

'All Mine are yours . . .'

Call to Worship

The Lord reigns! Let the earth rejoice. Sing to God, sing praises to God's name. Lift up a some to the one who rides upon the clouds. Rejoice before the one whose name is the Lord. O rider in the heavens, in the ancient heavens. We listen to the thunder of God's mighty voice. Awesome is our God, who gives power and strength to the people. Come – now is the time to worship, our risen and ascended Lord, our way, our truth and our life. Amen.

Hymn: - STF 87 – Praise to the Living God

1 Praise to the living God!  
All praised be his name,  
who was, and is, and is to be,  
for e'er the same!  
The one eternal God  
ere aught that now appears:  
the First, the Last, beyond all thought  
his timeless years!

2 Formless, all lovely forms  
declare his loveliness;  
holy, no holiness of earth  
can his express.  
Lo, he is Lord of all!  
Creation speaks his praise,  
and everywhere, above, below,  
his will obeys.

3 His Spirit flowing free,  
high surging where it will:  
in prophet's word he spoke of old,  
is speaking still.  
Established is his law,  
and changeless it shall stand,  
deep writ upon the human heart,  
on sea, on land.

4 Eternal life has he  
implanted in the soul;  
his love shall be our strength and stay,  
while ages roll.  
Praise to the living God!  
All praised be his name,  
who was, and is, and is to be,  
for e'er the same.

Mediaeval Jewish Doxology translated by Max Landsberg (1845–1928 and Newton Mann (1836–1926)

Prayer of Approach:

God of love, we are the community of life you gave to Jesus Christ, we thank you for the work you sent him to do. Help us to pray together as the disciples did, waiting on the spirit. Help us to act in love and unity so all may know that Jesus Came, loving the world, as you love him. Help us bring your justice to the powerless and your care those without resources. In all things, we glorify your name, for we share in the glory of Jesus your Son, in whose name we pray. Amen.

### **Prayers of Confession:**

Let us confess our sins to God. **Gracious and holy God, we confess that we have sinned against you and against our neighbour. Your Spirit gives light, but we have preferred darkness; Your Spirit gives wisdom, but we have been foolish; Your Spirit gives power, but we have trusted in our own strength. For the sake of Jesus Christ, your Son, forgive our sins, and enable us by your Spirit to serve you in joyful obedience.**

*[We pause for a few moments to bring our own confessions to God]*

There is now no condemnation, for those who live in union with Christ Jesus; for the law of the Spirit of life has set us free from the law of sin and death. **Amen. Thanks be to God.**

### **Readings:**

**1 John 5: 9 – 13:** - <sup>9</sup> If we receive human testimony, the testimony of God is greater; for this is the testimony of God that he has testified to his Son. <sup>10</sup> Those who believe in the Son of God have the testimony in their hearts. Those who do not believe in God<sup>[a]</sup> have made him a liar by not believing in the testimony that God has given concerning his Son. <sup>11</sup> And this is the testimony: God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. <sup>12</sup> Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.<sup>13</sup> I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.

**John 17: 6 – 19:** - <sup>6</sup> “I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. <sup>7</sup> Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; <sup>8</sup> for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. <sup>9</sup> I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. <sup>10</sup> All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. <sup>11</sup> And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one. <sup>12</sup> While I was with them, I protected them in your name that<sup>[a]</sup> you have given me. I guarded them, and not one of them was lost except the one destined to be lost,<sup>[b]</sup> so that the scripture might be fulfilled. <sup>13</sup> But now I am coming to you, and I speak these things in the world so that they may have my joy made complete in themselves.<sup>[c]</sup><sup>14</sup> I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. <sup>15</sup> I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one.<sup>[d]</sup><sup>16</sup> They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. <sup>17</sup> Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. <sup>18</sup> As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. <sup>19</sup> And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.

## Sermon:

A few years ago I was at a workshop in Sherwood Forest, near Nottingham. We were given a piece of wood, a chisel – and told – “be the creative people you were made to be, make something beautiful”. Well . . . I created a holding Cross, not terribly beautiful – but smooth, tactile and an aid to prayer for me, particularly when I don’t know where to begin in prayer.

