

# 18<sup>th</sup> July 2021 – Morning Service

## Rest a while

Rev Chris Watson

### Call to Worship

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Come away...and rest a while.' Come into the Lord's presence now, away from the burdens and stresses of life. Come with open arms, and receive the rest that Jesus offers – to restore our souls, and equip us for whatever comes next.

### StF 148 – Come let us with our Lord arise

- 1) Come, let us with our Lord arise,  
Our Lord, who made both earth and skies:  
Who died to save the world he made,  
And rose triumphant from the dead;  
He rose, the Prince of life and peace,  
And stamped the day for ever his.
- 2) This is the day the Lord has made,  
That all may see his love displayed,  
May feel his resurrection's power,  
And rise again, to fall no more,  
In perfect righteousness renewed,  
And filled with all the life of God.
- 3) Then let us render him his own,  
With solemn prayer approach his throne,  
With meekness hear the gospel word,  
With thanks his dying love record,  
Our joyful hearts and voices raise,  
And fill his courts with songs of praise.
- 4) Honour and praise to Jesus pay  
Throughout his consecrated day;  
Be all in Jesus' praise employed,  
Nor leave a single moment void;  
With utmost care the time improve,  
And only breathe his praise and love.

Charles Wesley

CCL No. 515642

### Prayers

Everlasting God, creator of heaven and earth, your love causes our hearts to soar. You know the number of stars in the universe – just as you know the number of hairs on our head.

L: Mighty God      **R: We love you**

You call each star by name – just as you call us each by name.

L: Mighty God      **R: We love you**

You supply the earth with rain to make the grass grow; and provide food for the animals and birds – just as you provide all we need to sustain us.

L: Mighty God      **R: We love you**

You care about the details, seeing every tiny part of the bigger picture – just as you care about the tiniest detail in our lives; for you know the person you created each of us to be.

L: Mighty God      **R: We love you. Amen.**

Father God, you have promised that when we pray for something in the name of Christ it will be done. Teach us what that really means- to know and love Jesus so completely that our will and his coincide. Forgive us when we abuse prayer, looking only to our own ends rather than yours. Forgive us when we pray emptily or half heartedly, and then complain that our prayers go unanswered. Help us to recognise prayer is your gift to us, rather than ours to you, and so may we learn from it more of your purpose, and more about you.

Strengthen our faith, deepen our fellowship, direct our witness. Help us to grow inwardly and outwardly, reaching out to you, to one another, and to all around us. And when we cannot see any answers to our own needs or those of others, when we see only problems that seem beyond us, when we don't know what to pray for, teach us to leave all things in your hands.

We come then now, asking not for our will to be done, but yours, to the glory of your name.

Father, we bring you this prayer in the name of Christ. **Amen**

## Song – When peace like a river

- 1) When peace like a river attendeth my way,  
When sorrows like sea billows roll;  
Whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to know,  
It is well, it is well with my soul.
- 2) Though Satan should buffet,  
Though trials should come,  
Let this blest assurance control:  
That Christ has regarded my helpless estate,  
And has shed his own blood for my soul.
- 3) My sin oh, the bliss of this glorious thought!  
My sin, not in part, but the whole,  
Is nailed to His cross, and I bear it no more;  
Praise the Lord, Praise the Lord, O my soul!
- 4) For me, be it Christ, be it Christ hence to live  
If Jordan above me shall roll  
No pang shall be mine, for in death as in life  
Thou wilt whisper Thy peace to my soul.
- 5) But Lord, 'tis for thee – for thy coming we wait  
The sky, not the grave, is our goal  
O trump of the angel! O voice of the Lord!  
Blessèd hope! Blessèd rest of my soul

Horatio Gates Spafford      CCL No. 515642

## Reading: Mark 6:30-34, 53-56

The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, “Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.” So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place. But many who saw them leaving recognized them and ran on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things.

When they had crossed over, they landed at Gennesaret and anchored there. As soon as they got out of the boat, people recognized Jesus. They ran throughout that whole region and carried the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. And wherever he went—into villages, towns or countryside—they placed the sick in the marketplaces. They begged him to let them touch even the edge of his cloak, and all who touched it were healed.

## StF 20 – Be still for the presence of the Lord

- 1) Be still, for the presence of the Lord,  
The Holy One is here.  
Come, bow before Him now  
With reverence and fear.  
In Him no sin is found,  
We stand on holy ground.  
Be still, for the presence of the Lord,  
The Holy One is here.
- 2) Be still, for the glory of the Lord  
Is shining all around;  
He burns with holy fire,  
With splendour He is crowned,  
How awesome is the sight,  
Our radiant King of light!  
Be still, for the glory of the Lord  
Is shining all around.
- 3) Be still, for the power of the Lord  
Is moving in this place,  
He comes to cleanse and heal,  
To minister His grace.  
No work too hard for Him,  
In faith receive from Him;  
Be still, for the power of the Lord  
Is moving in this place.

