

KSAT Worship Service for Sunday – 18th October 2020

THEME – ‘Dry-stone walling!’

Welcome to the KSAT Worship Service for this week on the theme ‘Dry-stone walling!’ Many thanks to Bernard Staley for the Reflection, to Avril & Dacre Swinbank for the prayers and Heather for the hymns.

Call to worship ‘*Unless the LORD builds the house, the builders labour in vain.*’ (Psalm 127v1)

Prayer Jesus, you are the solid rock, which cannot be shaken. May our lives and our church fellowships be built on You and Your love; and may we stand strong in the storms of life, witnessing to Your mercy and grace, and the hope that is found only in Jesus Christ, the Way, the Truth, and Life. **Amen.**

Hymn – Christ Is Our Corner-

Stone <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gPM9U0jqfzw>

Christ is our corner-stone, On him alone we build;
With his true saints alone The courts of heaven are filled:
On his great love Our hopes we place Of present grace And joys above.
Oh, then with hymns of praise These hallowed courts shall ring;
Our voices we will raise The Three in One to sing;
And thus proclaim In joyful song, Both loud and long, That glorious Name.
Here, gracious Lord, do Thou for evermore draw nigh;
Accept each faithful vow, and mark each suppliant sigh;
In copious shower on all who pray, each holy day, Thy blessings pour.
Here may we gain from heaven The grace which we implore;
And may that grace, once given, Be with us evermore,
Until that day When all the blest To endless rest Are called away.

Prayers

Thank you, Lord, for this new day. Thank you that we can join together to worship You – in many different situations. Please make Yourself known to us through our worship, our prayers and our understanding of Your word today. Let us remember that we worship the God who created the world, the God who wants all people to be drawn to His love and grace, to know His forgiveness. Help us to put aside everything that stops us worshipping You and bless us all as we share in this service today. Lord, You are worthy of all our praise, You are the God who never fails to keep His promises. We worship You today. **Amen**

Forgive us, for the wasted moments, spent selfishly or just filling time; for the hurtful moments, caused by our words or actions; for the thoughtless moments, lacking in love; for the destructive moments, when we let our anger rip; for the missed moments, lost by hesitation and doubt. Jesus says to all who truly repent, ‘Your sins are forgiven’ and Lord, we are thankful. **Amen**

Reading – Matthew 7 v 24-29

“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”

When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at His teaching because He taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law.

(You may like to watch the following video of the story –
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jb0YTNdYxls>)

Hymn MP 473– My hope is built on nothing less

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wDqJ593eAJ4>

My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus' name.

*On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand; all other ground is sinking sand,
All other ground is sinking sand.*

When darkness veils His lovely face, I rest on His unchanging grace;
In every high and stormy gale, my anchor holds within the veil.

His oath, His covenant, His blood support me in the whelming flood;
When all around my soul gives way, He then is all my hope and stay.

When He shall come with trumpet sound, Oh, may I then in Him be found;
Dressed in His righteousness alone, faultless to stand before the throne.

Reading – 1 Corinthians 3 v 9-17

For we are co-workers in God's service; you are God's field, God's building. By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as a wise builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should build with care. For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person's work. If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward. If it is burned up, the builder will suffer loss but yet will be saved—even though only as one escaping through the flames.

Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in your midst? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person; for God's temple is sacred, and you together are that temple.

Reflection

You might think I have chosen a strange subject for a reflection today, considering the resurgence of the Corona virus. However, I always tend to think of things that have been important in life and I find encouragement in the everyday, even in the hardest of times. For nearly all of my life, (and I'm not quite finished yet!) I have been a builder of dry-stone walls, as have my father, my four brothers, two nephews and both our sons. I still find walling rewarding and a relaxing way to spend a few hours; it can be an opportunity to draw near to God in the quietness of the outdoors. There are many things about a dry stone wall that resemble the Christian life and can be applied even in the midst of this pandemic.

