – everyone knows that (or at least they did back then!). In other words a new work of God, as Jesus was bringing in through his life and teachings, requires a new mindset, an openness to change which sadly the Jewish leaders in Jesus' day were not prepared to accept.

This has so many parallels for us as we enter a 'new normal' post-COVID. Parallels individually, as churches, as a global community. Alexander White said that the Christian life was a 'series of new beginnings'. It starts with our salvation and rebirth, but doesn't stop there. God is always doing a 'new thing', because he is active, creative, adaptive. That may excite us or terrify us just as new technology does, but it is a fact of being a Christian and particularly so now. So what might it mean for our global community, our churches and ourselves?

For our global community we are recognising that we need to support poorer nations with the vaccination programs because the effects of COVID in other countries affect us too. And I think there are signs of a desire for equity that will stretch beyond vaccinations, to provide greater financial support to reduce poverty and improve health care and quality of life in poorer nations as well as tackle climate change for the good of all nations. There is a long way to go, but I think God is stirring things up and we should pray.

For us as churches in this parish I think God is saying a few new things for us in this season post-pandemic:

- We need to focus on Him, trust in Him, pray to Him rather than focus and rely on services, activities and events
- We need to be braver in sharing our faith, individually and corporately
- We need to be more open to change, to spontaneity
- We need to share the load and not rely on certain people to do so much

As you will see in N&N we are bringing in a new service pattern in September for a number of reasons which we believe is responding to what God is doing amongst us at present. We will also be dropping some of our regular pre-COVID activities, adapting others and starting a few new ones as well as keeping much the same. These changes some of you may find hard, you may miss aspects of what was there before, but let's pray that God uses this 'new normal', which we have prayed about and sought God about for his glory and be supportive of them. And let's be open to what other new things God might want to do amongst us that we are not aware of yet!

And individually what might God be saying to you? What new thing might he want to do in you or through you? For me God is telling me to be braver, more courageous, something I have often struggled with. What about you? Take time to listen to God, to reflect on what he might have been saying to you through the pandemic. How can you better love your family and friends, your world, your church, yourself and keep these all in balance?

While I was preparing this I received an email from Mick Moorse who read Isaiah 43 for our online service today. He felt God saying to us words from 2 Kings 3:16-17: "Dig ditches", because God is going to send rain and we need those ditches to catch the rain rather than let it soak away. In other words how are we preparing ourselves and our churches for this

new thing that God is doing? Are our hearts ready, are our lifestyles open to change, are we prepared to adapt to the 'new normal'? God is speaking afresh to us today through Isaiah to help us be ready and to perceive these wonderful new things that he is doing. Let's be open, ready, adaptable and expectant and pray 'Come Holy Spirit, do a new thing in me'.  
AMEN

## Hymn      Waymaker

You are here,  
You're moving in our midst  
I worship You  
I worship You

You are here,  
You're working in this place  
I worship You  
I worship You

*Way maker, miracle worker,  
promise keeper  
Light in the darkness, my God  
That is who You are  
[x2]*

You are here,  
touching every heart  
I worship You  
I worship You

You are here,  
healing every heart  
I worship You  
I worship You

You are here,  
turning lives around  
I worship You  
I worship You

You are here,  
mending every heart  
I worship You  
I worship You

Even when I don't see it,  
You're working  
Even when I don't feel it,  
You're working  
You never stop,  
You never stop working  
You never stop,  
You never stop working

## Creed

All

*(We stand to declare our faith)*

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.**

**We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.**

**We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

Prayers ~ Jenny Jones

Dear God, thank you for the opportunity we have to come together to worship you, whether in-person or online, this morning. Thank you for the community that we have, both locally to us and our brothers and sisters in Christ around the world. Help us to work together as a community, to encourage one another, to celebrate together and mourn together, to correct each other and to guide one another. We pray for Christians around the world who must gather and worship in secret, for fear of persecution or violence. Strengthen these secret churches in numbers and in faith.



Thank you for our community here in Woking, thank you for the opportunities that we have to serve those in need around us, and to share God's light. We pray especially for those we know who are unwell or struggling at this time: for Mary Angus, Eileen & Peter Bliss, Patrick Chapman, Brenda Collard, Gloria Johnson (Eliot Johnson's mother), Barbara Jones, Lynda Kirk, Barbara Lloyd, Trevor Lloyd, Doreen McKinnon, Denise Randall, Jacquie Still, and Joy Storkey. Bring them healing, bring them comfort and bring them peace.

Thank you for our teachers and schools. As we come towards the end of the school year for many students, we pray that they will be able to relax and celebrate their achievements. We pray especially for those who will be moving schools, going to secondary school or college or university for the first time, for those leaving education and starting a job. Be with them as they navigate these chances, give them wisdom and courage.

Thank you for our country and for the safety and freedom that we are blessed with. Thank you for all those who look after us and have supported us throughout the pandemic. For our doctors, nurses, healthcare workers, paramedics; for our police and fire service; for foodbank volunteers. We pray for Covid-19 cases and hospital admissions to decrease across the country and across the world, for businesses to be able to open and begin to recover, for those who have lost their jobs to be able to find work.

Thank you for the world we live in, and all of the different people who live upon it. You created each one of us, you know us, and you made us in your image. Help us to show love, respect and kindness to everyone we meet. Help us to disagree with kindness, truth and compassion, rather than with anger, unkindness and hostility. Guide us as we navigate challenging situations and conversations, give us the words to say, and the courage to be obedient to you.

We pray for situations around the world, where people are living in fear. For the children kidnapped from their schools in Nigeria, for the people of India devastated by the impact of Covid-19, for indigenous families in Canada as more graves are discovered. We pray for your hand to be upon these situations. We pray for peace across the world, for families to be reunited, and for an end to suffering. Help us to recognise how we can help in these



situations and others that we see around us, let us be your hands and feet on the Earth serving your people. Amen.

We finish our prayers by saying together the Lord's Prayer:

### The Lord's Prayer

Leader      So we pray with confidence as our Saviour 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      **189    *God is working His purpose out***

God is working his purpose out,  
as year succeeds to year:

God is working his purpose out,  
and the time is drawing near:  
nearer and nearer draws the time,  
the time that shall surely be,  
when the earth shall be filled  
with the glory of God,  
as the waters cover the sea.

From utmost east to utmost west,  
wherever foot has trod,  
by the mouth of many messengers  
rings out the voice of God:  
Listen to me you continents,  
you islands look to me,  
that the earth may be filled  
with the glory of God,  
as the waters cover the sea.

We shall march in the strength of God,  
with the banner of Christ unfurled, that the  
light of the glorious gospel of truth  
may shine throughout the world;  
we shall fight with sorrow and sin  
to set their captives free,  
that the earth may be filled  
with the glory of God,  
as the waters cover the sea.

All we can do is nothing worth  
unless God blesses the deed;  
vainly we hope for the harvest-tide  
till God gives life to the seed:  
nearer and nearer draws the time,  
the time that shall surely be,  
when the earth shall be filled  
with the glory of God,  
as the waters cover the sea.

### Blessing

Leader      May the peace of God, which passes all understanding,  
keep our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

and the blessing of God Almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always.

**All**      **Amen.**

Leader      Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

**All**      **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

**Worshipping ▶ Loving ▶ Sharing ▶ Growing**

