

Why Witness?

Opening Prayer

(With psalm 92: 1-5)

“It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to your name, O Most High; to declare your steadfast love in the morning, and your faithfulness by night, to the music of the lute and the harp, to the melody of the lyre. For you, O Lord, have made me glad by your work; at the works of your hands I sing for joy. How great are your works, O Lord! Your thoughts are very deep!” **Amen.**

Hymn: Seek ye first the kingdom (Singing the Faith 254)

Seek ye first the kingdom of God,
and his righteousness,
and all these things shall be added unto you;

Allelu-, alleluia:

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia,
allelu-, alleluia!

We shall not live by bread alone,
but by every word
that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord;
Allelu-, alleluia:

Karen Lafferty (b. 1948)

Ask, and it shall be given unto you;
seek and ye shall find;
knock, and the door shall be opened unto to you;
Allelu-, alleluia:

Let us pray together.

Lord, I come with thanksgiving and praises in my heart for your love and faithfulness. You are worthy of my heartfelt worship today.

Lord, thank you for sending your Son Jesus who inaugurated your kingdom on earth and for the continuing power of the Holy Spirit, which helps the kingdom to grow.

Forgive me Lord when I fail to see your will in my life and in others.

Forgive me when I am overcome with anxiety, when I become impatient and when I lose heart in times of suffering and prevailing evil in our world.

Help me to be confident in your faithfulness even when things seem bleak and to know that you are in control of all things. **Amen.**

Reading: 2 Corinthians 5: 6-17 (we walk by faith, not by sight)

Reflection:

As I prepare this worship on Monday 7th June 2021 there is still a lot of conversation in the media about whether or not all Government restrictions should be lifted in just a fortnight's time. There are those who believe that after sixty-three weeks of disruption, the time has come for us to regain our freedom and go back to normal, while there are others who see a total lifting of restrictions as being far too risky.

In the midst of all this uncertainty, people are trying to figure out how to plan for the next few months, people are wanting to plan for their businesses, their holiday's, their children's education and even how we plot the way ahead for Churches. All the uncertainty causes us to feel vulnerable and ill at ease. How do we react?

- *How do you feel at times on uncertainty, not just in times of pandemic, but at times when you have to make some of the big decisions in life and are unsure of which is the right way to go?*
- *Who do you turn to on such occasions?*
- *Paul says “we walk by faith, not by sight” how do you react to that concept.*

A time of prayer

Lord God, we pray for all pastors, church ministers, missionaries and Aid workers who risk their lives for sake of spreading your gospel in word and deed.

We pray for those who have been overcome with struggles of life, doubt and fear and for whom faith means nothing.

We pray for the persecuted Christians in our world, for whom following Christ may mean much suffering.

We pray for those who have been bereaved, those who are in physical, mental or emotional pain.

Faithful God,

Be with us as we seek to serve you so that we may reflect kingdom values rather than worldly values. We ask these prayers through the powerful name of Jesus, our Lord and Saviour. **Amen**

The Lord’s Prayer

Our Father

Gospel Reading Mark 4: 26-34

If you have the means to watch a thirty-minute video, please watch “the man who planted trees”

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aY_zuNtf3_g&t=422s

Reflection:

One of the beauties of living where we live is that during a typical year, we will watch the farmer come and turn the soil in the field opposite our house and start preparing the land, he will return after a while and sow his seed and then leave the field until harvest time. I am reminded each year that the farming season isn’t a swift process. In these days of instant this and instant that, we are becoming less accustomed to waiting.

In the video mentioned above, a solitary shepherd in France planted trees throughout his lifetime in a barren area of the country and in time, wildlife started to return to the land, the trees nourished the earth and the efforts of one man made a lasting impact on the area. I am sometimes far too impatient, I want instant results, but maybe the lesson Jesus is teaching us, is to do what we can in our time for future generations to reap the harvest.

- *Do you sometimes feel that we are wasting our time trying to witness, because it feels as though the people of the modern world see very little need for Jesus in their lives?*
- *What can we do today, to turn the world around, to turn the fortunes of the Church around?*
- *What small, almost insignificant changes can we make, that future generations will be thankful for, maybe long after we are gone?*

Hymn: Hear the call of the kingdom (Singing the Faith 407) OR Listen to

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WL-UdwB0Qvc>

Hear the call of the kingdom,
lift your eyes to the King;
let his song rise within you
as a fragrant offering
of how God, rich in mercy,
came in Christ to redeem
all who trust in his unfailing
grace.

Hear the call of the kingdom
to be children of light
with the mercy of heaven,
the humility of Christ;
walking justly before him,
loving all that is right,
that the life of Christ may shine
through us.

King of heaven, we will
answer the call.
We will follow, bringing hope
to the world,
filled with passion, filled with
power to proclaim
salvation in Jesus' name.

Hear the call of the kingdom
to reach out to the lost
with the Father's compassion
in the wonder of the cross,
bringing peace and forgiveness,
and a hope yet to come:
let the nations put their trust in him.

King of heaven, we will answer the call ...

Keith Getty (b. 1974), Kristyn Getty (b. 1980) and Stuart Townend (b. 1963)

A prayer of blessing

Father God, as we look forward to the new week, may your discerning knowledge fill our hearts and minds to see your will. May we play an active part in extending your kingdom. Help us to bring you praise and glory by being in your service with our words, deeds and thoughts. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

Original Materials & all prayers by Rev. Nutan SJ Suray