

Worship - Sunday 1st November 2020

Calling Us to Encourage

Good morning everyone, and welcome to worship with the churches of Fleet URC and Beacon Hill URC. My name is Ruth Dillon and I am the minister of Fleet URC and Beacon Hill URC and I shall be leading us in worship. You are all most welcome.

Today we shall be having a live Zoom service, and this will be recorded then uploaded to YouTube and also on Twilio.

We shall also be having our monthly communion service. Please make sure you have your bread and wine ready at the appropriate point in the service.

I know I have often suggested that we are all Saints in the making; however today is the day that the churches celebrate All Saints' Day, when we remember those who have gone before us, especially in faith. Today's service will also confirm our discipleship calling, that is to urge and encourage people whose faith may be faltering through illness, grief, unemployment, addiction... in fact the list is endless. We are privileged to welcome Nigel Poole to this service and we shall be chatting about his role in the chaplaincy at Frimley Hospital and at Aldershot Medical centre, especially during the coronavirus pandemic.

Our opening words this morning are taken from Psalm 43:

*Vindicate me, O God, and defend my cause
against an ungodly people:
from those who are deceitful and
unjust deliver me!
For you are the God in whom I take refuge.*

*why have you cast me off?
Why must I walk about mournfully because of the
oppression of the enemy?
O send out your light and your truth;*

*let them lead me; let them bring me to your holy hill and to
your dwelling.*

*Then I will go to the altar of God,
to God my exceeding joy;
and I will praise you with the harp, O God, my God.*

*Why are you cast down,
O my soul, and why are you disquieted within me?
Hope in God;
for I shall again praise him, my help and my God.*

Let us pause and put aside the distraction of the moment,

To be still before our God
To abide in the shadow of God
To be with the God in whom we trust.

Opening music Organ Music
Nessie Black, Fleet URC

Call to worship

Leader We are gathered here today around your Word.
God, your Word lives:
it breathes, it encourages, it pleads.
It urges us towards love and greater love.

**All As we listen to your Word today,
may we hear the words in our hearts
that call us towards love of other,
self and stranger.**

Leader Your Word is an invitation towards an ever greater hospitality.

**All And so, we stand, supported in the living Word
that always welcomes. Amen.**

Prayers of Adoration, confession and Lord's Prayer

Now let us come to God in Prayer and Praise this morning, but also come seeking God's forgiveness for things that we may or may not have done this week.

Mysterious God,
who transcends time and space,
we know that in coming towards you,
you came towards us first.
So we join together and say
May your Holy name be praised.

You called us by name,
bringing us deeper into you, into community, into love.
Through Jesus who is our Christ and Redeemer
Our discipleship flourishes as we learn to love,
to encourage and befriend your people
So we join together and say
May your Holy name be praised

We thank you for the gift of your presence,
your mystery, your faithfulness, your abundant love for us.

God of justice,
for Justice is your name,
in the midst of our praise,
and recognising that you call us by our names,
names that give identity and purpose

We have often left justice at the door –
preferring words to action.
Preferring compliancy to compassion
Preferring laziness to loving.

O God, we have done wrong.
May we pick up justice,

and hold it in our hands as we turn back to you.

*In the silence Lord, we bring our own private prayers before you,
seeking your words of encouragement and forgiveness*
Silence

God in whom we live and move and have our being,
Your tenderness and mercy surrounding us,
and making us whole again -
restored, forgiven and free.

In your sight we are new creations,
full of potential and vessels of love.
Let us be
the action you desire,
the wisdom you crave for
And the faithfulness you deserve.

You say to each one of us, *your sins are truly forgiven,*
yet you also say these words, *come now and follow me.*

And now let us say the prayer that Jesus taught his friends to say

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done,
in earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those that 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.**

Readings Now we shall hear today's readings, from Colin and Liz who attend Fleet URC. The readings are both from the New Testament **Matthew 23: 1-12 and 1 Thessalonians 2:9-13.**

Matthew 23: 1-12

1 Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, **2** "The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat; **3** therefore, do whatever they teach you and follow it; but do not do as they do, for they do not practice what they teach. **4** They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on the shoulders of others; but they themselves are unwilling to lift a finger to move them. **5** They do all their deeds to be seen by others; for they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long. **6** They love to have the place of honour at banquets and the best seats in the synagogues, **7** and to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces, and to have people call them rabbi.

8 But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher, and you are all students. **9** And call no one your father on earth, for you have one Father—the one in heaven. **10** Nor are you to be called instructors, for you have one instructor, the Messiah. **11** The greatest among you will be your servant. **12** All who exalt themselves will be humbled, and all who humble themselves will be exalted.

