



## Service for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Trinity, 21<sup>st</sup> June 2020

*A warm welcome to all who share in worship with us today.*

Today is Father's Day: let us begin with a pray for fathers.

### PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we take time today to bring to mind our earthly fathers, to give thanks to you for all that they have done for us, all that they have been and are to us.

We bless you for their gifts to us: gifts of nurture and strength, of understanding and dependability, of energy and decisiveness, of gentleness and wisdom, of peace and courage.

We remember fathers whose families are torn apart by jealousy and misunderstandings and are unable to see their children.

We remember fathers who helplessly watch their children suffer and die through malnutrition because of famine, drought, flood or war.

Father God, we recognise that there are those for whom memories of their fathers are painful, or for whom there are no memories at all. May they find in you a loving embrace.

**Amen.**

HYMN: Jesus calls us

*If you would like to **sing** this hymn, click the icon on the webpage for organ accompaniment.*

1 Jesus calls us o'er the tumult  
of our life's wild, restless sea;  
day by day his sweet voice soundeth,  
saying "Christian, follow me."

2 As, of old, apostles heard it  
by the Galilean lake,  
turned from home and toil and kindred,  
leaving all for his dear sake.

3 Jesus calls us from the worship  
of the vain world's golden store,  
from each idol that would keep us,  
saying "Christian, love me more."

4 In our joys and in our sorrows,  
days of toil and hours of ease,  
still he calls, in cares and pleasures,  
"Christian, love me more than these."

5 Jesus calls us; by thy mercies,  
Saviour, may we hear thy call,  
give our hearts to thine obedience,  
serve and love thee best of all.

## PRAYERS

Let us pray.

Lord, you have called us to be your disciples.

Thank you for empowering us in the ways of service.

Thank you for giving us courage when we are fearful.

Thank you for your strength when we are vulnerable.

Thank you for knowing us, loving us and enhancing our lives.

Thank you, Lord.

We are sorry for the times we get our priorities wrong:

when we do not put you first,

when we fail to see the needs of our neighbours,

when we lack the courage and faithfulness of true disciples.

Grant us forgiveness, grant us perseverance; that we may serve you as you desire and play our part in establishing your kingdom. **Amen.**

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name;

Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.

For Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## SCRIPTURE READING: St Matthew 10: 24-33

<sup>24</sup> "A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the master; <sup>25</sup> it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher, and the slave like the master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household!

<sup>26</sup> "So have no fear of them; for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. <sup>27</sup> What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. <sup>28</sup> Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. <sup>29</sup> Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground unperceived by your Father. <sup>30</sup> And even the hairs of your head are all counted. <sup>31</sup> So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.

<sup>32</sup> "Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; <sup>33</sup> but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven."

Thanks be to God.

## REFLECTION

In this passage from Matthew, we see Jesus preparing his disciples for their mission. He warns them of threats they are likely to face. He points out that they may meet opposition,

including the possibility of it coming from members of their own families. They are called to go out and take on their mission completely reliant on God. Matthew's gospel makes us aware of what it was like to be living with the reality of Jesus' predictions. This must have been a terrifying time for the disciples. They had had three years where they had followed Jesus. He had taught them many things, including the message that everyone was seen as equal in the eyes of God. But this was entirely contrary to the dictatorship of the Roman Empire. Rome was cracking down on people and it was likely that anyone following Jesus was at risk of losing everything. It was not going to be easy.

But then we are reminded that Jesus is with us and we need not be afraid. In our reading, Jesus uses a wonderful image. It is the image of little sparrows. I'm guessing that many of you get huge enjoyment out of watching the birds in your gardens. Perhaps you get to know certain ones that come daily to eat from your bird feeder? You care for them: they are important to you. During this lockdown my grandsons, with the help of their Dad, made a bird box and their sister, three-year-old Alice, enjoys watching the birds feed.

Jesus talks about the little sparrows that were sold in the markets of the Middle East in his time. They were inexpensive: two birds were sold for a halfpenny. They were pretty insignificant things, these little sparrows; but God watches over them. If God cares about the birds that fall from the air, the tiny little birds sold in the market, how much more God cares for us.

