

# 7<sup>th</sup> July 2024 – Morning Service

## Acceptance

Rev Chris Watson

### Call to Worship

People of God, let us walk in God's ways; let us sing of God's love; let us shout for God's justice.

**We are ready to walk, sing and shout for God's kingdom.**

People of God, get ready to listen to all God wants to say; get ready to change your minds and your heart; get ready to move with God in the world.

**We are ready to listen, change and move with God.**

People of God, listen for God's voice; listen for God's guidance; listen to what God is saying to us today.

**We are ready to listen and to follow with all our heart.**

### StF 1 – All people that on earth do dwell

- 1) All people that on earth do dwell,  
Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice:  
Him serve with mirth, his praise forth tell;  
Come ye before him and rejoice.
- 2) The Lord, ye know, is God indeed;  
Without our aid he did us make:  
We are his folk, he doth us feed;  
And for his sheep he doth us take.
- 3) O enter then his gates with praise;  
Approach with joy his courts unto;  
Praise, laud, and bless his name always,  
For it is seemly so to do.
- 4) For why, the Lord Our God is good;  
His mercy is for ever sure;  
His truth at all times firmly stood,  
And shall from age to age endure.
- 5) To Father, Son and Holy Ghost,  
The God whom heaven and earth adore,  
From earth and from the angel host  
Be praise and glory evermore.

*William Kethe*

### Prayers of Approach

May Christ, the true, the only light, banish all darkness from our hearts and minds.

Blessed are you, Creator of all, to you be praise and glory forever.

As your dawn renews the face of the earth, bringing light and life to all creation, may we rejoice in this day you have made; as we wake refreshed from the depths of sleep, open our eyes to behold your presence and strengthen our hands to do your will, that the world may rejoice and give you praise.

Blessed be God forever.

**Open our lips: And our mouth shall proclaim God's praise.**

Early in the morning our prayers come before you

**Protect us, Creating One**

You speak in our hearts and say 'Seek my face'; your face oh God will we seek

**Protect us, Redeeming One.**

Let the words of our mouths and the meditation of our hearts be acceptable in your sight, our strength, and our redeemer. **Amen**

## The Lord's Prayer (Alternate version)

Eternal Spirit, Earth-Maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver, source of all that is and shall be, Father and Mother of us all, Loving God, in whom is heaven:

The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!

The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world!

Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!

Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on earth.

With the bread we need for today, feed us.

In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.

In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.

From trials too great to endure, spare us.

From the grip of all that is evil, free us.

For you reign in the glory of the power that is love now and forever. **Amen**

## StF 638 – Through all the changing scenes of life

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|---|--|
| 1) Through all the changing scenes of life,<br>In trouble and in joy,<br>The praises of my God shall still<br>My heart and tongue employ. | 4) The hosts of God encamp around<br>The dwellings of the just;<br>Deliverance he affords to all<br>Who on his succour trust.                  |
| 2) Of his deliverance I will boast,<br>Till all that are distressed<br>From my example comfort take,<br>And charm their griefs to rest.   | 5) O make but trial of his love;<br>Experience will decide<br>How blest are they, and only they,<br>Who in his truth confide.                  |
| 3) O magnify the Lord with me,<br>With me exalt his name;<br>When in distress to him I called,<br>He to my rescue came.                   | 6) Fear him, ye saints, and you will then<br>Have nothing else to fear;<br>Make you his service your delight,<br>Your wants shall be his care. |

*Nahum Tate and Nicholas Brady*

## Reading: 2 Samuel 5:1-5, 9-10

All the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and said, 'We are your own flesh and blood. In the past, while Saul was king over us, you were the one who led Israel on their military campaigns. And the Lord said to you, "You shall shepherd my people Israel, and you shall become their ruler.'" When all the elders of Israel had come to King David at Hebron, the king made a covenant with them at Hebron before the Lord, and they anointed David king over Israel. David was thirty years old when he became king, and he reigned for forty years. In Hebron he reigned over Judah for seven years and six months, and in Jerusalem he reigned over all Israel and Judah for thirty-three years. David then took up residence in the fortress and called it the City of David. He built up the area around it, from the terraces inwards. And he became more and more powerful, because the Lord God Almighty was with him.

