

**Trinity 7. Sunday 26 July 2020**  
**Order of Service**  
**Led by Revd David Treharne**

**Welcome and Introduction**

Leader: O Lord, open our lips

**All: And our mouths shall proclaim your praise**

Leader: Let us worship the Lord

**All: All praise to his name**

Leader: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit

**All: As it was in the beginning, is now, and shall be forever. Amen.**

Loving Lord, fill us with your life-giving, joy-giving, peace-giving presence, that we may praise you now with our lips and all the day long with our lives, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Hymn:** Come Down O Love Divine

**Confession**

In the silence of our hearts, let us pray to the Lord, bringing our individual and corporate failures to respond to God's call and live to his praise and glory.

*We bring before God the mistakes of the past that we have made as a Church and our own personal failures and inadequacies.*

**Most merciful God, we confess to you  
before the whole company of heaven and one another,  
that we have sinned in thought, word and deed  
and in what we have failed to do.  
Forgive us our sins,  
heal us by your Spirit  
and raise us to new life in Christ. Amen.**

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.**

**Bible Readings:**

Psalm 66:1-6 read by Roseanna Treharne

Luke 9:18-23 read by Revd David Rees

**Anthem:** God be in my head

**Sermon: Being Worshipful. Fiona Gardiner**

Where the River flows, everything will live.

**PART ONE...Showing Up**

This week we're thinking again about 'being worshipful'. Last week Tom took us through WHY we worship. In a nutshell, it's our response to God's saving love, grace and power. It's our reaction to being loved completely, forgiven utterly and known through and through. It's also, Tom said, because God is worth it! You could say worship is all about worth-ship...the Lord's worth.

In Psalm 66, we hear again the story of the miraculous Crossing of the Red Sea, as a whole nation of enslaved people escaped to freedom through God's intervention. It's no wonder they danced and sang and worshipped.

But let's be honest here. If I were to have a report card delivered summarising how well I've managed to worship during the last months of being church scattered because of lock-down, I think the honest comment would be: 'Could do better.'

Now my first reaction is to scramble for an excuse. It's not so easy to be worshipful on my own... I know there's on-line services and Zoom meetings....but it's just not the same!

No, it not been 'the same', but it is what it is. God's worth-ship hasn't changed. I know, deep down...I could have done an awful lot better, worship-wise.

One Christian writer has put it rather neatly. He says: 'Show up! Shut up! Look up!'

Show up! That's what I need to do, when I worship. When we worship.

It's showing up in church, if and when we can. It's showing up on-line if we're tech-savvy.

It's showing up, on my own, day by day, to spend a quiet time-out with God...be it for ten minutes or twenty or an hour. It's about putting God first over all the other things that call for my attention. Because He's worth it. And because I really need to stop putting myself at the centre of my world and make sure that it's the Lord on the throne of my heart. It's about making sure my spiritual compass is properly aligned with the Lord Jesus, my true North. And I do this by showing up and worshipping.

It's about letting go of the busy-ness, the unimportant things and even the important things that consume us, just to be with God for a time. Letting go, to readjust our spiritual focus and to regain a right perspective on things. It's about allowing Jesus to ask us each time we come to worship: Who do you say I am? and then responding honestly and openly. It may even be that we have to admit that we have found it difficult to allot time to Him or give Him space in our busy schedule and that we really need to readjust our priorities.

So we all come, trailing our burdens and griefs, all our mess and our madness, and we drop them in front of Him.

Worshipping means we take time to gaze at Him, remembering all He is and all He has done.

Lord, I want you to be Lord of my life, 'cos that's who you truly are, but sometimes I'm just too busy, too lazy.

Sometimes...often...I could do better.

Lord forgive. Here I am, now.

**Hymn:** Be Still for the Presence of the Lord

## **PART TWO...Going Deep**

Have you ever tried to have a conversation with somebody who just never stops talking, who barely stop to take a breath and the words just flow on and on? It's not very satisfactory.

Sometimes, showing up to worship also means we have to 'shut up'. Not a very elegant or spiritual expression, perhaps, but memorable.

