

Camel-Allen Churches

Sunday Worship at Home

7<sup>th</sup> February 2021



WE PREPARE

Today's Psalm calls us to, 'Praise the Lord'...

O God, we come to you out of the week just gone –  
with its successes and disappointments,  
its joys and its struggles.

By your Holy Spirit,  
help us to focus on you now,  
to listen as you speak to our hearts,  
so that we may be better prepared  
to serve you in the week to come. **Amen.**

HYMN

**Immortal, invisible, God only wise,**  
in light inaccessible hid from our eyes,  
most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,  
almighty, victorious, Thy great name we praise.

Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,  
nor wanting, nor wasting, Thou rulest in might;  
Thy justice like mountains high soaring above  
Thy clouds, which are fountains of goodness and love.

To all, life Thou givest, to both great and small;  
in all life Thou livest, the true life of all;  
we blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree,  
and wither and perish, but nought changeth Thee.

Great Father of glory, pure Father of light,  
Thine angels adore Thee, all veiling their sight;  
All laud we would render; O help us to see  
'tis only the splendour of light hideth Thee.

Immortal, invisible, God only wise,  
in light inaccessible hid from our eyes,  
most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,  
almighty, victorious, Thy great name we praise.

We say, 'Sorry'...

People, people, everywhere! Day in, day out.  
Seeking you, Lord. Hunting you. Following you.  
Hungry for your presence. Wanting your attention.  
Yet not once did you complain...

We're sorry, Lord,  
that the weight of life's demands causes us to stumble,  
to lose our temper and at times to buckle under the pressure.  
Help us to be more like you, Lord.

Lord have mercy. **Lord have mercy.**

We're sorry for not getting our priorities right.  
Help us to know, as you did,  
the importance of spending time with,  
and drawing refreshment from, the Father.

Christ have mercy. **Christ have mercy.**

We're sorry for allowing other people and things  
to take over and squeeze out our time with you.  
Help us to draw daily on your refreshing strength  
in order to cope with whatever our day holds.

Lord have mercy. **Lord have mercy.**

... and receive God's forgiveness...

May the God of love and power  
forgive us and free us from our sins,  
heal and strengthen us by his Spirit  
and raise us to new life in Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**A prayer for today**

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation,  
for you have brought everything into existence,  
you're great and mighty in power.  
Be our strength in times of weakness,  
uphold us when we are down,  
protect us at all times;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



Psalm 147; 1 - 11, 20

Praise the LORD!

For it is good to sing praises to our God;  
for it is pleasant, and a song of praise is fitting.

<sup>2</sup> *The LORD builds up Jerusalem;  
he gathers the outcasts of Israel.*

<sup>3</sup> He heals the broken-hearted  
and binds up their wounds.

<sup>4</sup> *He determines the number of the stars;  
he gives to all of them their names.*

<sup>5</sup> Great is our Lord, and abundant in power;  
his understanding is beyond measure.

<sup>6</sup> *The LORD lifts up the humble;  
he casts the wicked to the ground.*

<sup>7</sup> Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving;  
make melody to our God on the lyre!

<sup>8</sup> *He covers the heavens with clouds;  
he prepares rain for the earth;  
he makes grass grow on the hills.*

<sup>9</sup> He gives to the beasts their food,  
and to the young ravens that cry.

<sup>10</sup> *His delight is not in the strength of the horse,  
nor his pleasure in the legs of a man,*

<sup>11</sup> but the LORD takes pleasure in those who fear him,  
in those who hope in his steadfast love.

<sup>20</sup> **Praise the LORD! Amen!**

**HYMN To God be the glory! great things He hath done;**

so loved He the world that He gave us His Son;  
who yielded His life an atonement for sin,  
and opened the life gate that all may go in.



*Praise the Lord, praise the Lord!  
let the earth hear His voice;  
praise the Lord, praise the Lord!  
let the people rejoice:  
O come to the Father,  
through Jesus the Son  
and give Him the glory;  
great things He hath done!*

O perfect redemption, the purchase of blood!  
to every believer the promise of God;  
the vilest offender who truly believes,  
that moment from Jesus a pardon receives.

