

24th May 2020

Acts 1:6-10 and 1 Peter 4:12-14:

Why not arrange to phone someone else to share today's worship together.

Today 24th of May is Aldersgate Sunday, a great opportunity to celebrate the work of God in our lives, and to reflect on how we should respond to everything that God has given us.

John Wesley heart was "strangely warmed", as he experienced God's love in a most personal and life-giving way. Until then he had known God in his mind, but not in his heart. Now he understood the value of a personal experience of God that would bring assurance of salvation to the believer.

We also keep in mind that it is mental health awareness week, particularly relevant to our current time.

Opening:

As we rejoice in the gift of this new day, so may the light of your presence, O God, set our hearts on fire with love for you. now and for ever. **Amen.**

Hymn: At the Name of Jesus (StF 317)

At the name of Jesus ev'ry knee shall bow,
ev'ry tongue confess him King of glory now.
'Tis the Father's pleasure
we should call him Lord,
who from the beginning was the mighty Word.

Humbled for a season to receive a name
from the lips of sinners unto whom he came,
faithfully he bore it spotless to the last,
brought it back victorious,
when from death he passed.

In your hearts enthrone him;
there let him subdue all that is not holy,
all that is not true;
crown him as your Captain in temptation's hour:
let his will enfold you in its light and pow'r.

For this same Lord Jesus shall return again,
with his Father's glory, with his angel train;
for all wreaths of empire meet upon his brow,
and our hearts confess him King of glory now.

Carolynne Maria Noel (1817-1877)

Prayer of Approach

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your people
and kindle in us the fire of your love.

All who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God and fellow heirs with Christ.
Come, Holy Spirit,
and fill the hearts of your people.

Renew the face of your creation, Lord,
pouring on us the gifts of your Spirit,
and kindle in us the fire of your love.

For the creation waits with eager longing for the glorious liberty of the children of God.
Come, Holy Spirit,
fill the hearts of your people
and kindle in us the fire of your love.

A Prayer of Confession

Lord Jesus Christ, we confess we have failed you as did your first disciples. Our selfishness betrays you: Lord, forgive us.

All Christ have mercy.

We fail to share the pain of your suffering: Lord, forgive us.

All Christ have mercy.

We run away from those who abuse you: Lord, forgive us.

All Christ have mercy.

We are afraid of being known to belong to you: Lord, forgive us.

All Christ have mercy.

Read Acts 1: 6-10 and 1 Peter 4:12-14

Hymn: Christ is alive! Let Christians sing

Christ is alive! Let Christians sing
His cross stands empty to the sky.
Let streets and homes with praises ring.
His love in death shall never die.

Christ is alive! No longer bound
to distant years in Palestine,
he comes to claim the here and now,
and conquer every place and time.

In every insult, rift and war,
where colour, scorn or wealth divide,
he suffers still, yet loves the more,
and lives, though ever crucified.

Christ is alive! His Spirit burns
through this and every future age,
till all creation lives and learns
his joy, his justice, love and praise.

by Brian Wren (b.1936)

Sermon or Reflections of the day

Isolation can have serious side effects especially to the people who are extraverts and used to being out there with people. The period of Pandemic has had its way of confronting us with some of the things that we try to avoid and sometimes they haunt us.

Similarly, the disciples of Jesus might have felt sad to see their master being taken to glory and a new sense of being left alone in isolation was something they had to come to terms with as they looked up gazing in the skies. The disciples were still thinking in terms of an earthly, perhaps military coming of the kingdom of God: They had already faced many troubles during their time with Jesus, and they looked forward just like us to a new world order.

Perhaps we find ourselves wondering will things get any better? When is it going to be normal? Yet we are not sure of the time lockdown is going to be lifted. There is so much uncertainty in these unusual strange times which impacts society in tremendous ways. We can be encouraged knowing that Jesus continues to pray for us as he did in John 17... *'I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one.'*

Regarding the Question of when is time for God's Kingdom to replace all these? We do not yet know really, but perhaps Jesus' command to wait, and the Aldersgate experience of John Wesley & his brother Charles call us to the same yearning prayer for the empowering of the Spirit for ourselves and our life together as Church... *"Come Holy Spirit, warm our hearts during period of trouble and may we experience your saving power. Amen."*

Prayers of Intercession

God our protector, we come before you in prayer for your world, As we remember your ascension, we thank you that you did not leave us alone but sent your Spirit so that we can always know you are with us.

We pray for the leaders of nations making impossible decisions on our behalf. We pray that they will speak and act with integrity and protect those who are most vulnerable. We pray for our church communities.

We bring you our sadness at not being able to meet together and we thank you for the people finding it easier to explore faith at this time. that we will find new ways to reach out to the world. We pray for those struggling with their health in body, mind or spirit.

We pray for the people we miss. Our friends and families and those we long to see face to face. We pray for safety and protection for our loved ones. We pray for those who have lost someone they love and haven't been able to say goodbye. We pray that they will know the comfort of your loving presence and that you will show us how to reach out in love and friendship.

We pray for ourselves in these difficult days shared by so many people but also lived in isolation. Help us to know your protecting love and to live in the power of your Spirit. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen**

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father

Take a time to sit quietly

A Final Prayer

God of overwhelming grace, you ignited the spark of your grace in John and Charles Wesley and a passion for holiness, justice and sharing your great love with others,

Warm our hearts that we may trust in you.

Renew our conviction and inspire us to embrace new opportunities even in difficulty.

Pour out your spirit on us.

We pray that we may be united in your love and ready to share hope with the world through Jesus who is one with you.

Amen

Notices! (*Knew you'd be missing them!!!*)

Next Sunday is **Pentecost** and we would like everyone to **share worship** with each other, so please **arrange during the week to meet up on Sunday with one or more others, on the phone**, or in other ways (WhatsApp, ZOOM etc). **THANK YOU!!** 😊