

All-age worship for 9th October 2022

Safe space

Welcome to this place of worship, where God meets with us and we can praise and honour our God.

We have made the Lord our place of protection, our refuge,

Here is a place of safety.

When we call, the Lord will answer us.

**Come now, O Lord, to live with us,
and show us how you are saving us, (our salvation),
Amen.**

However you travelled here today,

[mime the way you travelled here or wish you had: car, bike, helicopter, surfboard etc...]

Jesus says: **“Come in!”** *[one arm drawing in]*

However you’re feeling here today,

[mime the way you feel: tired, joyful, scared, curious, etc...]

Jesus says: **“Come in!”** *[one arm drawing in]*

If you feel like making noise,

[everyone make noise (drums too)]

Jesus says: **“Come in!”** *[one arm drawing in]*

If you feel like being quiet,

[everyone say a soft “shhhhhh”]

[whisper] Jesus says: **“Come in!”** *[one arm drawing in]*

If you’re celebrating something great,

[arms up shout “hooray”]

Jesus says: **“Come in!”** *[one arm drawing in]*

If you’ve made some big mistakes,

[raise hands and say “whoops”]

Jesus says: **“Come in!”** *[one arm drawing in]*

If you want to meet with Jesus,

[push finger into palms as sign of Jesus]

Jesus says: **“Come in!”** *[one arm drawing in]*

He longs to restore, renew and rebuild us,

[hold out hands to receive, pause here a moment]

... Jesus says: **"Come in!"** *[one arm drawing in]*

Let's worship God with the song, 'Shout for joy and sing.' Worship folder 84.

Shout for joy and sing

Shout for joy and sing your praises to the King,

Lift your voice and let your hallelujahs ring;

Come before His throne to worship and adore,

Enter joyfully now the presence of the Lord.

You are my Creator, You are my Deliverer,

You are my redeemer, You are Lord, and You are my healer.

You are my Provider,

You are now my shepherd and my guide,

Jesus, Lord and King, I worship you.

David Fellingham SoF496 Copyright 1988 Kingway's Thankyou Music.

Safe spaces. Activity:

Where do we feel safe, what words do we connect with feeling safe?

(Using the white board, write 'Safe' and link with first letter write 'Space'.) Try to link other suggestions with these letters, ie., peace with P, family with the F., etc.

1st Bible reading: Psalm 91 verses 9-16. (Rachel Squire)

Psalm 91:9-16

International Children's Bible

⁹The Lord is your protection.

You have made God Most High your place of safety.

¹⁰Nothing bad will happen to you.

No disaster will come to your home.

¹¹He has put his angels in charge of you.

They will watch over you wherever you go.

¹²They will catch you with their hands.

And you will not hit your foot on a rock.

¹³ You will walk on lions and cobras.

You will step on strong lions and snakes.

¹⁴ The Lord says, "If someone loves me, I will save him.

I will protect those who know me.

¹⁵ They will call to me, and I will answer them.

I will be with them in trouble.

I will rescue them and honour them.

¹⁶ I will give them a long, full life.

They will see how I can save."

Now let us sing:

God's People aren't super brave - worship folder 28

God's people aren't super brave super heroes
They don't have muscles from their heads to their toes
They're not gladiators, that's easy to see
In fact, it's amazing, they're just like you and me.

Sometimes scared, shaking and a' shivering
But let's realise, we've got God on our side,
And He can do, absolutely anything
(Repeat X 2 from top)

John Hardwick Kid's source Copyright 1996 www.johnhardwick.org.uk

Where do we feel safe? (Rachel Squire to talk about where she feels safe.)

Sandy to talk about the Greenbelt festival with slides.

- I've been going to Greenbelt for a few years now, and it has become a place of refuge, a safe place, for me and my daughter. We feel we can go there and be ourselves, for just one weekend a year, it has become a place we can relax, enjoy each other's company, and try out new experiences together, away from the usual everyday constraints that life throws our way.
- But why do I feel it's a safe space? Firstly, you may wonder that a festival full of people I don't know, would become this place of safety for us. Well, Greenbelt isn't any old festival, it started almost 50 years ago, and now has partners that support Greenbelt each year, such as Christian Aid, The Methodist Church, the trussell trust,

the Arts council of England and of course the United Reformed Church. This is how they describe themselves:

- **WHAT IS GREENBELT?**

- We're somewhere artistry meets activism, the secular meets the spiritual, politics meets positivity. We're somewhere to come together once a year, where we're just as likely to dream up a better world as we are to dance and debate, to pray and to party (ideally all of those things at the same time).
- Greenbelt is different to other festivals, it's greener, friendlier, you can put your bag down, wander off and it's still there when you get back, (or someone's handed it in to lost property for you). You can make new friends, these two, Annie and I met at the communion service on Sunday morning, a lovely couple, called Bill and Val who were in their 80s; we went to the communion service nice and early to get a good position on the grass with our picnic blanket – it's what everyone tries to do, and then you realise that you have to make friends, because the communion bag is for 10 people not two, so you then ask around you, "are you with others? Would you like to join us?" And you make friends, chat and find out about each other while waiting for the service to start. And then the service starts – it's an amazing time of joining with thousands of others – the whole of Greenbelt stops for the Sunday morning communion, and we sing and we hear stories, this year was all about our climate and what the world might look like in 30 years' time. And I wept with others as we sang a new version of all things bright and beautiful, which was very difficult to sing and the voices of others slowly petered out as they realised the words they were expected to sing;
- Each little flower that opens, Each little bird that sings, Is tainted with the plastic,
- We've thrown into our bins.
- All things bright and beautiful, All creatures great and small, God who made the universe,
- Looks out on us appalled.

