

Traditional Home service

Sunday 18th July

OPENING PRAYER

Lord of all power and might,
the author and giver of all good things:
graft in our hearts the love of your name,
increase in us true religion,
nourish us with all goodness,
and of your great mercy keep us in the
same; through Jesus Christ your Son our
Lord, who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

PRAYER OF PENITENCE

Let us return to the Lord our God and
say to him:

**Lord our God,
in our sin we have avoided your call.
Our love for you is like a morning
cloud, like the dew that goes away
early. Have mercy on us;
deliver us from judgement;
bind up our wounds and revive us;
in Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

PRAISE

Let everything be said and done in the
name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to
God through Jesus Christ. Sing psalms,
hymns and sacred songs:

Let us sing to God with thankful hearts.
Open our lips, Lord:
and we shall praise your name.

HYMN 1 (*In Christ alone*)

READINGS - 2 Samuel 7.1-14a
Ephesians 2.11-22
Mark 6.30-34,53-56

CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth. I believe in
Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who
was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of
the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius
Pilate, was crucified, died, and was
buried; he descended to the dead. On
the third day he rose again; he ascended
into heaven, he is seated at the right
hand of the Father, and he will come to
judge the living and the dead. I believe in
the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness
of sins, the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

*Spend some time praying for our nation,
our community and our families.*

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your
name, your kingdom come, your will be
done, on earth as in heaven. Give us
today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation but deliver
us from evil. For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours, now and for
ever. Amen.

HYMN 2 (*The church's one foundation*)

CONCLUSION

To him who is able to keep you from
stumbling and to present you before his
glorious presence without fault and with
great joy,

to the only God our Saviour be glory,
majesty, power and authority, through
Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages,
now and forevermore!
Amen.

Jude 1:24-25

TALK

HYMNS TO USE

In Christ alone my hope is found
He is my light, my strength, my song
This Cornerstone, this solid ground
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm
What heights of love, what depths of peace
When fears are stilled, when strivings cease
My Comforter, my All in All
Here in the love of Christ I stand

In Christ alone, who took on flesh
Fullness of God in helpless babe
This gift of love and righteousness
Scorned by the ones He came to save
'Til on that cross as Jesus died
The wrath of God was satisfied
For every sin on Him was laid
Here in the death of Christ I live

There in the ground His body lay
Light of the world by darkness slain
Then bursting forth in glorious day!
Up from the grave He rose again
And as He stands in victory
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me
For I am His and He is mine
Bought with the precious blood of Christ

No guilt in life, no fear in death
This is the power of Christ in me
From life's first cry to final breath
Jesus commands my destiny
No power of hell, no scheme of man
Can ever pluck me from His hand
Till He returns or calls me home
Here in the power of Christ I'll stand

*Songwriters: Townend Stuart Christopher
Andrew / Getty Julian Keith*

1 The church's one foundation
is Jesus Christ her Lord;
she is his new creation
by water and the word:
from heaven he came and sought her
to be his holy bride;
with his own blood he bought her
and for her life he died.

2 Called out from every nation,
yet one through all the earth;
her charter of salvation
one Lord, one faith, one birth:
one holy name she blesses,
and shares one holy food;
as to one hope she presses
with every grace endued.

3 We see her long divided
by heresy and sect;
yet she by God is guided
one people, one elect:
her vigil she is keeping,
her cry goes up, 'How long?'
and soon the night of weeping
shall be the dawn of song.

4 In toil and tribulation,
and tumult of her war,
she waits the consummation
of peace for evermore:
till with the vision glorious
her longing eyes are blessed;
at last the church victorious
shall be the church at rest!

5 Yet she on earth has union
with God the Three-in-One;
and mystic, sweet communion
with those whose rest is won:
O happy ones and holy!
Lord, grant to us your grace,
with them the meek and lowly,
in heaven to see your face.

Sermon Notes - Adrian Morton

Ephesians 2:11-22

Importance of Remembering & The Presence....

I want to continue working through Ephesians this week and look at this passage from Ch2.

And pick up just two themes..

The first theme comes from verses 11 and 12...

Paul has just told this church that they are created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Then he says, 'Therefore, remember.. you used to be Gentiles...

v12 - '... remember... that you were once separated from Christ...'

If you are going to do these good works then you need to remember...

And he goes on to talk about both Gentiles and Jews are now One in Christ...

So its a great passage about unity of course..

But I want to pull out this theme of 'Remembering...'

It's important that we keep reminding ourselves what God has done for us.

And actually if you remember last week, I was saying that the first half of this letter is essentially about what God has done for us in Christ.

