

Morning Worship for 12th July 2020 at 10.30am

Good morning everyone and welcome to worship in these extraordinary times when we are the church but are not in church.

Remember that God is present with us as we gather in his name, and that wherever we are, we are the body of Christ.

Opening Prayer:- *(from Roots)*

We all love a good story; and we can't wait to hear how it ends. Come and worship the Lord God, author of our stories – each one so different, but if properly rooted in God, they can be amazing. Come and hear God's story for us today and make it part of your story. Amen

Hymn H&P153 Tell me the stories of Jesus I love to hear; things I would ask him to tell me if he were here; scenes by the wayside, tales of the sea, stories of Jesus, tell them to me.

First let me hear how the children stood round his knee; and I shall fancy his blessing resting on me; words full of kindness, deeds full of grace, all in the love light of Jesus' face.

Tell me, in accents of wonder, how rolled the sea, tossing the boat in a tempest on Galilee; and how the Master, ready and kind, chided the billows and hushed the wind.

Tell me with joy of his rising up from the grave; and how he still lives triumphant, ready to save. Wonderful story, Jesus my friend, living and loving right to the end. *W.H. Parker (1845-1929) verse 6 Ruth Fagg*

Prayer: (from Roots) Lord, we might not be sitting by a lake today. However, as the crowds eagerly gathered to listen to the stories and truths you told them, we too await your word to us. With joy in our hearts and anticipation, we pray that you will give us listening ears, and hearts open to receive your love, your teaching, and your wisdom. Help our lives to be full to bursting, bearing your fruit. Forgive us all that is past and strengthen us for all that is to come. Amen. **We say the Lord's Prayer together.....**

Bible Readings for today: Psalm 65 v.9-13 & Matthew 13 v.1-9 & 18-23 if you do not have a Bible to hand, here Jesus tells one of his most famous stories – the parable of the Sower, and later interprets it for the disciples.

Reflection: I love stories! Words are my passion, as an English Literature graduate, I love to lose myself in a good story. That's also why I love going to the theatre, because, at its best, it is all about good story-telling and bringing words and characters to life. Today's reading from Matthew is perhaps Jesus' most famous parable and Jesus was a wonderful storyteller, using everyday incidents and objects to tell his listeners something about the nature of God's kingdom and love. With a wonderful picture of the traditional method of

sowing seed; casting it out from the bag and seeing where it lands; Jesus talks of the different ways in which people receive the word of God in their lives. I believe there is great encouragement to us all in this story for these times. Each of us is capable of spreading the Word in our words, actions and prayers. I often say that we never really know what seeds we have sown in the hearts of others. So, I invite you now to take your slip of paper, write a message about God's love and grace on it, however brief, roll the paper into a tight tube and cast it away from you onto the ground. As you do that ask God to inspire you in ways in which you can share the Gospel message in the coming week. Amen (*reflection idea from Roots*)

Prayers of Intercession: O God of healing love, we pray for all who are in hospital, hospice or ill at home in these anxious days, continuing to hold before you those who are suffering with Covid 19. We remember in our prayers all NHS staff whatever their role. Be near to all those, loving God, who are lonely and vulnerable, for those with dear ones in care homes and those living with a partner with dementia. Bless, O Lord, all carers. We pray for all whose lives are ripped apart by war, violence and abuse and for all who encounter prejudice and live in fear. We hold before you, loving God, those who are re-opening their businesses, those on the brink of closure, those who have already lost their jobs and those who fear for the future, remembering all young people leaving schools and further education institutions as they search for work. We pray for our friends and families who we miss so dearly and for our church family with whom we join in worship and prayer. Strengthen us all, Lord, to be a blessing to others because of your love in our hearts. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Hymn: STF 672 (tune Epiphany "Brightest and best") Where can we find you, Lord Jesus our Master? We want to serve you, to answer your call. Where do you lead us and ask us to follow? What should we do in our service to all?

"Go to the hungry, to those who have nothing; go where the farmlands are empty and bare. I broke the bread for the people around me; out of my plenty, think what you can share.

Go to the outcast, to those who have no-one; go where my sheep are rejected and lost. I dined with sinners and reached out to lepers; go and do likewise, and don't count the cost." *Allan Charles Dickinson (born 1954)*

Blessing: The Blessing of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, be with us now and always. Amen

**Please consider this my "virtual" handshake and please stay safe and well.
If you are in need of anything, please call me on 01765 698288.
Next week is my final service with you in the morning and the theme is
"Nothing can separate us from the Lord of God"**