

## Traditional Home service Sunday 3rd July

### OPENING PRAYER

Almighty God, you have broken the tyranny of sin and have sent the Spirit of your Son into our hearts whereby we call you Father:  
give us grace to dedicate our freedom to your service, that we and all creation may be brought to the glorious liberty of the children of God; 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

Come, let us return to the Lord and say:

*Almighty God, long-suffering and of great goodness: I confess to you, I confess with my whole heart my neglect and forgetfulness of your commandments, my wrong doing, thinking, and speaking; the hurts I have done to others, and the good I have left undone. O God, forgive me, for I have sinned against you; and raise me to newness of life; 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 (Here I Am, Lord (I, the Lord of Sea and Sky)*

READINGS - 2 Kings 5.1-14  
Galatians 6.1-16  
Luke 10.1-11,16-20

### 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 (Make Me a Channel of Your Peace)*

### 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

I, The Lord Of Sea And Sky,  
I Have Heard My People Cry.  
All Who Dwell In Dark And Sin,  
My Hand Will Save.

I Who Made The Stars Of Night,  
I Will Make Their Darkness Bright.  
Who Will Bear My Light To Them?  
Whom Shall I Send?

*Here I Am Lord, Is It I, Lord?  
I Have Heard You Calling In The Night.  
I Will Go Lord, If You Lead Me.  
I Will Hold Your People In My Heart.*

I, The Lord Of Snow And Rain,  
I Have Borne My People's Pain.  
I Have Wept For Love Of Them, They  
Turn Away.

I Will Break Their Hearts Of Stone,  
Give Them Hearts For Love Alone.  
I Will Speak My Word To Them  
Whom Shall I Send?

*Here I Am Lord, Is It I, Lord?  
I Have Heard You Calling In The Night.  
I Will Go Lord, If You Lead Me.  
I Will Hold Your People In My Heart.*

I, The Lord Of Wind And Flame  
I Will Tend The Poor And Lame.  
I Will Set A Feast For Them,  
My Hand Will Save

Finest Bread I Will Provide,  
Till Their Hearts Be Satisfied.  
I Will Give My Life To Them,  
Whom Shall I Send?

*Here I Am Lord, Is It I, Lord?  
I Have Heard You Calling In The Night.  
I Will Go Lord, If You Lead Me.  
I Will Hold Your People In My Heart.*

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 is doubt true faith in You

Make me a channel of your peace  
Where there is despair in life let me bring  
hope  
Where there is darkness only light  
And where there's sadness ever joy

*Oh, Master grant that I may never seek  
So much to be consoled as to console  
To be understood as to understand  
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  
It is in giving to all men that we receive  
And in dying that we are born to eternal  
life

*Oh, Master grant that I may never seek  
So much to be consoled as to console  
To be understood as to understand  
To be loved as to love with all my soul*

Make me a channel of your peace  
Where there's despair in life let me bring  
hope  
Where there is darkness only light  
And where there's sadness ever joy

Sermon - Adrian Morton  
Gal 6:1-10  
Living the best life we can...

I believe the Lord wants us to live the best life we can live...

Jesus said, I have come so that you may have life.

He wants us to be the best us we can be.

And I think that involves a life rooted in worship and adoration.  
In life we are drawn towards that which we worship.  
Towards that which captivates our heart.

So I think living the best life we can live will involve worship and adoration.

Living with a knowledge of God's presence.  
Getting to know Him.  
Learning to hear from Him.

Again Jesus said "many will say to me Lord, Lord didn't we do many deeds in your name. Then I will declare to them, "I never knew you."

Always a scary passage that one!

So living the best life we can will involve worship and adoration, building intimacy with Him.

But of course, at some point we will need to interact with other people.

I love this prayer we use on the Alpha course.

*"So far today God, I've done rather well... I haven't gossiped, haven't lost my temper, been greedy, grumpy, nasty, selfish or over indulgent. I'm really glad about that. But in a few minutes I'm going to get out of bed, and from then on I'm going to need a lot more help!"*

So this morning I want to talk about living the best life we can in the context of other people.

And I think this Galatians reading has something important to say about how we can do that.

A bit of quick background...

There were some in this church in Galatia who were saying that to be a Christian you had to observe the Torah, the OT law.

And Paul was like, "what are you doing?"

Don't you know that you are called to freedom. ch5v13.  
But not to use your freedom to, and the NIV says, indulge the "sinful nature."

That's actually a bad translation...  
When we become a Christian, the Spirit is deposited within us.  
and we become a new creation.  
With a new nature.

We haven't a sinful nature anymore.

A better translation is 'flesh'.  
Don't use your freedom to indulge the "flesh".

Which simply means your old way of thinking and believing before you became a Christian.

And, Paul says use your freedom to serve one another in love.

And he goes on in Ch5 to list a whole load of things that belong to the flesh.  
Then, as a contrast, he lists the fruit of the Spirit.  
Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness etc...

And then he gives some practical examples of what it looks like to live by the Spirit.

So he says, "if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual, in other words, you who have the Holy Spirit, i.e. you're a Christian, you should restore that person gently.

He says, carry each other's burdens.

<I love reading the St. Mary's, WhatsApp group. People posting, can we pray for this, can we celebrate this, can we give thanks for this...

It's helping us carry each other's burdens....>

Paul says, have a proper estimation of your worth.

In other words, stop being big headed!  
You're being deceived.

v6 - "Anyone who receives instruction in the word must share all good things with his instructor."

Doesn't even say good instruction!  
My bank account details will be given at the end - Joking!

