

Worship at home – 14TH June

Key: Scriptures: Matthew 9:36-38

Key Themes:

- ³⁶ As he saw the crowds, his heart was filled with pity for them, because they were worried and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷ So he said to his disciples, “The harvest is large, but there are few workers to gather it in. ³⁸ Pray to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers to gather in his harvest.”

Call to Worship:

Worship God with Gladness.
Come into his presence and sing his Praises.

Hymn: For the healing of the nations

For the healing of the nations,
Lord, we pray with one accord;
for a just and equal sharing
of the things that earth affords.
To a life of love in action
help us rise and pledge our word.

Lead your people into freedom,
from despair your world release,
that, redeemed from war and hatred,
all may come and go in peace.
Show us how, through care and goodness,
fear will die and hope increase.

All that kills abundant living,
let it from the earth be banned:
pride of status, race or schooling,
dogmas that obscure your plan.
In our common quest for justice
may we hallow life's brief span.

You, Creator-God, have written
your great name on humankind;
for our growing in your likeness,
bring the life of Christ to mind;
that by our response and service
earth its destiny may find.

BY FRED KAAAN

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Prayers:

Loving Lord, your grace draws us to your presence; your peace unites us in your love, even though we are apart. Your hope inspires us to praise your glory. May our worship be worthy of you.

We come before you gracious God, just as we are.

We come with our weakness and our vulnerabilities.

We come with our fears and apprehension, and they are many for some of us right now.

We come with our faith and with our doubt.

We come to offer and to receive.

We come to you, the king of love –

In the name of your Son, and in the power of your Spirit.

Lord, you have called us to the privilege of service, but we have failed to serve.

You have given us the blessing of peace, but we have chosen discord.

You have loved as a shepherd tends his sheep, but we have strayed from your way.

Forgive us, and show us the path of obedience and faithfulness that your Son trod.

In his name we pray.

We unite with the whole world in praising you, creator God.

We come before you with gladness and thanksgiving.

We praise your goodness. We praise your faithfulness. We praise your tenderness.

We are yours and we worship you. We bless your name forever more.

Amen

Psalm 100

A Hymn of Praise

100 Sing to the LORD, all the world!

²Worship the LORD with joy;

come before him with happy songs!

³Acknowledge that the LORD is God.

He made us, and we belong to him;

we are his people, we are his flock.

⁴Enter the Temple gates with thanksgiving;

go into its courts with praise.

Give thanks to him and praise him.

⁵The LORD is good;

his love is eternal

and his faithfulness lasts forever.

Reflection:

- We gather in our separate homes for yet another week. I guess some of you are wondering when it might get back to 'Normal', but I wonder if we need to ask what our new normal might look like.
- If we think of that in the light of the psalm then what ever it looks like we must praise God.
- For a while we might not be able to sing hymns of praise so how can we praise God in a different way.
- Maybe I could teach you the sign Language and we can praise God with our hands.
- The Psalmist continues and reminds us that we are like sheep, at the moment we are scattered but we can still hear the masters voice and know that we belong to him.

Matthew 9:35-10:8 Good News Translation (GNT)

Jesus Has Pity for the People

³⁵ Jesus went around visiting all the towns and villages. He taught in the synagogues, preached the Good News about the Kingdom, and healed people with every kind of disease and sickness. ³⁶ As he saw the crowds, his heart was filled with pity for them, because they were worried and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷ So he said to his disciples, "The harvest is large, but there are few workers to gather it in. ³⁸ Pray to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers to gather in his harvest."

The Twelve Apostles

10 Jesus called his twelve disciples together and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and every sickness. ² These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James and his brother John, the sons of Zebedee; ³ Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew, the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; ⁴ Simon the Patriot, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Jesus.

The Mission of the Twelve

⁵ These twelve men were sent out by Jesus with the following instructions: "Do not go to any Gentile territory or any Samaritan towns. ⁶ Instead, you are to go to the lost sheep of the people of Israel. ⁷ Go and preach, 'The Kingdom of heaven is near!' ⁸ Heal the sick, bring the dead back to life, heal those who suffer from dreaded skin diseases, and drive out demons. You have received without paying, so give without being paid.

Reflection:

- All three of the readings set for today are concerned with our identity as people of God.
- First, from Exodus 19, we read about the interaction between God the people of Israel shortly after they were delivered from Egypt in the Exodus.
- Here the author outlines the covenant that God is proposing to the Israelites.
- It calls for their obedience to God's instructions and includes the new identity, that they will be a Holy Nation, set apart to be priests and in receipt of the promise.
- Secondly, in Paul's letter to the Romans he reminds his readers that through Christ's death and Resurrection we have been put right with God, and now we can claim our rightful place, that was set before time as God's children.
- Jesus in Matthew's gospel likens the people of Israel to sheep without a shepherd.
- Jesus himself steps into the role and offers guidance, food for thought and living water, so that the lost sheep might find their true identity within the overwhelming love of God's sheep fold.
- So where do we find our identity.
- At the moment we are shattered.
- We are like those sheep. However, Jesus is near, he is still calling each of us by name and he is still offering us the spiritual food we need and the life giving water of life.
- We might have to work a bit hard to find it, as we cannot gather in one building each Sunday morning but God is as alive now as He ever was.
- Christ told his disciples that the harvest is large, but that the workers are few.
- Over this period of lockdown, the number of people attending on line service had increased three fold.
- People are looking for something to hope and trust in at this difficult time.
- So, as we move forward we have a message that could offer that hope.
- How can we begin to be the people of God who shepherd the flock toward the safety of the sheep fold?
- During this time of lockdown have we asked ourselves where our identity lies. Does it lie in the person of Christ and being children of God?
- If it does then how are we going to share the Good News that was given to us?
- There are of course no right or wrong answers. I just pose these questions for our own reflection.

Prayers of Intercession:

Loving Lord, you call and equip us to serve you. Watch over those who risk their safety by caring for those in need. At this time we continue to pray for all those who are key working and who are keeping the country going. Strengthen and protect all those who are persecuted for sharing their faith, particularly for those in places where living out their Christian faith is not allowed.

Lord, Hear us,

Lord, graciously hear us.

Loving Lord, you empower us to live out our discipleship. Give wisdom, imagination and the strength to persevere to those who face apathy as they seek to live out their discipleship.

Lord, hear us.

Lord, graciously hear us.

Loving Lord, you understand what it means to suffer for what is right. Give comfort and courage to those who are unjustly imprisoned, intimidated and tortured because of their faith. We also remember those who are targeted for being different. Help us to stand with those who have no voice and speak out against injustice. We continue to remember the family of George Floyd and pray for justice.

Lord, hear us,

Lord graciously hear us.

Loving Lord, you taught us to pray for those who abuse and hurt us. We pray for people who persecute those who hold different beliefs to their own; may they be touched by faith and their hearts be opened to love, that the world may be united in your love.

Lord hear us.

Lord graciously hear us.

Amen.

Hymn: Send me Jesus

Send me Jesus,
send me Jesus,
send me Jesus,
send me Lord.

Lead me Jesus,
lead me Jesus,
lead me Jesus,
lead me Lord.

Fill me Jesus,
fill me Jesus,
fill me Jesus,
fill me Lord.

Blessing:

Go to serve; go to love; go to bring healing; go to bring peace; go in the strength of the Father. Go in the power of Jesus; go united by the Spirit. GO – and know his grace.

Amen