Closing my eyes, rubbing my hand over this holding cross, I feel God entering the space, and often (not always) the prayers flow. That experience of making the cross and now using it, reminds me that God constantly has a chisel to me. Tapping and chipping away, knocking off some of those sharper edges, forming and shaping, through my life and encounters, continuing his work of creation in me. Sometimes the chips and chisels take us by surprise, other times the shape and form of God’s gifts, shape and become clear over time, we simply have to respond, to what is freely given to us. Prayer and praying connects me and focuses me on those points and moments of God’s continual work on me. And we are reminded today from these powerful words of John, that Jesus prays his wisdom, protection and love onto us.

So John’s Gospel, chapter 17. This prayer of Jesus, takes place at the end of the Last Supper. The upper room was filled with pain and abandonment. Highlighted by betrayal and loss. Here Jesus prays for his disciples, and for us all. This is all focused on transferring the mantle of mission from Christ to his disciples. It focuses on their understanding of the Faith and Truth that he had taught them, and been given by God, his Father in Heaven. Jesus powerfully prays they that the disciples will be protected in their mission to share Christ’s Love, hope and peace to the world. In the first three verses of this passage Jesus signifies that he has completed his work of mission. In that he has shared with his disciples God, and their need to know the love of God, and the truth that in Jesus, God’s chiseling is fulfilled. He states that his disciples are ‘chosen from the world’, but through their faith, and their knowledge of the truth, they are set apart from the world. This mission task is a serious task to carry the messages of God grace and peace to the world.

**I wander** what it feels like to know that Jesus is constantly praying over you? It enables me to step out of my comfort zone, to come alongside and share God’s love with folks that otherwise I may be less comfortable or able to engage. An example of that is serving homeless folks food once a month on Westham Bridge in Weymouth. It also enables me to be more comfortable with freely allowing God to chisel, change and transform me. So, in the power of that Prayer of Jesus, will you step out with me, in mission, in the days, weeks, years to come?

**I wonder**, do we stop and think how people feel when we pray for them? Maybe, to start to answer that question, next time someone prays for you, stop and think how does it feel for you? Maybe this is an opportunity for you to have a conversation with the people praying for

you, talking about how it feels when you are prayed over. We can't always find the words to pray for ourselves, to pray on our own, even to pray for those we love the most. Maybe we are tired. Maybe we just don't know where to start. Maybe we think our issues are minimal compared to others. Or maybe, we don't have to have an excuse. We just can't do it. And then you hear those words being prayed for you, on behalf of you. And through that love, your heart is a little less troubled.

When someone says to you, can I pray for you, take them up on that offer – even when it's the last thing you want, maybe it's the only thing you really need in that moment? We are called to do the same here across the Circuit, we are called through our church Councils, through our mission and outreach – to be prayerful lights of Jesus, that Thy Kingdom might come, not in the past, or tomorrow, but today, and every day, by the grace of God. Amen.

### **Prayers of Intercession**

Gracious God, whose Spirit helps us in our weakness and guides us in our prayers, we pray for the Church and for the world in the name of Jesus Christ. Renew the life and faith of the Church; strengthen our witness; and make us one in Christ . . . Grant that we and all who confess that Christ is Lord may be faithful in your service and filled with the Spirit, that the world may be turned to you. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**. Guide the nations in the ways of justice, liberty and peace; and help them to seek the unity and welfare of all people . . . Give to all in authority wisdom to know and strength to do what is right. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**. Comfort those in sorrow; heal the sick in body or in mind and deliver the oppressed . . . We pray for five people we know and love who are in need of prayer, healing and God's spirit breaking through into their lives today: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**. May we and all your people share the life and joy of your kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**.

### **The Lord's Prayer:**

**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. Save us from the Time of trial And deliver us from evil. For the Kingdom, The power and the glory are yours, Now and forever. Amen.**

### **Blessing: -**

The spirit of truth lead you into all truth, Give you grace to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, And strengthen you to proclaim the word and works of God; May God the Father fill you with his strength, May God the Son fill you with his peace. May God the Holy Spirit fill you with his presence. The Blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Be with you all, with those you love, And Those you are called to love, Now, in the name of Christ. **Amen**