

KIRKBY STEPHEN APPLEBY AND TEBAY CIRCUIT SERVICE 28-6-20

THEME: A CUP OF COLD WATER

Prayers written by James Law, rest of service by Jackie Betts.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Jesus we are here.....Saviour we are here.....Master we are here....

We are here for you. (SF 27)

OPENING HYMN – Come let us Sing

(Robert Walmsley)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3BZfXTCUbr8&list=RD3BZfXTCUbr8&start_radio=1

Come let us sing of a wonderful love, tender and true
Out of the heart of the Father above, streaming to me and to you:
Wonderful love dwells in the heart of the Father above.

Jesus, the Saviour this gospel to tell, joyfully came;
Came with the helpless and hopeless to dwell, Sharing their sorrow and shame;
Seeking the lost, saving, redeeming at measureless cost.

Jesus is seeking the wanderers yet; why do they roam?
Love only waits to forgive and forget, home weary wanderers home.
Wonderful love dwells in the heart of the Father above.

Come to my heart, O thou wonderful love; Come and abide;
Lifting my life till it rises above, envy and falsehood and pride;
Seeking to be, lowly and humble, a learner of thee.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, as we come to You in prayer, we are coming to One who made us, who loves and cares, and who provides for us. All that we are and all that we have is because of Your grace and Your giving. Thinking of all Your blessings to us, for all those who have been so helpful during these last months, how it's brought us together, there has been such lovely feelings of love and care. Just how thankful we need to be.

But most of all You gave us Your only Son – Jesus came to love, heal and forgive. He came that we might become Your children. Lord help us never to forget what it cost You to forgive us – as the hymn-writer reminds us:

*Bearing shame and scoffing rude, in my place condemned He stood;
Sealed my pardon with His blood. Hallelujah! What a Saviour!*

And as Scripture says (Eph 4v32), You call us, Your children, 'to be kind to each other, tender hearted, forgiving one another, just as God has forgiven us,' because we belong to Christ.

*May our desire be to be like Jesus. Our desire to be like Him
His Spirit fill me, His love overwhelm me, in deed and word to be like Him.*
(words written in front of a hymnbook)

Amen

LORD'S PRAYER.

HYMN - O God you search me

(Bernadette Farrell – Based on Psalm 139)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mEGc3_D19Vo

O God, You search me and You know me, all my thoughts lie open to Your gaze.
When I walk or lie down, You are before me, ever the maker and keeper of my days.

You know my resting and my rising. You discern my purpose from afar,
And with love everlasting You besiege me: in every moment of life or death, You are.
Before a word is on my tongue, Lord, You have known its meaning through and through.
You are with me beyond my understanding: God of my present, my past and future too.

Although Your Spirit is upon me, still I search for shelter from Your light.
There is nowhere on earth I can escape You: even the darkness is radiant in Your sight.

For You created me and shaped me, gave me life within my mother's womb.
For the wonder of who I am, I praise You: safe in Your hands, all creation is made new.

BIBLE READING – Romans 6 v 12-23

¹²Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. ¹³Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to Him as instruments of righteousness. ¹⁴For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law but under grace.

¹⁵What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means!

¹⁶Don't you know that when you offer yourself to someone to obey them as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey – whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience which leads to righteousness? ¹⁷But thanks be to God, that though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted. ¹⁸You have been set free from sin and become slaves to righteousness.

¹⁹I put this in human terms because you are weak in your natural selves. Just as you used to offer the parts of your body in slavery to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer them in slavery to righteousness, leading to holiness. ²⁰When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness. ²¹What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? These things result in death!

²²But now that you have been set free from sin and become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. ²³For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord. **Amen**

BIBLE READING Matthew 10 v 40-42

⁴⁰“He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives the One who sent Me. ⁴¹Anyone who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and anyone who receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man will receive a righteous man's reward. ⁴²And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth he will certainly not lose his reward. **Amen.**

REFLECTION.

BE LIKE JESUS..... LITTLE THINGS ARE IMPORTANT..... MEET THE NEED.

When lockdown first began, as well as an excellent written circuit service, I was depending very much on the TV services (unfortunately my You-tube was not working!) so I could see someone else and sing with other people as I worshipped. Things have improved –I can now get sound on my You-tube and, since lockdown began to ease, have been enjoying Garden and Chicken Church (curious? ... get in touch!). However as I read this week's lectionary passages and prayed about the theme, 'A cup of cold water', I was reminded of words of St David quoted a few times on the TV services: "Be joyful, keep the faith and do the little things".

Before reflecting on those words, and the words of Jesus, '*If anyone gives even a cup of cold water....*' (Matt 10 v42), I want to reflect a bit more on the words which Paul wrote to the church in Rome. Part of the passage is entitled 'Slaves to righteousness' and a commentator on the passage reminds us, 'In certain skilled crafts, an apprentice trains under a master who trains, shapes and moulds his apprentices of his craft'. As spiritual people, we chose a master and are called to pattern ourselves after Him. Two weeks ago the service included the lovely hymn 'I want to walk with Jesus Christ'. Can we make those words our prayer?

I want to learn to speak of Him, my life must show that He lives in me.

My deeds, my thoughts, my words must speak all of His love for me.

I want to learn to read his word, For this is how I know the way

To live my life as it pleases Him, in holiness and joy.

What changes could we make during/after lockdown to be more like Jesus?

BE LIKE JESUS –to whom LITTLE THINGS ARE SO IMPORTANT.

