

Service Sunday 11th July 2021 Rayleigh

Opening music – ‘We lift our voices for the Lord is good’

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Opening Prayer

Come God. Come walk with your people for you alone are our strength and glory
AND WE PUT OUR TRUST IN YOU

Come God. Come walk behind us, beside us, before us for you alone are our shelter and direction.
AND WE PUT OUR TRUST IN YOU

Come God. Come seek and find and put us right for you alone are the light in our darkness
AND WE PUT OUR TRUST IN YOU

Come God. We know you are near, the sound of your footsteps sets us dancing
HELP US TO PRAISE AND WORSHIP YOU. Amen

Song – My Jesus, My Saviour

My Jesus, my Saviour
Lord there is none like you
All of my days, I want to praise
The wonders of your mighty love
My comfort, my shelter
Tower of refuge and strength
Let every breath, all that I am
Never cease to worship You

Shout to the Lord, all the earth let us sing
Power and majesty, praise to the King
Mountains bow down and the seas will roar
At the sound of Your name
I sing for joy at the work of your hands
Forever I'll love you, forever I'll stand
Nothing compares to the promise I have
In YOU

My Jesus, my Saviour
Lord there is none like You
All of my days, I want to praise
The wonders of your mighty love
My Comfort

Prayer of praise

Let us pray. Father, we praise you that whoever we are and wherever we go you are there. We have discovered that there is simply nowhere we can go where you will not be present. We cannot hide, we cannot run, we cannot even be there before you.

You are always ahead of us, preparing the way. You are there waiting with arms of love and mercy to hold us and to welcome us; to heal us and to hold us. Lord, you are ever near, ever approachable. Great and wonderful God, always loving, we praise and honour you.
Amen.

Prayer of thanks

Lord we thank you for the richness of your creation; for the vastness of our universe, so totally huge that it takes our breath away - our minds simply cannot take it in.

We thank you for the smallest creature, perfect in detail, incredibly made.
We acknowledge that you have not only made the world, but you have created us.
We thank you for giving us the ability to think, to plan and to choose.
We can enjoy each other's friendship and put our trust in you.
Thank you most of all for Jesus, and that through his life, death and resurrection
you have made it possible for us to know you in a whole new way.
Accept our thanks in Jesus name. Amen

Prayer of confession

Father forgive us for not showing love to each other; for our failure to help those in need; for the foolishness that spoils our lives. Forgive us, and fill us with the love of Jesus

Lord's Prayer

Offering and prayer

Journeys

I love walking in the countryside – being out in the fresh air and looking at the open fields, the trees and flowers, listening to the birds singing. Maybe stopping along the way for a rest and perhaps some lunch. I've not done what I would call a really long walk – perhaps one lasting for several days. There are lots of walks available in this country and I'm going to tell you a bit about 1 of them.

The North Wales Pilgrims Way runs for 140 miles and would take about 2 weeks to complete the walk from Holywell to Bardsey Island. A long time ago pilgrims in their thousands were finding their way to Bardsey Island, drawn to the place where the sun sets over the watery horizon at the end of the world. Today a route has been waymarked there from Holywell in Flintshire. The route goes via prehistoric stone circles, ancient churches, thousand year-old stone crosses, sacred springs and waterfalls. You will pass through magical woodlands and across great rivers, up mountains and along coast paths, along ancient roadways, through wilderness and human settlements. Tiny stone churches nestled into the hills provide shelter and rest along the Way, much as they would have done in the past.

Activity - What do we need for a journey?

So if you were going out for a long walk what things might you want to take with you to make sure you're fully prepared for anything that might happen. I've brought some things with me this morning which I'm going to show you now. And just to make it a bit more fun we're going to play a game of travel bingo.

You should all have a bingo card and a pencil. As I take out each item you can cross it off your card if you have it. And if you manage to cross off all the items on your card then shout out 'bingo'.

Talk

As we've just seen, when we're going on a journey, especially a long one, we might think we need to take every possible item with us to make sure we've got what we need and we feel safe and protected. But after we've started our journey it can seem like there is a lot to carry, our luggage can weigh us down, slow us down and make our journey difficult. A good rule for a long journey is to carry no more than 10% to 15% of your body weight.