Then we get to the verses I want to concentrate on this morning.

v7 - Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for you reap whatever you sow. If you sow to your own flesh, you will reap corruption from the flesh. but if you sow to the Spirit, you will reap eternal life from the Spirit.

In other words, sow to flesh - Bad!  
Sow to the Spirit - Good!

Its a law of nature isn't it..  
That what we show is what we reap!

<Louise and I had a few days away last week, and on one of the days we went for a walk across fields of barley and wheat.

If there was a farmer here, he would tell you that if you sow barley you reap barley.  
If you sow wheat you will reap wheat!

We know its a law of nature.  
And as in nature so in the spiritual world...

If you sow to indulge your old way of living you reap those things listed in Ch5.

But if you sow to please the Spirit you will reap Spiritual fruit.

Spirit life, sowing unto the Spirit, is about making choices.

When we become a Christian, the Holy Spirit comes and lives within us and I believe will deposit some fruit, which is listed in Ch5, in our lives.

So you may have suddenly found, when you became a Christian, that you had more love. Or more joy, or more patience than you used to have.

Imagine it this way....

Imagine that your inner life has a number of fruit bowls.

The size of these fruit bowls will dictate the amount of fruit that gets deposited.

Someone, for whatever reason, and it might just be circumstances of life, may have a small joy fruit bowl but a large kindness bowl. So the Holy Spirit will deposit a small amount of joy and a larger amount of kindness. So that person is really kind but are miserable in their kindness!

But the call on all of others is to live increasingly fruitful lives.

No matter what size of fruit bowl you started with.

We need to increase our fruit bowl size.

So we can contain more fruit.

Who doesn't want to live with more love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness... in your life?

That is living the best life we can live.

A life full of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, self-control.

And increased levels of fruitfulness is down to the choices we make.

Its by practicing the list of fruit.

"Lord, why am I surrounded by people with such differing views?

Well are you going to grow in love and patience by practicing love and patience toward those who hold differing views to you."

"Lord, why are there so many grumpy people in this church?

"Well, are you going to practice joy so you grow in joy and grow joy in others?"

<I've used this illustration before I know, and I'm using it at the moment when I speak at weddings and talk about sowing good things into a marriage...

Talk about the lawn mower...>

I know Louise has reaped mercy back...  
Because I am increasingly sowing mercy...

Its a spiritual law that what we sow we will reap.

Actually, we know it works...  
How do you feel when someone is rude to you?

Something inside of you rises up and you want to be rude to them.

<Phone call about bell ringing...>

Fruitfulness is neither automatic or optional.

Fruitfulness relies on our cooperation with the Spirit.  
Its about choices we make.

Neither is it optional.  
We can't go through life just saying, I'm not really a patient person.  
Or I have no self control...  
That's just how God made me!

Why else don't we sometimes cooperate with the Holy Spirit?  
For one, we don't realise it's a way the Lord works.

It can be our pride...

It can be that we simply don't believe that by continuing to sow into the way we once used to think and behave, we'll reap corruption.

Bad stuff in our lives...

Paul says, Do not be deceived.  
And its akin to mocking God.. its quite a warning...

It can be because we are more concerned about our rights than our responsibilities.

Our responsibility is to sow to please the Spirit.  
More than worrying about how others are behaving.

I asked Jez if we can have Waymaker this morning just so I can refer to it.

Even if I don't see it you're working.  
Even if I don't feel it, you're working.

I believe the Lord is constantly working to create situations where we can makes choices to increase our fruitfulness.

In this church in Galatia, the context was conflict.  
I even believe the Lord allows difficult situations in churches to arise, conflict even, in order to grow fruitfulness in us.

The sad thing is, often people will run away from those situations and join another church.

But remember Jonah, you can't run away from the Lord...!  
If its a God thing.. he'll still be on your case!

It may be that difficult person at wrk is being used by the Lord to grow fruitfulness in your life.

It might not be they might just be rude!

But a first step is at least to ask the Lord.  
Are you behind this?

Is this about me? Are you working on me in this situation?

I believe He is passionate about growing fruitfulness in our lives.  
Because he wants us to live the best lives we can

Paul finishes by concentrating on one of the fruit - Goodness.

v9-10: "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers."

<I keep hearing reports that many churches have lost people.  
People have given up volunteering, getting involved the life of the church community.

I wonder whether the pandemic has caused many to become weary in doing good..

I know in our benefice a number of people have dropped away from the church community.

A number just aren't as regular as before...

I think a consequence of the pandemic is that many have become weary...

Paul says, "Let us not become weary in doing good,..."

Its a real temptation, but lets not become weary...

This passage also implies that there are some things that we sow into, which we'll need need patience to see how it reaps. And maybe it won't reap in this life time.

Maybe there is a 'shop floor angel.. keeping track of our good deeds...

Ah Adrian.. still doing good... I'm going to get him a bigger motorcycle for heaven!

I don't think there will be motorcycles in heaven!

Though it does say that there is a great street paved with gold?

I heard recently someone saying, 'What is the best job in heaven ? - it will be a road sweeper!... gathering up the gold dust!

"Let us not become weary in doing good,..."

<P>

We had a funeral for a 17 year old boy this week...

I said at the funeral that the significance of someone's life is not in the number of years they live.

But how their live has influenced others for good.

Doing good to other's is never wasted...  
"especially to those who belong to the family of believers."

The Lord sees it all...

The Lord wants us to live the best life we can live...

A ket part of that is living by the Spirit. And growing in fruitfulness by sowing to please the Spirit.

Practically, that is practicing the fruit of the Spirit...

Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and elf-control.

Amen.