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## Address

The reading from Mark is a selection of verses that are often overlooked because they are the connecting verses between the death of John the Baptist, the Feeding of the 5000 and Jesus walking on water. The events take place around the Sea of Galilee which is an inland sea surrounded by hilly ground, easy to cross from one side to the other but also easy to see people making that crossing. Jesus and disciples set off to find a quiet place but the crowds worked out where they were going and got there first. Jesus was at the height of his popularity with the people, the tensions with the religious authorities were starting to rear their heads but it hadn't got to the point of open confrontation so wherever Jesus went the crowds followed leaving little time to rest or to have time off or to have time for himself or his disciples.

On this occasion the disciples have returned from their journeys, exhausted but exhilarated, eager to talk and discuss recent events. Initially Jesus tries to find them some rest but then as usual he had compassion on the crowds, started teaching them until it was late. For the crowds who follow Jesus, he is still a healer and teacher and they follow him for healing and teaching. Jesus sees them as sheep because they come for their immediate needs with no concept of the bigger picture, no idea of what is going to happen or what it would cost them if they were to truly follow him. He sees them as sheep without a shepherd, blindly following him for what he can provide now, not in the future.

*Psalm 23 says - The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.*

This psalm depicts God as being our good shepherd, a shepherd who truly cares for his sheep, putting their needs first. This shepherd leads us beside quiet waters, in green pastures and refreshes our souls. With him we can feel safe enough to eat a feast whilst enemies look on, with him we lack nothing and even in danger he is with us. This is the type of shepherd Jesus sees the crowd needing and he has compassion on them because he knows what they lack so he teaches the crowd, the disciples try to get him to disperse the crowd to find food but he feeds the crowd before dismissing them and then he goes to pray in a quiet place.

In this passage we see the human side of Jesus, we see him as a physical being as a man, understanding hunger, tiredness, stress all the things we experience. He came to be one of us to experience the things we go through, only through doing this could he bridge the divide between us and God. Only through becoming both God and Man could his death and resurrection create a way back for us to God.

We see as well that he, like his disciples, like us, needed time to recover, to be rejuvenated, where did he go? He found a quiet place and spent time with God in prayer. This is what we need to do. We don't have to go up a mountain, we don't have to go out into the countryside, we don't have to even leave the house we just need a quiet space. Sometimes that can be hard to find, sometimes we need to go right back to basics and pray that God will provide the time and space for us to have a conversation with him, or to be able to just sit in his presence undisturbed and free from distractions.

## StF 628 – Faithful one

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

Lord, help us to understand the way you want us to live and to follow you. Lord, help us to follow in your footsteps, safe in the knowledge that you are with us always, surrounding us with your love. Lord, we pray for those around us, both close and further away, that they will receive the guidance they need, no matter how difficult the decisions they need to make are, may they feel your presence with them always. We pray for those in power across our world, may we all learn to live in peace and understanding with each other. We pray for your wisdom and loving presence to reach across our world, so that all will understand its importance. Lord, we pray for those who live their lives in fear no matter the reason, may they know and understand that they are not alone. We pray for all of those who are suffering, whether it physically or mentally. May they feel your healing touch. **Amen**

## The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory for ever and ever. **Amen.**

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 for ever. **Amen.**

## StF 654 – The love of God comes near

1) The love of God comes close  
Where stands an open door  
To let the stranger in,  
To mingle rich and poor.  
The love of God is here to stay,  
Embracing those who walk his way.

4) The grace of God comes close  
To those whose grace is spent,  
When hearts are tired or sore  
And hope is bruised and bent.  
The grace of God is here to stay,  
Embracing those who walk his way.

2) The peace of God comes close  
To those caught in the storm,  
Foregoing lives of ease  
To ease the lives forlorn.  
The peace of God is here to stay,  
Embracing those who walk his way.

5) The Son of God comes close  
Where people praise his name,  
Where bread and wine are blest  
And shared as when he came.  
The Son of God is here to stay,  
Embracing those who walk his way.

3) The joy of God comes close  
Where faith encounters fears,  
Where heights and depths of life  
Are found through smiles and tears.  
The joy of God is here to stay,  
Embracing those who walk his way.

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## Blessing

O God, in Scripture, we read that you rested on the seventh day – after all the busyness and work of creation; and we read of Jesus' desire for his disciples to rest. As your followers, your disciples, now, and as we return to our busy lives, may we know the rest you offer every day of this week. **Amen.**