Sometimes as we travel through life we can feel like we are carrying too much and it's making us tired. So what do we really need each day for our journey? We probably need some clear directions, we need to know where we want to end up, we'll need some perseverance when things get a bit difficult, we need friendship and help in times of trouble. We need to know where to turn for advice and who we can trust. Where can we get these things from? Well we're going to find out

more about that in a moment. For now, we can see that the whole of life is a journey and we need God to guide and protect us every step of the way.

Song – One more step along the world I go

One more step along the world I go,
One more step along the world I go;
From the old things to the new
Keep me traveling along with you

*And it's from the old I travel to the new;
Keep me traveling along with you.*

Round the corners of the world I turn,
More and more about the world I learn;
All the new things that I see
You'll be looking at along with me

As I travel through the bad and good,
Keep me traveling the way I should;
Where I see no way to go
You'll be telling me the way, I know

Give me courage when the world is rough,
Keep me loving though the world is tough;
Leap and sing in all I do,
Keep me traveling along with you

You are older than the world can be,
You are younger than the life in me;
Ever old and ever new,
Keep me traveling along with you

Reading - Matthew 11: 28-30

²⁸ "Come to me, all of you who are tired and have heavy loads, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Accept my teachings and learn from me, because I am gentle and humble in spirit, and you will find rest for your lives. ³⁰ The teaching that I ask you to accept is easy; the load I give you to carry is light."

Talk

What things are we carrying around with us each day? Are there things that are weighing us down and making us feel uncomfortable? Do we feel we constantly have to get hold of the latest gadget or the newest smartphone? Do we have big responsibilities to look after somebody in our family or a friend? Maybe we're worried about something. Perhaps we're afraid something bad might happen. We might be afraid of what's going to happen in the future. Or perhaps we feel we have to do things that other people expect us to do. The words of Jesus that we heard just now show us that we can take these worries and things that are dragging us down to Jesus in prayer and that he can help us cope with any heavy load and give us freedom. Jesus promises not to burden us and weigh us down with things that we can't cope with. If we live our life by trusting God and relying on him we don't have to struggle on our own any more.

Reading - Matthew 6: 25-33

²⁵ “So I tell you, don’t worry about the food or drink you need to live, or about the clothes you need for your body. Life is more than food, and the body is more than clothes. ²⁶ Look at the birds in the air. They don’t plant or harvest or store food in barns, but your heavenly Father feeds them. And you know that you are worth much more than the birds. ²⁷ You cannot add any time to your life by worrying about it.

²⁸ “And why do you worry about clothes? Look at how the lilies in the field grow. They don’t work or make clothes for themselves. ²⁹ But I tell you that even Solomon with his riches was not dressed as beautifully as one of these flowers. ³⁰ God clothes the grass in the field, which is alive today but tomorrow is thrown into the fire. So you can be even more sure that God will clothe you. Don’t have so little faith! ³¹ Don’t worry and say, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear?’ ³² The people who don’t know God keep trying to get these things, and your Father in heaven knows you need them. ³³ Seek first God’s kingdom and what God wants. Then all your other needs will be met as well.

Talk

God promises to care and provide for us as we travel through life. God knows what we need. God takes care of everything that he has created including the animals and birds. God provides food for the birds even though they don’t do anything to look after themselves. And in the reading we’ve just heard, Jesus says that God loves us far more than birds. So we don’t need to always be trying to get more and more for ourselves or to think that having more things will make us happier. God wants the very best for each of us and we can rely on God to take care of what we need.

And we can see the same when we look at the beautiful flowers in the fields. God gives them such wonderful colours and amazing shapes and variety even though the flowers only last for a few days. And God loves us even more than the flowers. So we can be sure that God will take care of us and give us the things that we need for our lives. We don’t need to be worried about what the future holds or concerned about whether we have enough food and clothes for the day ahead. God wants the best for us. We are precious to Him.

