

Traditional Home service

Sunday 19th June

OPENING PRAYER

O God, the strength of all those who put their trust in you, mercifully accept our prayers and, because through the weakness of our mortal nature we can do no good thing without you, grant us the help of your grace, that in the keeping of your commandments we may please you both in will and deed; 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 admit to God the sin which always confronts us.

O King enthroned on high, filling the earth with your glory: holy is your name, Lord God almighty. In our sinfulness we cry to you to take our guilt away, and to cleanse our lips to speak your word, through 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 (*Dear Lord and Father of Mankind*)

READINGS - 1 Kings 19.1-15a
Galatians 3.23-29
Luke 8.26-39

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 (*As the Deer*)

CONCLUSION

The Lord bless you and watch over you, the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you, the Lord look kindly on you and give you peace; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. Amen.

HYMNS TO USE

1 Dear Lord and Father of mankind,
forgive our foolish ways;
re clothe us in our rightful mind,
in purer lives thy service find,
in deeper reverence, praise.

2 In simple trust like theirs who heard
beside the Syrian sea
the gracious calling of the Lord,
let us, like them, without a word
rise up and follow thee.

3 O Sabbath rest by Galilee,
O calm of hills above,
where Jesus knelt to share with thee
the silence of eternity,
interpreted by love!

4 Drop thy still dews of quietness,
till all our strivings cease;
take from our souls the strain and stress,
and let our ordered lives confess
the beauty of thy peace.

5 Breathe through the heats of our desire
thy coolness and thy balm;
let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
speak through the earthquake, wind, and
fire,
O still, small voice of calm!

1 As The Deer Pants For The Water
So My Soul Longs After You
You Alone Are My Heart's Desire
And I Long To Worship You

2 You're My Friend And You Are My
Brother
Even Though You Are A King
I Love You More Than Any Other
So Much More Than Anything

*You Alone Are My Strength, My Shield
To You Alone May My Spirit Yield
You Alone Are My Heart's Desire
And I Long To Worship You*

3 I Love You More Than Gold Or Silver,
Only You Can Satisfy.
You Alone Are The Real Joy Giver
And The Apple Of My Eye.

4 As The Deer Pants For The Water
So My Soul Longs After You
You Alone Are My Heart's Desire
And I Long To Worship You

Sermon - Adrian Morton
The Father's love -

As its Father's day I want to talk about our heavenly Father.
And in particular the Father's love.

Knowing who the Father is.
Knowing the love he has for us, I believe, is foundational to us in our walk of faith.

<TESTIMONY - grew up an atheist, came to faith when I was 24.. etc...
converted in a rural CofE village church that was going through a charismatic renewal...

I came to faith essentially because I came to believe Jesus was who he claimed to be.
That he did rise from the dead...
And on that September morning in 1989 I encountered the reality of the living Jesus.
The Holy Spirit came and met with me powerfully.
And I was changed forever...
I was born again and became a new creation.

However, I had to then learn over the years about the Father's love.
Because I didn't know it...

And it all came to a head for me, when I attended a leadership conference at St. Andrews, Chorleywood with John & Carol Arnott.

For those who don't know, they were the seniors pastors of the Toronto church where the Toronto blessing became prominent.

At this leadership conference, the Arnotts and others spent a week, talking about the Father's love.

And John Arnott's message, particularly, just undid me.
What he was saying just seemed to get behind my defences and penetrate deep into my soul.

And I spent much of the week, overwhelmed by the love of God.

Most evenings I'd phone my wife to catch up and whenever she asked me how the conference was going, I would try and tell her, but just start weeping.

I spent most of the week weeping.

Just overwhelmed by the love of God...

Because I had encountered the love of the Father experientially...
I'd probably heard many sermons on God's love, the Father's love even.

But the Holy Spirit was giving me this experience of the Father's love.
Which is what he just wants to do.

And so the message of the Father's love has become foundational for me...

Its a well used saying that God loves you the way you are but he loves you too much to let you stay the way you are.

He wants to take us from glory to glory...
To become more like His son Jesus.

The Father's love, the Father's heart.. is that God has a heart towards you and I as a perfect Father would have.

And He is the perfect father...

Our problem is that we project our views of our own earthly father onto God the Father.

So there is this distortion going on.

I'm not sure what kind of Father you had.
Some of us may not have even known their Father.

Or your Father was far less than perfect.
Distant maybe, abusive even.