*Praise the Lord . . .*

Great things He hath taught us, great things He hath done,  
and great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son;  
but purer, and higher, and greater will be  
our wonder, our rapture, when Jesus we see.

*Praise the Lord . . .*

**Gospel Mark 1; 24 – 34 and 35 – 39 and Reflection**

With no angels, no stable, no shepherds and not a single wise-man, Mark's Gospel launches in, 'The beginning of the Good News of Jesus Christ, the Son of God', and we meet Jesus the man. By the end of chapter one, Mark has touched on many elements to be further revealed as Jesus' ministry develops.

If likened to politics, it's similar perhaps, to the first days in office. Come April 30<sup>th</sup>, President Biden, with his feet firmly under the White House desk, will make his 100-day speech, laying out more plans, marking some achievements, outlining challenges, opportunities, initiatives - we know how it goes; tho' whether he turns again to favoured mantras such as, 'Build Back Better', 'No Malarky', or even, 'Not Trump', we wait to hear!

Jesus faces tremendous challenges, opportunities and initiatives. The Jewish people, down-trodden, their land occupied, actions restricted, still keenly seek their Messiah. As we join Jesus now, towards the end of Mark's first chapter, he has been baptised, completed his forty-day wilderness exam, begun to preach and teach; he's called the first disciples, healed a man; and his fame is spreading throughout the area...

<sup>29</sup> And immediately Jesus left the synagogue and entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. <sup>30</sup> Now Simon's mother-in-law lay ill with a fever, and immediately they told him about her. <sup>31</sup> And he came and took her by the hand and lifted her up, and the fever left her, and she began to serve them.

<sup>32</sup> That evening at sundown they brought to him all who were sick or oppressed by demons. <sup>33</sup> And the whole city was gathered together at the door. <sup>34</sup> And he healed many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons. And he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.

How frustrating for Simon's mother-in-law to know Jesus is in the family home but her illness prevents her looking after him. In this nugget, we see true compassion from Jesus; at her family's request, he goes to her, takes her by the hand, gives his

healing touch and helps her up. In perhaps just a minute or two, she is restored.

Not simply to wait on the men-folk, tho' that's the tradition; but Jesus' healing released her to be herself. It is most likely that service is, for her, a joy; to serve Jesus is a privilege like no other.

Do we know what God wants from us? Who we truly are? He made us with a purpose for each; have we asked what it is? Do we ever allow him to take us by the hand and enable us to fulfil that role, or are we shaped more by the expectations of those around us? If so, can we, dare we seek God's desire, allow him to set us free to do his will, for the furtherance of his kingdom?

Our Gospel continues....

<sup>35</sup> And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed. <sup>36</sup> And Simon and those who were with him searched for him, <sup>37</sup> and they found him and said to him, "Everyone is looking for you." <sup>38</sup> And he said to them, "Let us go on to the next towns, that I may preach there also, for that is why I came out." <sup>39</sup> And he went throughout all Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and casting out demons.

Ready for another day of action, the disciples get up in good time. When Jesus doesn't come to breakfast, they wonder why. One goes to wake him, to find his sleeping mat neatly rolled, but no Jesus. Searching, they discover he has been deep in prayer deciding on his next step. A step puzzling for the disciples perhaps - why move on when things are going so well in

Capernaum? Surely Jesus would want to continue there? But Jesus' prayers have confirmed that the obvious thing is not always the best thing.

Despite Mark's almost gallop through the Gospel, the priority of Jesus' solitude, silence and quality time with his Father is not lost. Prayer is how Jesus begins his ministry; makes important decisions; works through troubling emotions; deals with the constant demands on his ministry; gets ready for important events and recovers afterwards; prayer is how Jesus prepares for his death on the cross for us.