There is another image which is just as lovely: the number of hairs on our head. We do not know how many hairs we have, but God does. The verse says, "Even the hairs on your head are all counted." This is so powerful because, after telling the disciples about the persecution they are likely to face, he tells them "Fear not, do not be afraid. I care about you." He reminds them that God is their heavenly Father who loves and values them so much. How marvellous is that?!

Although Christians in this country are not faced with persecution for their faith, we are aware of fellow Christians in other parts of the world who are – and we can pray for them. Sometimes it's not easy to follow Jesus in our every day lives. There can be many things that we may find difficult about being a true follower of Jesus. The following words are part of a prayer I found, which sums this up, so let us pray.

We are sorry for all the times we have not done what the Bible tells us we should do because what it asks of us makes us feel uncomfortable.

We are sorry for all the times we have been scared to say to other people that we are followers of Jesus, afraid that we might get bullied or laughed at.

Help us to put you first in our lives, and not be afraid to let others know that we are followers of Jesus.

When following Jesus means doing things that we are scared to do, help us to be brave and do them anyway.

Help us to remember that your love is stronger than anything, and that you will give us all that we need. **Amen.**

HYMN: Take my life

*If you would like to sing this hymn, click the icon on the webpage for organ accompaniment.*

1 Take my life and let it be  
consecrated, Lord, to thee.  
Take my moments and my days;  
let them flow in endless praise.

2 Take my hands and let them move  
at the impulse of thy love.  
Take my feet and let them be  
swift and beautiful for thee.

3 Take my voice and let me sing  
always, only, for my King.  
Take my lips and let them be  
filled with messages from thee.

4 Take my silver and my gold;  
not a mite would I withhold.  
Take my intellect and use  
every power as thou shalt choose.

5 Take my will and make it thine;  
it shall be no longer mine.  
Take my heart it is thine own;  
it shall be thy royal throne.

6 Take my love; my Lord, I pour  
at thy feet its treasure store.  
Take myself, and I will be  
ever, only, all for thee.

Frances Havergal

#### PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

There is a response: **Make us one of you.**

Lord, we are your disciples.

**Make us one of you.**

We pray for those whom you have called to service – doctors, nurses, scientists, all key workers and many more. We give thanks for their care and commitment.

**Make us one of you.**

We pray for those who serve you in our church: readers, music makers, those who welcome, wash up and clean. We long for the day when we can all return to church and worship together.

**Make us one of you.**

We pray for our own discipleship. For the times during this pandemic when we have been isolated, lonely and scared. As we slowly come out of lockdown, we pray for people who are nervous. Give us strength to face our challenges with courage.

**Make us one of you.**

May our united discipleship further your work and help to establish your promised kingdom.

**Amen.**

HYMN: Will your anchor hold

*If you would like to sing this hymn, click the icon on the webpage for organ accompaniment*

1 Will your anchor hold in the storms of life,  
when the clouds unfold their wings of strife?  
When the strong tides lift, and the cables  
strain,  
will your anchor drift, or firm remain?  
*We have an anchor that keeps the soul  
steadfast and sure while the billows roll;  
fastened to the Rock which cannot move,  
grounded firm and deep in the Saviour's love!*

2 Will your anchor hold in the straits of fear,  
when the breakers roar and the reef is near?  
While the surges rage, and the wild winds  
blow,  
shall the angry waves then your boat  
o'erflow?  
[Refrain]

3 Will your anchor hold in the floods of  
death,  
when the waters cold chill your latest  
breath?  
On the rising tide you can never fail,  
while your anchor holds you will still prevail.  
[Refrain]

4 Will your eyes behold through the morning  
light  
the city of gold and the harbour bright?  
Will you anchor safe by the heavenly shore,  
when life's storms are past for evermore?  
*We have an anchor that keeps the soul  
steadfast and sure while the billows roll;  
fastened to the Rock which cannot move,  
grounded firm and deep in the Saviour's love!*

Priscilla J Owens (altd)

## BLESSING

May you have discernment to see whom to serve.

May you have wisdom to know how to serve.

May you have strength to serve as a faithful disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ

**Amen.**