<Talk about GC..>

If our Father had been like that then the distortion is even greater.

But whatever our Father was like, and none of us had perfect Fathers, we need to bring it back to a Biblical perspective and get the right take on that.

The Trinity, which we celebrated last week, is a trinity of Love

Jesus says in John 17:24 - "Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world."

Jesus on earth just didn't serve the Father.
Jesus walked though his ministry knowing he was loved..

His salvation message wasn't just a strategy given to him...

What propelled Jesus through ministry is that he knew the Father loved him...

He loved the Father... the Father loved the Son.

The Holy Spirit is the bond of love between the Father & the Son.

In John 14:1-7 Jesus is preparing his disciples for when he is gone.

Its a well known reading.. often read at funerals.

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going." Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?" Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him."

I used to read that passage in this way. That Jesus is the only way to salvation, to heaven.

But what it says is that more specifically, we are all going to the Father

No one comes to the Father except through me.

Our ultimate destination is the Father...

Its not like we'll get to heaven, be with, hopefully, some of our loved ones. With Jesus, who's our friend..

And it won't be like, Jesus is Ok, but watch out for the Father.

You can never please him,
Not sure I can depend on him...
He always there with criticism...
Won't be like that...

Jesus is saying the Father is just like Him.
And our destination is the Father...

How many are excited about going to the Father...?

John 17:23 Jesus prays for his disciples:

"May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me."

When we get baptised.
We get identified with Jesus.
We become in Christ.

It means that the Father loves us as He loves Jesus.

The Father loves you just as much as He loves Jesus!

He's loves us with an everlasting love.
His love will never run out, its not fickle.

Its not like.. His love for you is ok today while you are at church.

But during the week, when maybe things go wrong... His love won't be so strong for you.

Its NOT like that - his love for you is everlasting!

In the Ot the word Father is used 15 times to describe God.

In the NT its used 245 times...

Consider the culture.

Jewish people, even today won't say the name Jehovah, or Yahweh.. lest they use it in vain.

They use the word Lord, Adoni... things like that..

He's the great God and King of the universe...

And Jesus comes along saying, God is my father.

And it was shocking to them.. how dare you put yourself into a close friendship with Him.

He says, haven't you read the Scriptures. Because it is in the OT...

But in the NT its there over and over again. That God is our Father...

The greatest picture we have of the fatherhood of God is in Luke - The parable of the Prodigal Son..

<You know the story...

Jesus is telling the story to tell what the father is like.

How many can relate to the younger son, the wasteful son?
So glad there was another chance.

How many have streak of the older brother?

Which one of the brothers was right?
Neither of them?

Both of them mis-understood the heart of that Father...

<Talk about AA funeral...>

John 3:16...

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

The simplicity of the Gospel.. simply believe in Him!

Its not a gospel of good works.
It has its beginning and ending in faith.

Simply believe!
Its all been done by Jesus.

The Father has been completely satisfied that the righteous requirements of the law have been met.

It means He can be the Father in the story and He can run to you.

Rescue you, and throw a party for you.

When you just humble yourself and come back to him.

God so loved you, that he gave His Son....

There is no other Good news anywhere else in the world.

It doesn't matter whether you are rich or poor, smart or dumb, well connected or not...

Simply believe...

The Father's love...

Love is a very sustaining thing...

As I said, Jesus walked though his ministry knowing he was loved..

It was because the Father loved you and I.. he was willing to give the son.

Love is the primary motivator in all of life...

So many in ministry have been motivated by worthy causes.

The duty to perform..

Motivated by other people's vision or ideas...

And we've missed the primary motivator...

That the love of Father has so filled your heart, that you are compelled to share the good news with others...

And that has to come via revelation...

The Holy Spirit has to come and reveal the Father's heart to us.

for me... it really took root at that leadership conference at St. Andrews, Chorleywood...

Romans 5:5 - And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

By faith I receive it...

I want more love poured into my heart by the Holy Spirit...

Later in Romans, ch 8, Paul writes "by the Sprit we cry, "Abba, Father."

word in Aramaic simply means 'daddy'...

If we are not careful it can seem disrespectful.

Yet children call their father daddy and still respect their father.

Describes a loving intimate relationship...

Not just saved from sin,...
saved for relationship...

And we now get to call him daddy...

It can feel awkward at first....

Yet I think God is inviting us to call him Abba, daddy...

Amen.