

Morning Service 30th June 2024

Songs of Praise

Notices

Call to Worship – Ps 66: 1-4/5; 1st verse of ‘At the Name of Jesus’

- **Hymn, WF 79** - ‘Our God is a great big God’
- **Hymn, WF** ‘Gonna jump up and down’

Prayer – Shine Jesus shine words **and LP**

Talk 1 – What’s good about singing?

- **Hymn, R&S 415** - ‘You shall go out with joy’

Blessing – Num 6: 24-26; Children leave

Offeratory

Reading – Ps 121 (from KJV)

- **Hymn, R&S – 117** ‘How great Thou art’

Prayer – ‘May the mind of Christ my Saviour’ and ‘Make me a channel’ words;
The Sailing Ship.

Talk 2 – What does singing do for us?

- **Hymn, R&S 552** - ‘The King of love my shepherd is’

Readings – Lam 3:21-24

- **Hymn, WF 73** - ‘My hope is built’ (Cornerstone)

POI – duty elder

- **Hymn, R&S 522** - ‘Servant King’
- **Hymn, R&S 489** - ‘Be Thou my vision’

Blessings

Notices

Thanks to all who offered their favourite hymns, poems and readings to this service. There were so many that I had the choice to either go through them all and keep you here till 2 o'clock this afternoon, or put a few together for us today. I decided on the latter, hope you are ok with that!! If at the end of this service you would like me to share the other favourites with you in a later service, let me know, but I do have to acknowledge that you may get a few extra minutes as a freebie in this service!!

Call to Worship – Ps 66: 1-4/5; 1st verse of 'At the Name of Jesus'

Bible reading and some words from the hymn chosen by Elizabeth. She chose this hymn because it was sung at the service when she became a member of this church – how many years ago?

Ps 66: 1-4, 'Shout for joy to God, all the earth! Sing the glory of His name; make His praise glorious.

Say to God, "How awesome are Your deeds! So great is Your power that Your enemies cringe before You.

All the earth bows down to You; they sing praise to You, they sing the praises of Your name.

At the Name of Jesus every knee shall bow; every tongue confess Him King of glory now; 'Tis the Father's pleasure we should call Him Lord who from the beginning, was the mighty Word. He is God the Saviour, He is Christ the Lord, ever to be worshipped, trusted and adored'.

- **Hymn, WF 79** - 'Our God is a great big God'
- **Hymn, WF** 'Gonna jump up and down'

Prayer – Shine Jesus shine words **and LP**

Using words from the song chosen by Alan, let's pray:

Dear Lord Jesus,

Shine, Jesus, shine, come fill this land with the Father God's glory;

Holy Spirit come blaze, Spirit, blaze, and set our hearts on fire to know You, to love You, to follow and obey You .

Lord, make Your river flow, flood the nations with Your grace and mercy;

And send forth Your word in and through us, Lord, and let there be light,

The light of Your truth, joy and saving love.

Let's say the Lora's prayer together

Talk 1 – What's good about singing?

Well, there are plenty of physical reasons why singing is good for us, and the Lord is always keen to help us keep our bodies healthy. Apparently, 'The act of singing uses both parts of the brain. Singing connects us emotionally.' Singing also increases blood flow to the brain and 'encourages the brain to release feel-good chemicals (eg endorphins), and helps to strengthen neural pathways which helps the brain's ability to change and adapt to new experiences.'

Singing is an aerobic activity (makes you breathe!!), it exercises major muscle groups in the upper body. It encourages you to take more oxygen into your body, leading to increased alertness! So, if you're feeling a bit tired or bored, sing loud and strong, see if it helps 😊 .

Let's take a look at what the bible tells us about singing to God, and I think we need a little singing warm-up while we do. So, as I read these bible verses, when I say 'SING' or 'SONG', or SINGING', could you do 'la la ...'. This is for everyone, not just the those at the front. This is a songs of praise service, we need to do our vocal exercises before we carry on. So, everyone as you are able, make yourself as tall as possible, stand if you'd like, opening your rib cage. Take a big breath through your nostrils, hold it, then push the air back out slowly. Ok, here we go, remember when I say 'SING' etc you do 'la la ...'
Ps 147: 1 Praise the LORD.

How good it is to sing praises to our God, how pleasant and fitting to praise Him!

Ps 95: 1-2 Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before Him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song.

Right, now when I say 'SING' or 'SONG', or SINGING', could you do 'me me ...', and you have to concentrate with this. Ready?

James 5: 13 Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise.

Excellent. Right, now for the tricky one. This time when I say 'SING' or 'SONG', or SINGING', could you do 'you you ...'. Ready?

Eph 5: 18-20 Instead, be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Well done 😊 !

Before we say a blessing for the children as they leave, we'll sing again a song chosen by Jim, who says he chose it 'because the whole idea of coming to church is to feel renewed and to go out with joy!' Well said Jim! Its lyrics are taken directly from Isaiah 55: 12, which says, curiously enough, 'You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands.' ... need to hear some clapping here too! Me go play!!