For Jesus, prayer is the key to connecting with his Heavenly Father, recharging his Spiritual batteries, working things through, hearing his Father's will. Jesus longs for us to do likewise, and by his example, teaches and encourages us.

Amen.

We declare our faith in God...

**We believe in God the Father,  
from whom every family  
in heaven and on earth is named.  
We believe in God the Son,  
who lives in our hearts through faith,  
and fills us with his love.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit,  
who strengthens us  
with power from on high.**

**We believe in one God;  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

## HYMN

### The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want.

He makes me lie in pastures green.  
He leads me by the still, still waters,  
His goodness restores my soul.  
*And I will trust in You alone,  
and I will trust in You alone,  
for Your endless mercy follows me,  
Your goodness will lead me home.*

He guides my ways in righteousness,  
and He anoints my head with oil,  
and my cup, it overflows with joy,  
I feast on His pure delights.  
*And I will trust . . .*

And though I walk the darkest path,  
I will not fear the evil one,  
for You are with me, and Your rod and staff  
are the comfort I need to know.  
*And I will trust . . .*

## WE PRAY TOGETHER

Loving God, you call us into closeness with you and yet we are so often strangely awkward about prayer. Help us to overcome our fear, reluctance and guilt and give us the desire simply to spend time with you, relaxing in your presence, orientating our lives towards you.

The disciples said, **'Lord teach us to pray.'**



Loving God, thank you for implanting in us the instincts that lead to prayer. We can't help being thankful, or sorry, or full of wonder, or concerned for someone we know and love. All this is where prayer starts. Help us to trust our instincts and to stretch them out before you regularly, knowing that in this way we'll deepen our relationship with you.

The disciples said, **'Lord teach us to pray.'**

Loving God, there are people we care about who have a variety of needs right now, many of whom we can't meet nor touch. To pray for them is the best way we can love them. So, we pray for the people who are on our hearts – in pain, alone, depressed, in hospital, struggling with a difficult situation, mourning the loss of a loved one... We lift them to you now Lord, for you to touch...

*...we bring to God those we know who struggle at this time*

The disciples said, **'Lord teach us to pray.'**

Loving God, ultimately words are not enough; they crumble to dust in the heat of your presence – they can feel puny and inadequate. Draw us deeper into the stillness of your eternal presence we ask, so that we may know you, or know we have opened our lives to you, or know we have *wanted* to open our lives to you. Whichever it is, it is enough. Here we are Lord, silently before you...

*...we bring to God ourselves*

The disciples said, **'Lord teach us to pray.'**

And Jesus did.....

**Our Father...**





## OUR SERVICE DRAWS TO A CLOSE

### HYMN

**Ye servants of God,**  
your Master proclaim,  
and publish abroad  
His wonderful name;  
the name all-victorious  
of Jesus extol;  
His kingdom is glorious,  
and rules over all.

God ruleth on high,  
almighty to save;  
and still He is nigh,  
His presence we have;  
the great congregation  
His triumph shall sing,  
ascribing salvation  
to Jesus our King.

'Salvation to God  
who sits on the throne',  
let all cry aloud,  
and honour the Son:  
the praises of Jesus  
the angels proclaim,  
fall down on their faces,  
and worship the Lamb.

Then let us adore,  
and give Him His right –  
all glory and power,  
all wisdom and might:

all honour and blessing,  
with angels above;  
and thanks never-ceasing,  
and infinite love.

Lord Jesus,  
go with us into the world this week.  
Help us to remain focused upon you  
and to make your priorities our priorities in  
all the places you are sending us and all the  
conversations we will have. **Amen.**

**And may the almighty and merciful Lord,  
Father Son and Holy Spirit  
bless us and keep us. Amen.**



---

*Material for this service is drawn from:  
New Patterns for Worship - Church House Publishing  
rootsontheweb.com*

*Prayers of intercession adapted from 'Prayer' by John Pritchard  
Hymns taken from missionpraise.com  
ccli 999402*

*Service compiled and reflection written by Claire*