

Traditional Home service
Sunday 14th July
7th Sunday after Trinity

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:

*Father, we have sinned against heaven
and against you. We are not worthy to be
called your children. We turn to you
again. Have mercy on us, bring us back
to yourself as those who once were dead
but now have life through 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 (*Praise, my soul, the King of
heaven*)

READINGS -

2 Samuel 6.1-5, 12b-19
Ephesians 1.3-14
Mark 6.14-29

TALK

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 (*All people that on earth do
dwell*)

CONCLUSION

Lord God, whose Son is the true vine
and the source of life,
ever giving himself that the world may
live: may we so receive within ourselves
the power of his death and passion
that, in his saving cup,
we may share his glory and be made
perfect in his love;
for he is alive and reigns, now and for
ever. **Amen.**

Hymns to use

Praise, my soul, the King of heaven

Praise, my soul, the King of heaven,
to his feet thy tribute bring;
ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,
who like me his praise should sing?
Praise him, praise him,
praise the everlasting King.

Praise him for his grace and favour
to our fathers in distress;
praise him still the same for ever,
slow to chide and swift to bless:
Praise him, praise him,
glorious in his faithfulness.

Father-like, he tends and spares us,
well our feeble frame he knows;
in his hands he gently bears us,
rescues us from all our foes:
Praise him, praise him,
widely as his mercy flows.

Frail as summer's flower we flourish;
blows the wind and it is gone;
but, while mortals rise and perish,
God endures unchanging on:
Praise him, praise him,
praise the high eternal One.

Angels, help us to adore him;
ye behold him face to face;
sun and moon bow down before him,
dwellers all in time and space:
Praise him, praise him,
praise with us the God of grace.

All people that on earth do dwell

All people that on earth do dwell,
sing to the LORD with cheerful voice;
Him serve with mirth, His praise
forth-tell;
come ye before Him and rejoice!

Know that the LORD is God indeed;
without our aid He did us make;
we are His flock, He doth us feed,
and for His sheep He doth us take.

O enter then His gates with praise,
approach with joy His courts unto;
praise, laud, and bless His name always,
for it is seemly so to do.

Because the LORD our God is good;
His mercy is forever sure;
His truth at all times firmly stood,
and shall from age to age endure.

Praise God, from whom all blessings
flow;
praise Him, all creatures here below;
praise Him above, ye heav'nly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!

Sermon - Adrian Morton
Eph 1:3-14 & Mark 6:14-29
Cultivating the prophetic amongst us...

I want to talk about prophets, cultivating the prophetic amongst us...

You will know that Ephesians 4 and the five-fold list of gifts/functions/ministries is a key scripture for us, as church, at the moment.

Jesus has given the ministries of Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Pastor and Teacher to the church.

So if Jesus has already given these to the church, our role is to discover them.

To better understand these roles, these functions.

We need to help people find out where they most naturally fit.
Where you are particularly gifted.

And for all of us to grow in all these ministries.
Because that is what it means to be Christ like as individuals.

But also as a church body, that is the path to maturity, to fullness in Christ.
Which is what Ephesians 4 says.

So this morning, as our Gospel reading mentioned John the Baptist, I thought it would be good to look at the prophetic.

Jesus certainly interpreted John the Baptist as an Elijah figure.
In Matthew 11 he called John a prophet.

So lets look at:

What does a prophet or a prophetic person look like.
How might each of us grow in that area.

And therefore become more Christ like...

When it comes to John the Baptist, there are certain things we can learn from Him.

And there are certain culturally specific things we don't need to take on board.

So for example, we don't need to live in the wilderness, wear odd clothes or eat locusts.

But you can be quirky!

What can we learn from him?

In our reading, we hear how John died?

He had been saying to King Herod, it wasn't lawful for Herod to have his brother's wife.

That resulted in John being beheaded.

So in other words, **John spoke truth to those in power.**

You will have a prophetic heart if you are someone who speaks truth to power.

So consider your workplace.
Or if you are retired, when you worked.

If your company introduced new working conditions that were unfair.
Or rules that were unjust.

Are you someone who would get so riled by that you'd write to the chairman.
Or demand to speak to your boss about it.

Are you someone who would challenge those in power.
And you'd do it regardless of the consequences.
Whistleblowers will probably be prophetic people.

John the baptist lost his life speaking truth to power.
Which is quite extreme.

Do you have a child or grandchild who comes back and tells you how the school has just introduced some unfair rule.

And your child wants to write to the headmaster about it.
Or maybe your child wants to start a campaign at school, be a nuisance about it.

Its probably because they have a prophetic heart.

Prophetic people can be a nuisance to those in power.

They will challenge the status quo.

Someone who writes to their MP could well be a prophetic person...

Some people just like to cause trouble because they are troublemakers.

They are broken to some degree and they try and mend their brokenness wrongly.

Some people like to create a drama because it makes them feel important.

I'm talking about people who have a heart for justice.

Who have heart for fairness, for what's right...

<Talk about Jo...?>

Those who are prophetic speak truth to those in power.

What else did John do?

His primary message was a call to repentance.

A call to holiness.