But it's important that we keep reminding ourselves what God has done for us.

Because the privileges we now enjoy in Christ will be appreciated all the more.

And I think, particularly, if we are in a hard place.

Or a confusing place..

Or a spiritually dry place...

Remembering what God has done for us is so important.

Because it will encourage and strengthen us in the present.

And if you are someone who can look back at particular promises God has made over your life, then again it is so important to remember those, because it will help us deal better with plans not being realised or just being a spiritually dry place.

And it's not as if we have forgotten what God has done for us.

Or forgotten the promises he has made over our live.

It's just that life will bring many distractions and crowds out our minds.

There is only so much our minds can contain.

So it's more about 'bringing to attention' again those things.
Reminding ourselves...

This is what God has done.

These are the promises over my life...

I'm really enjoying reading this book at the moment - 'Redigging the Wells' by Stephen Mawditt'.

It's the continuing story of church renewal in rural Norfolk.

It's the church that I was converted in, and Louise's family is still part of.

Louise and I get a very brief mention near the beginning!

But it has reminded me why I think like I do in many respects when it comes to church.

Why I have a particular vision for church.
The values I have.

So things like holding a 'charismatic doctrine of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, seeking alternative forms of worship and church life, trying to make the church attractive to unbelievers and the unchurched, evangelism through personal contacts, an expectation of signs and wonders...

All these things that have shaped me come from this church..

The vision and values that have shaped that church.

And Remembering them, bringing them to mind again, has been so encouraging.

Its like, Oh yes, this is why I do what I do! This is what God has called me to...

In 2 Peter Ch1, Peter famously talks about spiritual fruit... he says,

make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love.

and he then says, if anyone doesn't have these things, he is short-sighted and blind, and has **forgotten** that he has been cleansed from past sins.

How we grow spiritually is related to how well we remember what God has done for us.

And again, it's not that we have completely forgotten.

It's more that we need to call them to mind, to bring back to our attention these things.

Because the world, in all its busyness, can very easily crowd it out.

Our minds can very easily get distracted.

As we start to come out of this pandemic, albeit slowly and cautiously, I think many people are re-evaluating what life is about.

I saw on the news this week that the hotels and shops are rejoicing because the Silverstone grand prix is happening this weekend.

One hotelier though said he had vacancies for 170 staff.

He said it was hard to recruit people because many people are now not wanting to work unsociable hours or at the weekend.

People are re-evaluating life.

I know some are re-evaluating church life.

What is it for, what is my role now...

However we are thinking, let's not forget what God has done for us.

What he has called us to....

And if relevant and you know, what are the particular promises of God on my life...

The second theme I want to mention comes from the last verse of our reading.

Paul says, *"in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit."*

He's just been talking about God's people.

Its a reminder that the church is the people of God in a local area.

That is what's important.

Not our buildings.

They just exist to serve the mission of the people.

(In the Church of England, we really do get hung up on the importance of ancient buildings...)

But Paul is saying here that the people of God is to become a dwelling place in which God lives by His Spirit.

The life of God, His presence, is to be among the people, when we meet together...

In the OT, the people of Israel focussed their life around the temple because that is where God's presence dwelt.

Via the ark of the covenant.

What marked them out as the people of God was that the presence of God with them.

That hasn't changed... what marks us out as the people of God is the presence of God amongst us... via His Spirit.

In practice, this means an emphasis on worship.

We 'Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise'... as it says in Psalm 100.

So, as His people, we develop an expectation and desire for His presence.

So we try and give the Spirit space to work and minister.

And sometimes that will feel awkward...
Sometime it will feel clumsy..
Sometimes we'll think nothing is happening or going on...

But however we move forward as church.
And the DCC at Wollaston on Monday mentioned briefly about the possibility of re-introducing some kind of 'Pursuing His presence' service...

But what ever we decide, probably from the Autumn, for me there has to be an emphasis on worship AND time and space for the Spirit to minister.

To allow the life of God, if you like, to be manifest amongst us.

And that's whenever we meet.
During the morning or within an evening service...

The Bethel church leaders are fond of saying, 'The church owes the world an encounter with God.'

When we are in our work places, our community, those we leisure with.. we owe people a Spirit filled life...

Often we are not going to be able to 'debate' people into the Kingdom of God.

But we can release the presence of God over their lives.
By praying for them...

So, when we meet, we can't just be content with talking about God.
Extolling good doctrine.

Having a well keep ancient building...

Having excellent refreshments, imaginative children and youth work...

All those things are important...

But people need to encounter the presence of God.
The life of God... Amen!