## Comment

When you look at the people around you what do you see? Many of us would think that we know each other well, but do we? When you meet someone new how do you react to them and why do you react the way you do? When we see someone we haven't met before we put labels on them, our brains try to put them into the right box, so we might meet someone who looks stern but when you get to know them you may realise that actually they are full of fun. We sometimes label people as being too young or too old to be able to hold positions in our churches, but everybody is different.

David was anointed by Samuel when he was just a shepherd boy, the youngest of eight brothers. Nobody other than Samuel, inspired by God, would have considered him to be a future King. Many years later David became King firstly over the tribes of Judah for seven years and then in our reading, after years of dissent, he was accepted as King over Israel and Judah. He ruled over all Israel and Judah for thirty-three years. David the shepherd was accepted by his own people as their King.

### StF 481 – The Lord’s my shepherd

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| 1) The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want;<br>He makes me lie in pastures green,<br>He leads me by the still, still waters,<br>His goodness restores my soul. | 2) He guides my ways in righteousness,<br>And he anoints my head with oil;<br>And my cup - it overflows with joy,<br>I feast on his pure delights.         |
| Ch) <i>And I will trust in you alone,<br/>And I will trust in you alone,<br/>For your endless mercy follows me,<br/>Your goodness will lead me home.</i>     | 3) And though I walk the darkest path -<br>I will not fear the evil one,<br>For you are with me, and your rod and staff<br>Are the comfort I need to know. |

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### Reading: Mark 6:1-13

Jesus left there and went to his home town, accompanied by his disciples. When the Sabbath came, he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were amazed. 'Where did this man get these things?' they asked. 'What's this wisdom that has been given him? What are these remarkable miracles he is performing? Isn't this the carpenter? Isn't this Mary's son and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas and Simon? Aren't his sisters here with us?' And they took offence at him.

Jesus said to them, 'A prophet is not without honour except in his own town, among his relatives and in his own home.' He could not do any miracles there, except lay his hands on a few people who were ill and heal them. He was amazed at their lack of faith.

Then Jesus went around teaching from village to village. Calling the Twelve to him, he began to send them out two by two and gave them authority over impure spirits. These were his instructions: 'Take nothing for the journey except a staff – no bread, no bag, no money in your belts. Wear sandals but not an extra shirt. Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you leave that town. And if any place will not welcome you or listen to you, leave that place and shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them.' They went out and preached that people should repent. They drove out many demons and anointed with oil many people who were ill and healed them.

### Comment

This passage actually contains two separate stories; both stories concern the acceptance or rejection of Jesus and his representatives. The first story is about the way the people of Jesus' birth town rejected him and the second is about the call of disciples and the proclamation of the good news.

Mark puts these stories after the sandwich of Jairus' daughter and the woman with the haemorrhage, both of which demonstrated his power and those who witnessed it had been amazed. Then he goes to his hometown where, perhaps, they would have heard of these events. Should he have expected a warm, a proud welcome? Local boy made good?

Following verses in this chapter tell of the death of John the Baptist, so the call of the disciples to go out and preach is sandwiched between the rejection of Jesus and the rejection of John the Baptist, the bottom layer of the sandwich is the report by the disciples of their successful mission.

So Jesus goes to his hometown and on the Sabbath he goes to the Synagogue with his disciples and begins to teach. We are not told what he said, only that his words caused amazement and questions.

Jesus had come with disciples, implying status as a Rabbi, but these folk knew all about him, they knew he had no formal training, no Bible college, no ministerial training, no Lay Preaching course to back him up, no Synod acceptance or commissioning. They also knew his background, his family, they knew his siblings, they knew his parents. Instead of referring to him as Joseph's son they refer to Mary as his Mother, this would have been seen as a slur, an insult on his character, his honour hinting that he was illegitimate with no recognised paternal line.

And yet they had heard of his miracles, they had heard the authority with which he spoke, they had seen the way his disciples followed and respected him, what more did they need to heed his words? Jesus realised that nothing he could do or say would convince them that he was anything more than a local carpenter with ideas way above his station in life and so we are told he could not do any miracles there except to heal a few sick people.

There are at least some who seek him out in faith, just as Jairus did on behalf of his dying daughter, just as the woman who had been bleeding for twelve years did. So does this mean that God can't act unless we have faith? Does everything depend on our belief? Or is it rather that we hinder God's action because we don't ask? He can't answer our prayers unless we pray them. He can only change our lives to the extent that we allow him to. Jesus' ability to do great things in Nazareth was only limited by the fact that nobody bothered to ask – except for a few, and they were healed.