When we meet with God, we need to shut up about ourselves for a bit. We need to 'turn our eyes upon Jesus', as the song puts it. And as we quiet our gabbling, we quiet our minds. We are then more able bring the Lord a very special gift: ourselves. Open. Hoping. Expectant. Glad to be able to stop a while and just be with God.

This is the moment when we can go deeper with God. Being still with God is a whole different ball-game. It can be difficult, but it's worth persevering. Because it's when we're still that we are open to the possibilities God is presenting to us.

Be still for the presence of the Lord, The Holy One is here

Come bow before Him now, With reverence and fear

In Him no sin is found, We stand on holy ground

Be still for the presence of the Lord, The Holy One is here

David J Evans, © 1986 Kingsway's Thankyou Music

We are led onto this 'Holy Ground' in worship when we've chosen to 'show up and shut up.' Being close to God in the stillness of prayer or contemplation can be refreshing, healing, revelatory, sustaining. In this deep openness of heart, mind and spirit we can allow the Lord's love to move us and soothe us. Here we find 'deep fountains, welling up within us' as God's love hold us in the stillness.

He turned the desert into pools of water and the parched ground into flowing springs. Psalm 107:35

These deep moments with God are beautiful.

It's also really important, because this sort of worship confirms our answer to the 'who do you say I am?' question. It allows us to stop doing for a moment, and just be God's beloved son or daughter: chosen, saved, loved, precious.

This is worship without the intrusion of words or actions. It's akin to floating on your back, taking no physical effort, just total trust that the water will hold you.

Yes. Lord, I trust you to hold me, keep me, love me in good times and in bad. I trust you in the infinite, silent song of the universe. Holy Spirit, refresh me, breathe your Spirit into me as I rest in you for this moment. Here I am. Here you are. Together.

**Hymn:** Breathe on me Breath of God

### **PART THREE...New Horizons**

As we move through our exploration of what worship means for us, we come to the third part of that jaunty instruction: Look up!

Looking up, we look beyond ourselves, beyond the now of this moment into the possibilities of God's plan for us, for our church, for our community, for our world. We look up to see.

See what? Jesus talks in our reading from Luke of denying ourselves, taking up our cross daily, and following him. Now, I reckon very few of us could actually claim to have seen Jesus, but I can imagine lifting up my eyes and catching a glimpse of His back as He walks on. And perhaps He turns round and beckons me to follow Him, with one of those knowing smiles: Come on! Wait until you see what round the next bend, what's over the next hill. Come, follow me!

David is asking us all to pray about what the 'new normal' is going to be like for our Church. We're all praying about what the new way forward is for our country and our suffering world. As the next weeks roll on, we are being asked to pray alone, pray together, pray a lot! I'm sure we'll find new wisdom and inspiration as a result.

But let's not imagine for a moment that we are going to venture ahead of Jesus. He never says, 'On you go. I'll maybe turn up in a week or so!' No, He leads as Spirit inspires us with ideas and dreams of what the future could look like. But we are always following Him! In looking up, looking to Jesus in worship, we allow new challenges to come into our lives as God's Holy people.

So...being worshipful is a bit of an adventure. It's about showing up and letting go as we give the Lord our praise and love and thanks.

It's about going deep and still and bringing ourselves completely into his loving presence so He can do all He needs to do for us as we rest, recharge and rejoice in his company. Those quiet moments of total trust when we eventually stop chattering on and just listen, listen, listen.

It's about looking up, looking outwards and following Him into new ways of being his people in these days. It's about being gathered to be scattered, and living 24/7 as Christ's followers.

So worship. Worth-ship. Is he worthy of all this? He is. He is. He is. Amen

**Song:** He is Worthy

### **Affirmation of Faith**

Let us 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.**

### **Prayers**

Almighty and everlasting God, we thank you that you have brought us safely to the beginning of this day. Keep us from falling into sin or running into danger; order us in all our doings and guide us to do always what is righteous in your sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

### **A Prayer of Trust**

The Lord sits enthroned over the flood; the Lord sits enthroned as king forever.