- **Hymn, R&S 415** - 'You shall go out with joy'

Blessing – Num 6: 24-26; Children leave

A blessing (chosen by Jenny) for the children before they leave for Sunday Club, and for us who stay in here too: The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you; the Lord lift up His countenance (His face) upon you and give you peace. Amen. Children leave.

Offeratory

With a few words from the hymn chosen by Jill, let's pray:

Lord, for the years Your love has kept, guided, urged and inspired us, cheering us on our way, we bring our thanks today. And in response to Your loving generosity, we bring our gifts to You. We pray Your discernment and wisdom to those charged with dispensing these gifts, and Your loving kindness to those who will receive them. Lord of our land and its people in need, be pleased to hear our prayer. Amen.

Our blessing to the children asked the Lord to lift His countenance towards us, Ps 121 which we're about to hear, exhorts us to lift OUR eyes/our countenance to the Lord.

Bible Reading – Ps 121 (from KJV, chosen by Doreen, because she learned this in Sunday School when she was about 11 years old)

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.

My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth.

He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber.

Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.

The LORD is thy keeper: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand.

The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.

The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul.

The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore.

'My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth.' Next Hymn chosen by Eileen, describes the splendour and awesome majesty of creation and our creator God who made heaven and earth, and exhorts us to sing His praise from the depth of our soul. It was written by Carl Boberg in 1885 from his poem 'How great Thou art.' Boberg said this of his inspiration to write the poem, "It was in 1885, at the time of year when everything seemed to be in its richest colouring, and the birds were singing lustily. One afternoon as some friends and I were returning home, a thunderstorm appeared on the horizon. Thunder rolled, and lighting flashed across the sky, the winds sweeping over the meadows and fields of grain. However, the storm was soon over, and the clear sky appeared with a beautiful rainbow." The poem was originally set to a Swedish folk tune, translated into German and Russian before in the 1920's, missionary Rev Stuart Hine wrote the English words and tune we are familiar with today.

- **Hymn, R&S 117** - 'How great Thou art'

We've acknowledged the Lord as our great big God; we've sung with exuberant joy the praises of our creator God, and we've lifted our faces to confirm our trust in God, who ever hears and helps us. Now we lift our prayers to Him for our daily guidance and our service, in His name, to those around us.

Prayer – ‘May the mind of Christ my Saviour’ words

Going to use the words from the hymns chosen by Jean and by Mary as our prayer. Jean says of her choice, *'Having done my general nurse training at Southend Hospital, I then went on to Plaistow Maternity Hospital to begin midwifery training. It was my first time away from home - and I was introduced to the Nurses Christian Fellowship meetings, where we often sang - 'May the mind of Christ' my Saviour.'* Although this hymn is not in our hymnbook, it has remained one of my favourites over the years.'

Let's pray:

May the mind of Christ, my Saviour live in me from day to day, by His love and pow'r controlling all I do and say.

May the word of God dwell richly in my heart from hour to hour, so that all may see I triumph only through His pow'r.

May the peace of God my Father rule my life in everything, that I may be calm to comfort sick and sorrowing.

May the love of Jesus fill me as the waters fill the sea; Him exalting, self-abasing: this is victory.

May I run the race before me, strong and brave to face the foe, looking only unto Jesus as I onward go.

May His beauty rest upon me as I seek the lost to win, and may they forget the channel, seeing only Him.

Make me a channel of Your peace. Where there is hatred let me bring Your love. Where there is injury, your pardon, Lord, and where there's doubt, true faith in You.

Make me a channel of Your peace. Where there's despair in life, let me bring Your hope. Where there is darkness, bring Your light, and where there's sadness, bring Your joy.

Oh, Master grant that I may never seek so much to be consoled, as to console, Grant that I may never seek so much to be understood as to understand, and grant that I may never seek so much to be loved, as to love with all my soul.

Make me a channel of Your peace. It is in pardoning that we are pardoned, In giving to all men that we receive, and in dying that we're born to eternal life. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

A Poem chosen by Elizabeth Pryor. It could not be read at her funeral so Lionel has requested we share it today, in memory of Elizabeth.

The Sailing Ship, by Bishop Charles Henry Brent.

What is dying?

I am standing on the seashore. A ship sails to the morning breeze and starts for the ocean. She is an object of beauty, and I stand watching her 'til at last she fades from the horizon and someone at my side says, 'She is gone!'

Gone where? Gone from my sight, that is all; She is just as large in the masts, hull and spars as she was when I saw her, and just as able to bear her load of living freight to its destination. The diminished size and total loss of sight is in me, not in her, and just at the moment when someone at my side says, 'She is

gone!', there are others who are watching her coming, and other voices take us a glad shout, 'There she comes!!' and that is dying.

Talk 2 – What does singing do for us? Why do we sing in church, why does God through the bible encourage us to sing together?

As well as all the benefits we spoke about earlier, singing makes us feel better; enhances lung function; helps us beat stress; improves mental alertness, memory and ability to concentrate; builds a sense of community; boosts self-confidence; gives opportunity to express ourselves; helps focus away from persistent pain.