Jesus' teaching – many of the parables, Jesus' actions –blessing the children, His comment on the widow's mite, and His words, in today's gospel reading – '*If anyone gives even a cup of cold water*' – all remind us of the importance of little things. Yes it is a 'big' thing – a big responsibility, a big privilege to be God's church in Britain in this 21st century and in this pandemic, especially if, as Paul encouraged the Roman Christians, we try to follow Jesus' teaching with our whole heart (v17). And, yes, some of the things we are called to think and do and say may seem 'big' especially if they are, as the covenant service reminds us, 'against our natural inclinations and material interests'. Then it's easy to think that what we can do is only small and forget the bigger picture – remember the workman who was sweeping the floor and when asked what he was doing replied 'I'm helping to build a cathedral'; while, during the current pandemic, we have certainly learnt who the 'key workers' are in our society! Of course we may also lack confidence in our own gifts and skills compared to other people, and all sorts of other reasons, but little things are important as the African proverb reminds us, 'If you think what you do is too small to make a difference, try sleeping in a room with a mosquito!' And remember too how the words of the Covenant Service continue 'The power to do all these things is given to us in Christ who strengthens us'

BE LIKE JESUS..... LITTLE THINGS ARE IMPORTANT.... AND MEET THE NEED.

One of the things I've been enjoying during lockdown is watching the programmes about different factories – 'Keeping Britain Going'; extra shifts to provide enough baked beans; temporarily stopping production of flavoured tea bags in order to produce more 'builders tea' etc. One of the challenges facing us as Christians and as churches going forward, is meeting people's needs – because that means that often we need to build up relationships, take time and seek God's help, to understand what their needs really are. The Old Testament prophets often challenged the Israelite people – God didn't want only their worship (important though it was) but, equally important, were lives which showed both an understanding and a care for the needs of those around them. Jesus' teaching, and the letters in the New Testament give the same message. Sometimes for all sorts of reasons, like Naaman the leper when asked to bathe in the River Jordan, we want to do 'something bigger' than 'give a cup of water' in Jesus name; but if we do that whose needs are being met?!

Time and time again we need to ask 'What would Jesus do'

I want to close by quoting the last verse of one of the hymns which would have been sung at Andrew's ordination this afternoon:

*Ready for all Thy perfect will, My acts of faith and love repeat;
Till death Thy endless mercies seal, And make the sacrifice complete.
(from 'O thou who camest from above' by Charles Wesley).*

May we each be able to make them our prayer. **Amen.**

HYMN – Lord the light of Your love (Graham Kendrick)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uaTwx0ehbvM>

Lord, the light of Your love is shining In the midst of the darkness, shining
Jesus, Light of the world, shine upon us, set us free by the truth You now bring us
Shine on me, shine on me

*Shine, Jesus, shine! Fill this land with the Father's glory
Blaze, Spirit, blaze! Set our hearts on fire
Flow, river, flow! Flood the nations with grace and mercy
Send forth Your word Lord and let there be light!*

Lord, I come to Your awesome presence, from the shadows into Your radiance
By the blood I may enter Your brightness, search me, try me, consume all my darkness
Shine on me, shine on me

As we gaze on Your kingly brightness, so our faces display Your likeness,
Ever changing from glory to glory; mirrored here, may our lives tell Your story
Shine on me, shine on me.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION.

Heavenly Father, we bring before You now the needs of others, and there seem to be so many people who have encountered trouble and loss recently.

We remember those whose businesses have suffered through lockdown, not knowing what the future will bring; and those who are employed, the uncertainty over their jobs.....

We remember all those who have been ill and bereaved, especially those we know – family and friends.....

We pray for our churches, each one; help us to look to You for guidance and strength; for Stephen, Andrew and others who have kept us together over these days. We pray for the Methodist Conference meeting just now that they will know God's guidance as they deal with essential business and for Andrew and others who will be received into Full Connexion but will need to wait for ordination.....

We pray for our children and our schools; and for Ruth our schools worker and her work amongst children, so important in their early years.....

We pray for the many people who have had to flee their country because of dictatorship and war, having to live as refugees and have nothing to call their own. And especially for the persecuted church in these places, serving You under extreme suffering and persecution.....

And we pray for this beloved land of ours, that we may walk the paths the Lord our God has planned live by the principles You have given us – the faith our forebears taught and lived. Help us all to remember there is One who knows and cares and reaches out in love and compassion; and is able to give wonderful comfort and strength. **Amen**

CLOSING HYMN – In Christ there is no east or west *(John Oxenham)*

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

In Christ there is no East or West, in Him no South or North;
But one great fellowship of love, throughout the whole wide earth.

In Him shall true hearts everywhere, their high communion find;
His service is the golden cord, close-binding all mankind.

Join hands then people of the faith, whate'er your race may be!
Who serves my Father as His child, is surely kin to me.

In Christ now meet both East and West, in Him meet South and North
All Christ-like souls are one in Him throughout the whole wide earth.

CLOSING PRAYER.

May the love of the Lord Jesus draw us closer to himself, to each other and to those around us; the power of the Lord Jesus strengthen us in His service ;and the joy of the Lord Jesus fill our hearts-and the blessing of God ,Father ,Son and Holy Spirit be upon us and remain with us now and always. Amen

“... if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones...”



Two pictures this week to have a look at – I couldn't decide which one to print!

Take a few moments of quiet and, remembering Jackie's reflection on 'A Cup of Cold Water' ask God to speak to you .