Psalm 29:10

God, our God, King over all, including this chaos. You are always enthroned on high; You are always king. You alone are sovereign over this world you have made. In a time when we groan with uncertainty, when we are overwhelmed by the invisible flood of pandemic and panic, Be king. Be king over nations, and governments. Be king over sickness

and death. Be king over communities and families. Be king over me. Be king over the floods around me and the floods in me. For Jesus' sake. **Amen.**

### **A Prayer for All Who Minister**

Bless the Lord, all his hosts, his ministers, who do his will. Psalm 103:21

Father God,

You send your angels to minister to us.

Thank you for all those who minister in a particular way at this time:

For those who work in hospitals, care homes, surgeries and pharmacies;

For those who grow, produce, transport and supply our food;

For those who clean, cook, clear up and keep us healthy;

For those who speak, preach, call, write, blog, vlog, sing and pray into our isolation;

For those who calm, cradle, carry, comfort and care for the dead and their families;

For those who lead, decide, deliberate and govern;

For those who seek, research, explore and assess treatments and cures;

For those who give, bless, serve, love and tend the vulnerable and the needy;

For all who in this season reflect you.

Even as they mirror you, would you bless and protect and provide for them,

Our great Shepherd and the One who is always Enough. **Amen.**

### **A Prayer for Wisdom**

I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go. Psalm 32:8

Lord God,

You create and recreate us in your goodness and wideness.

Thank you for the many outreaches and programmes you have blessed us with,

Thank you for the ways they have changed us

Thank you for the ways they have changed our community

As we look to a time beyond lockdown,

Keep us listening to the ways you want to restore us

And the ways you may want to recreate us.

May we not cling to the old out of nostalgia,

But rejoice at the new wine you bring

And look for the fruitfulness after the pruning.

In this time of preparation make us flexible;

To contain new wine without bursting,

To be ready for harvest,

To embrace with joy all you are recreating.

May we look to you for comfort, not comfortableness.

In the name of Jesus, our foretaste and pioneer of all things new. **Amen.**

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name;**

**thy kingdom come; thy will be done;**

**on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread.**

**And forgive us our trespasses,**

**as we forgive those who trespass against us.**

**And lead us not into temptation;**

**but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory,**

**for ever and ever. Amen.**

## **Conclusion and Final Blessing**

**A Call to Prayer this Summer:** Be prayerful (Eph 6:18)!

During July and August I would like members of the church in the Parish to try and join in with three things:

1. **Rest.** I hope that these summer months afford you some time to rest. I love the definition of rest as 'unthreatened wellbeing.' From such a place good things can come.
2. **Gather.** As the church please do gather with one another. Gather in the church buildings for official services or for private prayer, or online. Or perhaps gather informally in gardens, in online chatrooms or chat on the phone... yes to touch base with each other and socialise but please also gather to pray.
3. **Prayer.** Whether it is prayers on Zoom or Facebook, whether having drinks and takeaways in gardens, whether Life Groups or music groups, whether Eucharist in Tidenham or the marquee, whether walking or having phone calls, or at home alone I want to ask you the people of God to pray for the Church, the Parishes here and for the world!

As your Vicar I'm calling you to pray. Why? Because we need God and because *"there are things God longs for which haven't yet happened."* (Pete Greig). Let's not just talk or write about praying together but actually pray. We are unsure of exactly what's next for our church and nation... so let's look to God. As we pray I have faith and confidence that God will lead us in our next steps.



May the Lord reign in our lives, our Parishes, our nation etc... Lord, have your way in us, amongst us and around us: in government, international relationship, scientific research, economic activity, public services, private enterprise, community engagement, voluntary services, in churches, in homes and in me. Pray 'your kingdom come, your will be done.' In so doing we are praying against all that frustrates God's good and loving purposes.

*"To clasp the hands in prayer is the beginning of an uprising against the disorder of the world."* Karl Barth

If you wish to gather to celebrate the Eucharist I am making as many slots available as are needed next Wed 29 July to meet up outdoors under the Vicarage Marquee. At the moment I am doing 10am, 11am, 12noon, 1pm and 2pm. Please book directly with me (Vicar David) if you want to come along. You must book as we have to limit numbers at each gathering.

Then next Sunday at 10am the Eucharist will be celebrated at Tidenham Church. Face coverings now have to be worn by all those in attendance.

The Lord bless us, and preserve us from all evil,  
and keep us in eternal life.  
Amen.

**Music:** The Peace of God