In a study at Leeds University, which explores in more depth the relationship between engaging with music and the positive effects on health and happiness, Dr Freya Bailes says, 'When we challenge our students to think critically about whether there is really anything special about music for wellbeing, the answer seems to be that music has it all! Singing with others contributes to positive mood, is engaging, promotes relationships with others, is experienced as meaningful, and can afford a strong sense of accomplishment.'

As a church family, we sing first and foremost to worship and praise our Lord God, it is a means to glorify our God. Singing together in church also enhances our relationships with one another. It restores and strengthens our faith as we hear again the truths and promises of our loving God, and the good news of our Saviour Jesus proclaimed through the lyrics and music. We hear too our own voices acknowledge and renew our devotion to the Lord. Plus, it sounds beautiful, and our Lord God loves to hear it!

Colossians 3: 16 sums it up nicely, '*Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.*'

Our next song speaks with beautiful gratitude, of the wonderful love of our God to whom we sing, this one chosen by Ian because it was sung at his Mum's funeral. It was written by Sir Henry Williams Baker for his second edition of 'Hymns Ancient and Modern' in 1868. He was vicar of Monkland Priory Church in Herefordshire and wrote this transcription of Psalm 23 as he approached his 'death's dark vale' in 1877. Originally set to music by Baker's friend John Dykes, it was later paired by Ralph Vaughan Williams with his own arrangement of an Irish Air, St. Columbus, the tune we use to this day.

- **Hymn, R&S 552** - 'The King of love my shepherd is'

Readings – Lam 3:21-24

The great love of God our King is central to our next reading, chosen by Penny. She says, 'This reading was part of my Day by Day with God, a daily reflection written by women for women, and the words made me realise that I am never alone, however low, frustrated or anxious I may be.'

It is difficult to define why this is special, it just seems to help hold me up, especially on difficult days. Lamentations 3: 21-24.

Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope:

Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

I say to myself, the LORD is my portion; therefore I will wait for him."

This waiting for the Lord is not passive, but active. We wait trusting in the hope He has given us of His unchanging love and grace to hold on to us here on earth, and bring us into His eternal and joyous presence when we pass from this life fully into His, as our next song, chosen by Rachel, portrays. This is one of many songs by Hillsong Worship and is a reminder of the hope we have in Jesus. This hymn was written by Edward Mote and published way back in 1837, then in 2011, Hillsong took this hymn, then entitled "The Solid Rock" and added a chorus that produced this praise song called Cornerstone. This song celebrates Christ as the Chief Cornerstone of our faith, who shed His blood for the forgiveness of sins and access to eternal life.

- **Hymn, WF 73** - 'My hope is built' (Cornerstone)

POI – duty elder

Our next hymn, chosen by Pat, speaks of our Lord Jesus, on whom our hope is founded, of His majestic royalty and servant heart & life. It was written by that most talented composer Graham Kendrick and was released in 1989 after Kendrick challenged himself to explore the supposed opposites of 'servant' and 'king'. That challenge led to much research. The first stanza in "Servant King" sets the tone for revealing *why* Jesus is our Servant King, beginning with His departure from the heavenly throne to become a man (while still God) to live and die on our behalf sacrificially. Jesus's love and mission to bring salvation to those who believe in Him are evident through His servant heart.

Our response, as seen in Kendrick's lyrics, is to follow His example by pouring ourselves out daily for the benefit of others, with the ultimate goal being to bring glory to God.

- **Hymn, R&S 522** - 'Servant King'

Our final hymn was chosen by Geoff Kittle, but it's also my aspirational hymn, my prayer and goal in my life for Jesus. The story of this hymn starts with St Patrick who was born in England, kidnapped to slavery in Ireland, became a Christian while there, escaped back to England, then later returned to Ireland as a missionary. On Easter Sunday 433, the local Druid festival prohibited anyone lighting a flame or candle. Patrick, determined to honour only Christ, risked his life by lighting a huge fire on the areas tallest hill – Slane Hill – to show the world God's light shining in the darkness and deserving all the praise.

Years later, an unknown composer penned the melody 'Slane' in honour of Patrick's heroism and the hill on which he shined his light. It is said that in 6th century, an Irish poet wrote a poem in Gaelic called 'Be Thou my vision' also in honour of St Patrick.

Both lapsed into obscurity until in 1905 Mary Byrne, a 25 yr old university student rediscovered a 14th century copy of the poem, and in 1912, Eleanor Hunt set the words to music using an medieval Irish tune she knew – Slane!!

Read hymn

- **Hymn, R&S 489** - 'Be Thou my vision'

Blessing

We go from here with a blessing chosen by Tom (because it appeals to his Irish ancestry) and a prayer.

May the road rise up to meet you. May the wind be always at your back. May the sun shine warm upon your face; the rains fall softy upon your fields and until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of His hand.

And a prayer:

Lord Jesus, give me eyes to see You; ears to hear Your whispered words; a heart to discern You; my mouth to praise You, and arms to love and embrace You, wherever and in whomever You are. 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