

Sunday 9th August 2020

The paper-version Service



For now, we cannot meet in the building – but the church is still open!

All of our services are online www.goodshepherdfourmarks.org.uk but this weekly sheet captures our Sunday service for those without internet.

To Begin: Find a Bible. If safe, perhaps light a candle. Find a comfortable place and read prayerfully through the service. If you have access to worship music, choose a song and listen to it as you begin or read; or even sing, the modern song from this Sunday's Service set out below.



Opening Prayer: Father God, thank you for your extraordinary grace shown to us in Jesus. We are not worthy of your kindness, but we come invited by your love and ask forgiveness for our thoughts, words and deeds that have been against your law. May we receive your forgiveness, be restored increasingly in your likeness, and live wholeheartedly for you glory. **Amen**

Song:

When the music fades
All is stripped away
And I simply come
Longing just to bring
Something that's of worth
That will bless Your heart

I'll bring You more than a song,
for a song in itself
Is not what You have required
You search much deeper within
through the way things appear
You're looking into my heart

*I'm coming back to the heart of
worship, and it's all about You,
All about You, Jesus
I'm sorry, Lord, for the thing I've made
it, when it's all about You,
All about You, Jesus*

King of endless worth, No one could
express how much You deserve
Though I'm weak and poor
All I have is Yours, every single breath

Read: Psalm 51.

Repentance (A summary of the talk given by Jan Evans). King David wrote a lot of psalms, many of them are very uplifting but this one is another story – and what a story! I have something in common with David.

David is asking for God’s forgiveness and he cries out in the first few lines. *Look at verses 1-2 again.*

Most of what I have to say today is probably encapsulated in this first verse but before I look at that I think it is important that we know (or remember) the back story here! Why is David so desperate? I suggest you read the whole story in 2 Samuel 11 & 12.

In the simplest of terms, King David took another man’s wife to his bed, got her pregnant then tried to cover this by allowing the husband (a soldier) home on leave. When that did not work, he put the poor man in the thickest fighting so that he was killed. David thus covering up his adultery by committing murder!

David knows only too well what he has done, and he throws himself on God’s mercy expecting to be punished.

So, what are we to take from this story?

David asks God to blot out his transgressions and cleanse him from sin. We are all guilty of sin. I

said I had something in common with David. I didn’t murder anyone but my past is littered with betrayal (I should say all this was before I married Robin!) and I, like David have many, many times asked for forgiveness – it is hard to imagine that such actions can ever be forgiven but God sent his Son to wipe away our sins. In the New Testament we read...

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.” John 3:16 & 17

“He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.” 1 John 2:2

“But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” Romans 5:8

Over the years, I have come to believe that even the big sins can be forgiven (That’s forgiven not forgotten by the way) I have learnt that there is nothing *I* can do to wipe away these things, but it isn’t about me it’s about God!

He loves us and forgives us not because of what we do or what we are but because of who he is.

I read a little analogy which I think illustrates this clearly. When our children, dressed in their Sunday Best have chosen to roll around in the garden! Naturally, it makes us cross, but we love our children so time and time again we will patiently wash them and put on fresh clothes so that they are clean again ...

God (our Father) does not love you because you are clean – he cleans you because he loves you ...

Big sins and little sins! This story includes a web of lies and deceit.

Just as we don't know how God can use our little kindnesses to develop his Kingdom here on earth, we don't know what the ripple effect might be of our 'little' sins. That one little lie, the boast of our successes to someone who is feeling useless inside, asking how someone is but not really listening for signs that not all is well, and so on.

There are of course no such things as big sins and little sins, they are all sins and it is important that we daily confess them.

Most importantly I want to talk about God's love. We mention it often of course but in this context we would be wrong to assume the guilty are never punished. God did punish David, his illegitimate child died, however God also used David

to further his purpose in the world. There are literally dozens of examples in the Bible of God using pretty bad people ultimately to further his purposes. It is a long list that stretches right back to Adam and Eve.

He never gives up on us. If we acknowledge our sin and ask for His forgiveness, He will grant it.

As long as we live, we will never understand “how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ” (Ephesians 3 v18). But we can believe it.

Loving Father, all the fancy words in the world, expressed in eloquent prose, decorated with emotion, spoken with conviction, cannot compete with a heartfelt 'sorry'. There are times when we are all too aware of our limitations, conscious of sin and the distance it creates between us. Sometimes 'sorry' is all the heart can bear to say aloud. It is only you who can read and understand the language of our hearts. Only you who can translate our 'sorry' into the prayer we would have prayed if we had the words within us. Then you forgive, and having forgiven, surround us in an embrace of love, drawing us close to your heart as it was always meant to be. Thank you, Loving Father, that you listen to hearts as well as voices. Thank you. Amen.

Prayers: Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. (Philippians 4:6)

- Pray for the day ahead and its tasks
- Pray for the nations
- Pray for organisations
- Pray for individuals, for neighbours, for family and friends
- Pray for the Church



Collect for 9th after Trinity: Almighty God, who sent your Holy Spirit to be the life and light of your Church: open our hearts to the riches of your grace, that we may bring forth the fruit of the Spirit in love and joy and peace; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen

The Lord's Prayer: 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. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.

Blessing to be declared over yourselves, COGS, the communities around us and our whole nation. The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face towards you and give you peace. (Numbers 6:24-26 NIV)

The Notices: If you know of others who'd like to receive this, or you'd rather not receive it; or if you find yourself isolated and not able to get neighbours, friends or family to help, then ring Howard, 01420 563344.

Church Services: On Sundays at 9.30 we are holding a service in the church building. For those of us able to come it will be an opportunity to experience God together. We need to wear face coverings and maintain social distance - this limits numbers to around 50, but people can sit in household groups. We are using video from our online church, as we are not allowed to sing. We are not yet offering communion until we have assessed the building for being able to manage this safely, and we cannot yet offer Kids Church or creche, or serve tea and coffee.