The first thing you need in a wall is a good foundation, a solid start and one or two verses come to mind:

In 1 Corinthians 3 v 10-11 we read: *'By the grace God has given me I laid a foundation as an expert builder and someone else is building on it. Every one of us must be careful how we build, but, no one can build other than on the true foundation already laid which is Jesus Christ.'*

Christ speaking to Peter *'And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church'* (Matthew 16v18). Despite his failings Jesus knew Peter was someone He could rely on. What a challenge for us today. What (or who) is the foundation of our lives and faith and are we taking care how we build? Can Jesus rely us as He relied on Peter?

So we build our wall. The foundation first then the bigger stones go in the bottom for stability and strength. This reminds me that those who are stronger, can and must, carry and support those who may be weaker or more vulnerable. We have seen this throughout the pandemic, neighbours and friends giving courage and help to those who couldn't go out and were lonely or afraid. Whether we are like the big stones or the smaller ones, we all need each other.

This leads me further up the wall and next come the fillings. These go in the middle of the wall and, again, are important. These small stones say a lot to me; once the wall is complete they can't be seen, but they give strength to the wall. Many people in our church life and outside the church do so much, quite often unnoticed, but very important. We have seen this over the last few months, people tirelessly working to help and support others; we need to remember these people in our prayers and be like them, whether we are 'seen' or 'hidden'.

About halfway up we find those big long stones that go right across the width of the wall. Some call them 'throughs' and some 'thruffs', but they are of great importance to the strength of the wall – they bind the two sides of the wall together, helping to stabilise the structure. We might liken them to our times of prayer, bible study and worship together, which has been so difficult in recent times. We would say with the song: 'Bind us together Lord, bind us together', even when we have been physically apart.

So we press on with our wall, building up towards the top. The stones get smaller but no less important. Each stone needs to cross the one below; at least that is the theory! No straight joints! In other words, each stone relies on another for the strength of the whole. How we need each other, never more so than in these times; we all need encouragement and we need to be thankful for all those 'on the front line' – doctors, nurses, care-workers, paramedics and ordinary people who go the second mile. Like the hymn says:

'He bids us build each other up and gathered into one,
To our high calling's glorious hope, we hand in hand go on'.

Finally we come to the top of our wall and put on the 'top stones' or 'coping stones'. This is the crowning glory! It needs to be straight, level and true and, although these stones are in a prominent place, they are no more important than any other stones in the wall. This reminds us as Christians that whatever our age or ability we are equally important to God. In these changing, challenging times God has a plan and purpose each of us. As it says in *Matthew 21v42*: 'The stone which the builders rejected has become the Capstone.'

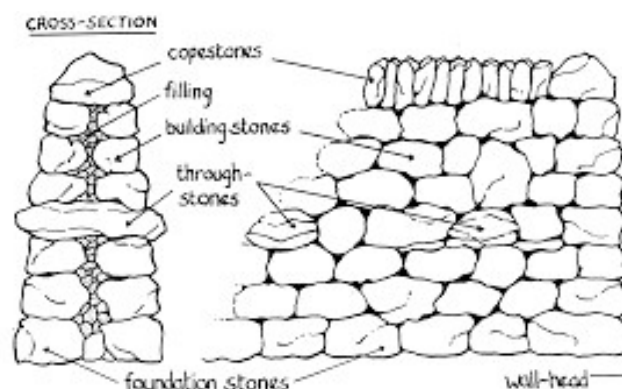
Be it a hidden filling or a prominent top stone, for every stone, however rough, God will find a place.

So that is the wall finished! Next time you pass by a wall, just stop and think, 'My life should be like that wall, solid, firm, strong and also a place of shelter for all who need it'. When the cold east wind blows and the sleet is horizontal, you will find the sheep huddled in the shelter of a well-built wall. The storm we are passing through now is something we have never had to face before and we may be worried, scared even; so many have lost their lives and perhaps many more will, but as we read in *2 Corinthians 5v1*: 'Now we know if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, and eternal house in heaven, not built with human hands'. What a hope, what a prospect.

We sing a song in the Male Voice Choir which says it all:

'Thou art my rock, Oh blessed Redeemer
Thou art my refuge where I may hide,
Thou art my rock to shelter and bless me, ever in safety abide.

