

Integrity and repentance

Call to worship

We will not hide these truths from our children; we will tell the next generation about the glorious deeds of the LORD, about his power and his mighty wonders. Psalm 78:4 (NLT)

Hymn StF 317 At the name of Jesus

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OI2rKRCWmOU&ab_channel=mkariobangi

At the name of Jesus
every knee shall bow,
every 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 :

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

Caroline Maria Noel (1817–1877)

Prayer Creator God, we thank you for place to grow: to grow flowers, fruit and vegetables, to grow community, friendships and togetherness, to grow health, wellbeing and self worth, to grow in awareness of you hand on all things. God of growing places, may we grow in you. Amen

Reading Exodus 17:1-7 Water from the Rock

Reflection

Our call to worship, based upon a verse from today's Psalm, is an invitation to commit to telling the story of God's story to our children and the next generation. The Psalmist recounts a few of the glorious deeds of God. The part of the story from the Old Testament, is about the complaints of the God's people, the Israelites on their journey of escape from slavery in Egypt are years in the desert. Earlier chapters have the Israelites complaining about lack of food, and God provides manna and quails. Now it is water, some of the water has turned bitter and in the desert place you need water

The Jewish people were good at recounting their stories. Several festivals would tell God's story, If you read Psalm 78, it tells part of that story. This affirms that God provides. Telling how God has led, protected, nurtured his people. It should have been an encouragement that God has promised and will provide. But they are grumbling again. Their memories are short lived. I have some sympathy with the people as you need water every day – you can't carry much with you. On my visit to Israel last year I stopped at Arad, on the way down to the Dead Sea. It's on the border of the Negev Desert and the Judean Mountains, it was the hot midday sun, very dry, hot sand and I was glad I was carrying water in the car. They had no car, no protection from the sun – Give us water they grumbled to Moses. Years earlier God had provided an aquifer that would provide water for these 1000's of Israelites in this journey and in answer to Moses, prayer God showed him where to strike to rock to let the water come to the surface

To reflect on in these difficult days of corona virus

- 1) Have you ever grumbled to God about his provision for you? (supply your own word)
- 2) Have you told the story of God's provision of your salvation to your children, or friends? Find time to reflect on what God has provided you with over the years (and turn it into a prayer of thanksgiving – you may need a pray of confession first for your grumbling)

Hymn StF 337 There is a higher throne

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zvDSG4s5FJw&ab_channel=FableDuck

There is a higher throne
than all this world has known,
where faithful ones from every
tongue will one day come.
Before our God we'll stand,
made faultless through the Lamb;
believing hearts find promised
grace: salvation comes.

*Hear heaven's voices sing,
their thunderous anthem rings
through emerald courts and
sapphire skies, their praises rise.
All glory, wisdom, power,
strength, thanks and honour are
to God, our King who reigns on
high for evermore.*

And there we'll find our home,
our life before the throne ;
we'll honour him in perfect song
where we belong.
He'll wipe each tear-stained eye,
as thirst and hunger die ;
the Lamb becomes our Shepherd
King: we'll reign with him.

Keith Getty and Kristyn Lennox

Reading Matthew 21:23-32 The Authority of Jesus questioned and the parable of the two sons

Jesus had not had the normal training for a religious leader – the current pack of religious leaders were jealous of the way Jesus spoke with authority and miracles happened, and people knew he was talking truth. They have a question that they thought would belittle Jesus, but Jesus knows their motivation and asks them a question about John the Baptist, and Matthew helpfully shares their reasoning for not answering the question. If they answer, “from men”, they will upset the people who knew at the very least Jesus was a prophet, if they say from God, Jesus will say then “Why didn’t you believe him?” If they had believed in John was from God, they would have listened to his message and repented, been baptised and would now be following Jesus, who John had pointed to. The parable Jesus then tells, makes them feel even more uncomfortable. Two sons, the first stands up to his dad and says no but then changes his mind, (which in the Greek is the same word for repent) – to turn around. The second son says dutifully Yes I’ll go, but then doesn’t. The question Jesus then asks of the religious leaders, only has one answer “Who did the will of his father?” the answer the first. Those that were originally doing wrong things (tax collectors and prostitutes) listened to the words of John the Baptist and repented, changed their minds, and did the Father’s will, were baptised. The religious leaders said the right thing “I will” but then failed to put into action their words. The unexpected are going to heaven first!

- 1) Have you ever promised anything, but not fulfilled the promise?
- 2) Have you ever resisted God’s call on your life and later (perhaps even much later) decided to walk in obedience to God? What kept you from responding? What does it feel like now?
- 3) Have you known “good” proud people, who think they deserve heaven? How do you feel?

Prayers Loving God, you call us into unity. We pray for your body for the world

for our community, this church and for ourselves. Help us to work together as one body in challenging injustice, meeting the needs of others and building one another up in faith and love. Accept these prayers in the name of Jesus Christ and send your spirit to inspire us to walk in obedience to your word in the world Amen

Hymn StF 345 And can it be https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sQeIGbKqiw8&ab_channel=fabioramsay

And can it be that I should gain
an interest in the Saviour's blood?
Died he for me, who caused his pain?
For me, who him to death pursued?
Amazing love ! How can it be
that thou, my God, shouldst die
for me ?

Long my imprisoned spirit lay
fast bound in sin and nature's night;
thine eye diffused a quickening ray
I woke, the dungeon flamed with
light,
my chains fell off, my heart was free,
I rose, went forth, and followed thee.

No condemnation now I dread ;
Jesus, and all in him, is mine !
Alive in him, my living Head,
and clothed in righteousness divine,
bold I approach the eternal throne,
and claim the crown, through
Christ, my own.

Charles Wesley (1707–1788)

Blessing Feel God’s blessing in your bones. Sense God’s blessing in your sinews.

Know God’s blessing in your hearts. Grow as the people God created you to be

Witness to Christ’s love in the world, and live inspired by the breath of the Spirit. Amen