If you read about his ministry that is what he did.

He called people back to relationship with God.

He preached repentance.

He preached make sure you act in accordance with what you say and believe.

Think about the NT books and letters...

Which one stands out as being maybe like this?

For me, its the letter of James...

If you feel in the need for a spiritual pipe clean, read James..

James 1:21-24:

"Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you. Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says."

James 2:14

"What good is it, my brother, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds?"

James 4:4

"You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred towards God."

If you read James and take it seriously, you'll need to sit in a dark room with flannel over your head to recover.

Its hard hitting stuff.

I think James had a prophetic heart.

He was concerned with calling people back to holiness.

Back to close relationship with God.

In our current process of discussing and debating blessings for same-sex couples.

Do you feel deeply about this?

That we have to get this right.

And you can be on either side of the debate.

But you know, just the debate causes something inside to rise up.

This is important...

Because you want fairness and justice for people you know.

Or you want the church to be holy, to not let anything hinder our relationship with God.

Or are you not that bothered?

Are your priorities elsewhere?

One of the comments I received from the survey was this:

"I feel it is far more important for us (church) to learn to 'disagree well'. All opinions are valid and all will need to decide whether to accept any decision or not. But this issue should not change what is the 'main thing' - Jesus was crucified and he rose again for everyone. We are to tell this wonderful, never changing news to everyone, while we grapple with an ever changing world."

The person who wrote that, and I won't say who, is probably more evangelistically minded.

Their main concern is, 'we need to tell people the good news of Jesus.'

But for the prophetically minded person, this is serious.

This is about holiness, about righteousness. This will affect our relationship with God...

The prophetic person will seek to find out what are the hindrances, the blockages to people finding intimacy with God.

Again in our workplace, the prophetic person is concerned that the values and integrity of the company are maintained.

We can't rip people off.
We have to act rightly.
You can't steal pens from the company.

<Aside .. I remember doing a talk at CTK on 'Thou shalt not steal' and one of the examples I was using was about not having software licenses for the software on our computer....>

John the Baptist called people to holiness.

He called people back to relationship with God.

He preached make sure you act in accordance with what you say and believe.

That is the heart of a prophetic person...

Finally, prophetic people are particularly sensitive to the voice of God.

We are all supposed to be able to hear from God.
Of course we are...

But, prophetic people are particularly sensitive to the voice of God.

Are you someone who values intimacy with God.
Someone who particularly values prayer and connection with Him.
Intercessors are probably prophetic people.

Are you someone who is intuitive by nature.
Someone who finds it easy to access their imagination.

<Talk about Gill C and being asked to imagine a cup and saucer...>

God wants to speak to you in that place.

<A good exercise to try is to ask the Lord, "How do you see me as a garden?"

Look at some of the OT prophets and how the Lord trained them:

God asked Jeremiah, *"What do you see, Jeremiah?"* *"I see the branch of an almond tree,"* he replied...

God will speak into our imagination.
In that place where you imagined a cup and saucer, he will speak pictures into that place.

Artists, musicians, worship leaders, those who are creative are probably prophetic people.

To grow a prophetic culture amongst us we'll need a safe space to experiment.
We'll need permission to get it wrong.

A number of us did an introduction to prophecy course a few years ago.

It taught us much about how to both receive and give words or pictures.

That we need permission to get it wrong.
We need to use the right language..

Not 'Thus saith the Lord, but "I could be wrong, but what I sense God might be saying is this..."

A culture where we are free to 'flush away' words or pictures that don't resonate with us.

That we may need others to interpret words or pictures we get.

There is much we can do to ensure a safe environment for a prophetic culture to develop well.

But the main point is that prophetic people will be particularly sensitive to the voice of God.

And the Lord will use them to speak into peoples lives.
To draw out the treasure within people.

To say to people, "This is who you can be..

This is your purpose, this is your destiny..."

To give direction to the church.

We so need those who are prophetic...

You may be particularly sensitive to the voice of God but you may not realise it yet.

Prophetic people speak truth to those in power.

Prophetic people call others back to relationship with God.

Prophetic people are particularly sensitive to the voice of God.

Finally, a few words about unity...

The letter to the Ephesians has two overarching themes:

One is being concerned with unity within congregations.

The other living a distinctively Christian lifestyle amongst a pagan world.

Before Ephesians 4 talks about the fivefold ministries.

Much is said about unity...

Paul writes "Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit..."

and then we get the seven one's of unity..

one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father..

In our reading from Ephesians 1, it says "in Christ" or "in Him" 9 times...

The basis for our unity is built around Jesus and us being "in Him".

So we live for His agenda, for His purposes to be worked out.

Unity is important when thinking about the fivefold because, while we are to grow in all the 5 areas, all of us will be stronger, more gifted in one or two..

One or two will be more natural for us.

And it means when we work together, which we have to do..

We will be motivated differently, we will be more focused on different areas, we will view things differently...

There is beauty in diversity but also challenge.

Simon Harris quote.. said, "its about learning from each other rather than antagonising each other."

Unity will be the foundation for all this Ephesians 4 talk...

Amen!