Thou art my rock when kingdoms and nations, rulers and crowns have crumbled to dust,
Thou shall remain my rock of salvation, rock everlasting; Thee will I trust'



Hymn MP 825 – Faithful One <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uxviwvjyg1w>

Faithful one, so unchanging; ageless one, You're my rock of peace
Lord of all I depend on You; I call out to You Again and again
I call out to You Again and again

You are my rock in times of trouble You lift me up when I fall down
All through the storm, Your love is The anchor, My hope is in You alone

Prayers of Intercession

Dear Lord,

We come to You today and thank You for the privilege we have of being able to pray for others. We thank you that so often we have been the recipient of others' prayers and we come before You now with confidence, according to Your will and know that You will hear us.

We pray for our Government and those in positions of authority who have important and difficult decisions to make. Please give them wisdom and guidance as they strive to determine the best way forward in the Coronavirus pandemic, giving them strength and perseverance to carry out their roles. We pray for all Christians in Government, that they may witness Your love to everyone they meet.

We bring before You a world that is broken. We pray for the weak and vulnerable in our own communities, both those who are known to us and those who aren't. We live in a world where some of us throw out food while others go to bed hungry, a world where some people have all the modern amenities of life at their disposal and yet others struggle to find clean water to drink. May we learn to share with one another and in this way, come to share in Your generosity to all. We pray for the work of the Upper Eden Food Bank and ask that they may continue to provide relief to the many families who are struggling with lack of food.

We pray for all those for whom Coronavirus has had a huge impact. We pray for those who are lost, those who are hurting, the lonely, the sick and the bereaved. Send Your comfort, Your peace and Your calming presence to these people, that they may know Your presence with them. We pray that Your healing hand may rest upon those who are suffering with this disease now and those who are struggling with health issues left behind because of the virus. For our doctors, nurses and supporting staff who are involved in the fight against Coronavirus, we pray that You will sustain them and inspire them to give Your life-saving services with care, love and compassion. We think of those who are involved in research and development of drugs to help fight this pandemic – give them wisdom and guidance as they work, that there may soon be an effective medicine to combat the virus.

We place into Your care all the refugees and migrants throughout our world, for those who don't have anyone to love and care for them, for those who don't have anyone to protect them. We pray for the agencies who are working to bring relief to these people, often in very difficult circumstances. Give them grace and love to help those in need and may they know our love and thanks for all they are doing to heal and help so many people. Bless them in these challenging days and bless their families and we pray that they may know Your protection and peace.

We pray for all those who work with children and young people, for teachers, for support staff and for youth workers. Bless them as they nurture the next generation, protect them and be close to them.

We lift up those in our community, our circuit and our church. We pray for those who follow You and ask that You will help us to influence others for good, help us to be salt and light pointing others to You. Deepen our love for You and for the people around us. Be with all our church communities and help us all to grow stronger and deeper in our faith, that we may share Your love with those we meet.

Lord, we know You are the one who can do all things and we bring these prayers to You in confidence that You hear us. We pray that Your will may be done and that Your name may be glorified in us. We pray that You will use us to help people around us in any way we can. Open our eyes and make us aware of the opportunities we have to bless others in need. Help us not to be selfish, help us to share and help us to remember that all that we have is given to us from You.

We commit these prayers to you in Jesus name. **Amen**

Lord's Prayer

Hymn - Let us build a house <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gKJqcv8SdnQ>

Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can safely live,
a place where saints and children tell how hearts learn to forgive.
Built of hopes and dreams and visions, rock of faith and vault of grace;
here the love of Christ shall end divisions:

All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.

Let us build a house where prophets speak, and words are strong and true,
where all God's children dare to seek to dream God's reign anew.
Here the cross shall stand as witness and as symbol of God's grace;
here as one we claim the faith of Jesus:

Let us build a house where love is found in water, wine and wheat:
a banquet hall on holy ground where peace and justice meet.
Here the love of God, through Jesus, is revealed in time and space;
as we share in Christ the feast that frees us:

Let us build a house where hands will reach beyond the wood and stone
to heal and strengthen, serve and teach, and live the Word they've known.
Here the outcast and the stranger bear the image of God's face;
let us bring an end to fear and danger:

Let us build a house where all are named, their songs and visions heard
and loved and treasured, taught and claimed as words within the Word.
Built of tears and cries and laughter, prayers of faith and songs of grace,
let this house proclaim from floor to rafter:

The Grace