The service half way through turned around and we looked at things as they might be if only, we all did whatever we could to help. A sobering service and one where we all had the chance to make promises to do what we can.

- And this is why it is my safe space – a place where like-minded people gather and any one, whoever they are, can feel able to express their views, their beliefs and their hopes. You can join in discussions on religion, gender, colour, the climate, in fact most topics that are current, without fear of being shouted down, everyone's opinions matter. Or you can listen and dance along to live music, listen to new and topical poetry, enjoy live comedy, watch weird and exciting circus acts, chill in the URC tent and listen to a children's story, or do some mindfulness colouring, learn to sing harmonies with folk songs, in fact there is something for everyone, including a very large programme of events for children.
- Next year is the 50th year for Greenbelt, and they have made some changes to their costs, so if you are interested the tickets are on sale now – and if you are struggling with finances, they have a reduced fee to help, go to their website and check it out.

Enough about Greenbelt – what about this church? Do you feel this is your safe space? Can you worship your God here without fear of how you do it? Can you come here knowing that all are part of the bigger family of church and will welcome you and look after you? I really hope the answer is yes, we've been doing our best to make this a safe place for all, we are part of the Inclusive Church Network, we are a child and youth friendly church and we are a Sight-Loss Friendly Church. We are also an Eco-Church and we're working on becoming a dementia friendly church too. All these things work only if we work together to make them happen.

Let's sing again as the offertory is taken up:

Be thou my vision (rejoice and sing 489)

Prayer: Thankyou God that we have so much to give. Our talents, our voices, all the wonderful things you have given us. Help us to use all these things in your name God. Amen.

Everything is upside down!
My friends don't like me, and then they do,
school work is easy, and then it's not,
my family are happy, and then they're sad,
everything is calm, and then it's mad!
My life is sometimes upside down
and I don't know where to go!
Then I'm reminded about you, Lord,
my safe place where I can go,
and you pull me close and say,
'I am here with you'.

Phew!

Amen.

Our Father in heaven, you are awesome!
Show us who you are and how you want us to be.
Make earth more like heaven.
Please give us what we need to keep going each day.
Help us when we are wrong and clean us up on the inside.
Help us to let other people off and move on.
Keep us from bad stuff.
You're in charge!
You're strong and powerful and always there.
Forever!
Amen.

Now let's sing again:

May The Fragrance Of Jesus Fill This Place
May The Fragrance Of Jesus Fill This Place

Rising From The Sacrifice
Of Lives Laid Down In Adoration

May The Glory Of Jesus Fill His Church
May The Glory Of Jesus Fill His Church

Shining From Our Faces
As We Gaze In Adoration

May The Beauty Of Jesus Fill My Life
May The Beauty Of Jesus Fill My Life

Fill My Thoughts, My Words, My Deeds
My All I Give In Adoration [2]

The story of Zacchaeus : 2nd Bible reading: Luke 19 verses 1-10. Read by Rachel Squire

Puppet script: Zacchaeus.

Sandy: Hi Mickey, how are are?

Mickey: Yeah, I'm okay

Sandy: So.... Zacchaeus...

Mickey: Yep, Zachety, Zac, Zac, Zac...

Sandy: Bet I know where his safe space was!

Mickey: Yep, Me too

Sandy: Where do you think Mickey?

Mickey: Well, the tree of course! Monkeys love trees!

Sandy: Umm, I'm not sure that was his safe space, but at least he got to see Jesus from there.

Mickey: well, where do you think then?

Sandy: well, I'm thinking it was his home.

Mickey: Oh, why?

Sandy: Well, he would have felt safe from all the people he upset there.

Mickey: Oh right.

Sandy: And he invited Jesus there. And look what happened when he did!

Mickey: What happened? Did they get to eat bananas? I love bananas!

Sandy: Well, they may have eaten bananas Mickey, but more important than that, Jesus turned Zacchaeus' life around.

Talk: Sandy: Zacchaeus wasn't very well thought of was he? He had cheated people out of money and made himself rich by doing so, which had made him very unpopular, so Zacchaeus didn't have many safe spaces he could go. In fact, when he heard Jesus was coming, and the crowd was so strong, climbing a tree was the only way he could get to see Jesus, as he was so short.

I think the one place Zacchaeus felt safe was his home, which is where he invited Jesus, and that invitation changed his life. After Zacchaeus had decided to give away half of his wealth to the poor, Jesus told him – "salvation has come to this home today".

Have you invited Jesus into your safe place yet?

I would like to think this building is a safe space, and can be for our communities, but it isn't the building that makes it a safe space, it is how we interact with it and the people that use it.

Let's talk to God again now:

Life is a journey, Lord:

let us travel with you.

Reassure us when we don't feel safe:

let us travel with you.

Protect us from all dangers:

let us travel with you.

Amen.

Song ; the lords my shepherd

And now Jean is going to lead us in our prayers for others.

Summary:

Jesus too had safe spaces that he used, to get away from the crowds and spend time with his Father God. These spaces are important for all of us, so that we can be refreshed, and renewed in our faith, and continue to serve and be a part of God's family together. I hope this morning as been helpful to you all, to think about where you feel safe to just be. To

spend time with God, and to find and renew your faith, and let's work on making this space in our community a place where everyone can feel safe and spend time with God.

Let's finish by saying the blessing together.

And now may the blessing of the Lord Jesus Christ

The Love of God

And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit

Be with us all, Now and always,

Amen.