Time of reflection and prayer

Think of yourself and of where you are in your life right now. Think of your concerns and of anything that is worrying you or making you feel afraid. Think of all you are facing in your life at this moment.

As you think about these things, you might like to hold in your hands the small stone that was on your chair when you got to church this morning while we are quiet for a few seconds.

If you would like to, when the service is finished I invite you to place your stone in the bowl as you leave as a way to let go of the things that are worrying you and weighing you down and handing them over to God.

Let us pray. May the living Christ make His purposes for your life known and His presence a reality. The Lord hears our prayers. Thanks be to God. Amen.

Song – Moses I Know You’re The Man

'Moses I know you're the man,' the Lord said.

'You're going to work out My plan,' the Lord said.

'Lead all the Israelites out of slavery.

And I shall make them a wandering race called the people of God.'

*So ev'ry day we're on our way,
for we're travelling, wandering race called the people of God.*

'Don't get too set in your ways,' the Lord said.
'Each step is only a phase,' the Lord said.
'I'll go before you and I shall be a sign
to guide My travelling, wandering race. You're the people of God.'

'No matter what you may do,' the Lord said,
'I shall be faithful and true,' the Lord said.
'My love will strengthen you as you go along,
for you're My travelling, wandering race. You're the people of God.'

'Look at the birds in the air,' the Lord said.
'They fly unhampered by care,' the Lord said.
'You will move easier if you're travelling light,
for you're a wandering vagabond race. You're the people of God.'

'Foxes have places to go,' the Lord said.
'But I've no home here below,' the Lord said.
'So if you want to be with Me all your days,
keep up the moving and travelling on. You're the people of God.'

Prayers of intercession

In these uncertain times,
let us pray to our Creator God
for those who have put their faith in worldly goods and invested in greed
and those who are now having to re-examine their values.
Jesus said; 'You cannot serve God and wealth'.

God, walk beside us.

In these changing times,
let us pray to our Creator God
for those who find themselves concerned about rising prices, job insecurity and unemployment
and those who are having their faith shaken in the things they thought secure.
Jesus said: 'Do not worry about tomorrow: today's trouble is sufficient for today.'

God, walk beside us.

In these star-struck times,
let us pray to our Creator God
for those who find themselves consumed by the latest celebrity gossip
and swayed by the latest fashion and fad, rather than engage in real life.
Jesus said: 'Do not worry about what your life... for the Lord knows what you need.'

God, walk beside us.

In this our time,
let us pray to our Creator God
that we may walk the path of life with Jesus and be guided by the Holy Spirit

so that the difference we make today might prove a lasting legacy.

Jesus said: 'Strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness.'

God, walk beside us.

God of the universe

we thank you that you meet our every need

you care about the smallest worry we have and the biggest fear

help us to follow your call,

help us to love your world.

Give us your peace and joy as we live and journey

Through the name of our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Memory verse

You should all have found a slip of paper on your seat or received it by email with the order of service for this morning. Let's take a look at the Bible verse printed on the paper.

'Seek first God's kingdom and what God wants. Then all your other needs will be met as well.'
(Matthew 6: 33)

Let's try to remember this verse each day of the coming week and remember that God knows what we need and God longs to give good things to all his children which includes every one of us.

Song - May The Grace

May the grace of Jesus Christ
and the love of God
and the fellowship of the Spirit
be with us.

The Lord bless us and keep us,
his face shine upon us,
his grace and his peace rest on us.

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Blessing

Have no fear, be in no doubt; you are not alone.

Open your eyes to the presence of God, open your ears to his word for you
and know he is guiding your feet.

Receive his peace, know his presence and be filled with the Spirit,
and in all you say and do and are, confess that Jesus is Lord. Amen.

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X	Hat	X	Hiking boots
waterproof	Phone	X	Torch
	Map	X	Sunglasses

X	Sunglasses	X	Sun cream
Money	Umbrella	Camera	X
X	First aid kit	X	Torch

X	Sunglasses	X	Sun cream
Money	Umbrella	Camera	X
X	First aid kit	X	Bottle of water

'Seek first God's kingdom and what God wants. Then all your other needs will be met as well.' (Matthew 6: 33)