Perhaps we sometimes restrain God's actions individually and as a church because of the things we cling onto, or because of an unwillingness to trust God completely, to let him take control, to pray 'You lead Lord, we will follow, show us where you want us to go and what you would have us do'

### **StF 663 – I, the Lord of sea and sky**

1) I, the Lord of sea and sky,  
I have heard my people cry;  
All who dwell in dark and sin  
My hand will save.  
I, who made the stars of night,  
I will make their darkness bright.  
Who will bear my light to them?  
Whom shall I send?

*Ch) Here I am, Lord.  
Is it I, Lord?  
I have heard You calling in the night.  
I will go, Lord,  
If You lead me;  
I will hold Your people in my heart.*

2) I, the Lord of snow and rain,  
I have borne my people's pain;  
I have wept for love of them  
They turn away.  
I will break their hearts of stone,  
Give them hearts for love alone;  
I will speak my word to them.  
Whom shall I send?

3) I, the Lord of wind and flame,  
I will tend the poor and lame,  
I will set a feast for them  
My hand will save.  
Finest bread I will provide  
Till their hearts are satisfied;  
I will give my life to them.  
Whom shall I send?

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### **Prayers**

God of riverside, wilderness, community and journeys: We see you in glorious vision; we feel your power around us and rejoice in you in glory. You lead us into places of unknowing and confusion but you walk with us, you guide us and support us. We pray that you will let us revel in you, let us not find things to make us busy: let us rest in you and feel your love.

God of the low and dark places: We feel you walking alongside us when we feel lost and see you in the face of the stranger. Let our hope be transformative in the darkness, let the changes you made within each one of us be real for those we meet. Take our light, and brighten the darkness.

God of changes: We pray that you will keep us open to hearing your voice, let the words of transforming power echo in our ears and empower us to respond as you need us to. Let your renewal start within us, let us be the catalyst of change that you know we can be... even if we doubt ourselves.

God who consoles us: We pray for the world we don't always understand... this world wracked by warfare, by hatred, by threat and violence... you walked this earth before we did and you know our frailties. We pray for the bereaved, the injured, the fearful and the broken... Help us to live as you would want us to live... Help us to offer what we can... We offer prayers for this community... maybe for people that only we and you know... and we pray for the events of the week we have just lived....[*Silence*]

God of love – hear our prayers.

God of enormous and expansive love: We pray for those that we love in this fellowship and in our families, we thank you for those that we chose to share our lives with. We thank you for our relationships, for the people that you set in our lives to transform us, to renew us and bring us joy. We pray for those people who we don't always get on with, for the person that we avoid and hide from. Help us to see you in our inner fears, in the difficulties we face and in the turmoil that we struggle with. Help us to offer your incredible love, prepare us to be challenged and give us the tools that we need to be ready to do all that you ask of us. On this day let us be changed by you and let the change in us be part of a bigger transforming change.

This prayer and all of our prayers we ask in and through the transforming name and power of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

### **StF 247 – I danced in the morning**

1) I danced in the morning when the  
world was begun,  
And I danced in the moon and the stars  
and the sun,  
And I came down from heaven and  
I danced on the earth:  
At Bethlehem I had my birth.

*Ch) Dance, then, wherever you may be,  
I am the Lord of the dance, said He  
And I'll lead you all, wherever you may be  
And I'll lead you all in the dance, said He.*

2) I danced for the scribes and pharisee,  
But they wouldn't dance and they  
wouldn't follow Me,  
I danced for the fishermen, for James and John,  
They came with Me and the dance went on.

3) I danced on the Sabbath and I cured the lame;  
The holy people said it was a shame.  
They whipped and they stripped and  
they hung Me high  
And they left Me there on a cross to die.

4) I danced on a Friday when the sky turned black;  
It's hard to dance with the devil on your back.  
They buried My body and they thought  
I'd gone,  
But I am the dance and the dance goes on.

5) They cast Me down but I leapt up high;  
I am the life that will never, never die.  
I'll live in you if you live in Me;  
I am the Lord of the Dance, said He.

*Sydney Carter © 1963 Stainer & Bell Ltd CCL No. 515642*

### **Blessing**

To the holy and glorious Weaver, Word and Wisdom, be blessing and honour, thanksgiving and praise, now and forever. **Amen** Let us bless God. **Thanks be to God**