1 Thessalonians 2:9-13

9 You remember our labour and toil, brothers and sisters; we worked night and day, so that we might not burden any of you while we proclaimed to you the gospel of God. **10** You are witnesses, and God also, how pure, upright, and blameless our conduct was toward you believers.

11 As you know, we dealt with each one of you like a father with his children, **12** urging and encouraging you and pleading that you lead a life worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory. **13** We also constantly give thanks to God for this, that when you received the word of God that you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word but as what it really is, God's word, which is also at work in you believers.

Reflection Calling us to urge and encourage.

Informal Interview with Nigel Poole, Chaplain at Frimley Hospital and at Aldershot Medical centre.....

Questions Nigel and I will be considering:

- What role has the 'chaplaincy' played during the coronavirus pandemic?
- How does the 'chaplaincy' encourage people in their time of anxiety and despair?
- Where have you encountered God during the coronavirus pandemic?

Prayer (said together)

**God who made us all –
who made us all unique,
unrepeatable, brilliant and brave –
help us to be brave when we're tired,
and help us to be kind when we're lazy.
Help us to do things for each other,
so that we can remind each other
of the brilliant ways you made us.
Amen.**

Hymn: Brother, sister let me serve you

Brother, sister let me serve you.
Let me be as Christ to you;
pray that I may have the grace to
let you be my servant too.

We are pilgrims on a journey,
and companions on the road;
we are here to help each other
walk the mile and bear the load.

I will hold the Christ-light for you
in the night-time of your fear;

I will hold my hand out to you,
speak the peace you long to hear.

I will weep when you are weeping;
when you laugh I'll laugh with you;
I will share your joy and sorrow
till we've seen this journey through.

When we sing to God in heaven
we shall find such harmony,
born of all we've known together
of Christ's love and agony.

Brother, sister let me serve you.
Let me be as Christ to you;
pray that I may have the grace to
let you be my servant too.

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Communion Invitation

Come, just as you are - to this table.
For this is the table of Promise.
Where lives that are full of broken promises and hurt
Are restored by Gods promise of commitment.

Come, just as you are - to this table
For this is the table of Hope
Where lives that are full of desperation and sorrow
Are restored by God's promise of Hope

Come, just you are - to this table
For this is the table of Love
Where lives that only know fear and hatred
Can be moulded and restored by God's promise of Love

Come, just as you are - to this table
All who are seeking God's promise of
love, hope and restoration

Come, just as you are.

Communion Story

Jesus was the guest at many tables.
He dined with the hurting, the doubters
the strong and the weak;
Yet he always broke bread and shared a meal with them.

At one meal in particular,
he broke the bread, and said
*"This is my body. It is broken for you
Do this to remember me"*

Then he took a cup of wine and said
*"This is the new relationship with God
made possible because of my death
Drink this all of you, to remember me"*

Prayers of intercession

*As we recall the Lord's table we are mindful of the pain and
difficulties in our world today.*

*We pray for God's people
and bring our concerns to God.*

There is also a response. When I say
'Lord in your mercy', can you respond by saying
hear our prayer.

Today, we pray for all who feel isolated.
for people who feel lonely
For people who are needing to feel loved.
Lord in your mercy ... **hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who feel disappointed
People who have experienced hospital cancellations,
People whose trust has been manipulated
People whose persistent questions

have been answered by silence.
Lord in your mercy.. **hear our prayer.**

We pray for people who yearn to be accepted
People who face rejection
People who face abuse
People who face suffering
Lord in your mercy **hear our prayer. Amen.**

In the silence we offer our own private prayers to you.
Jesus Christ, you live in us today.
Guard us and heal us with your balm of Gilead.
Restore us and strengthen your people we pray
In Jesus name, **Amen**

Communion *Thanksgiving*

God of Promise
We acknowledge your presence in our lives

God of Hope
We prepare our hearts for new experiences

God of Love
We thank you for your love shown to us in Jesus Christ

Gracious God,
Whose love created our world
We bring you our gratitude and praise
Voices strong, and hearts full of love for you.

And you have prepared a table for us
A feast - full of promise, hope and love.
A feast - full of forgiveness, healing and blessing

We thank you for the continuing promise of love and truth.
We thank you for this moment in time and space
We thank you for our freedom to worship.

God of Promise
Send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts
Be with us as we eat this bread and drink this wine.
Enable us to truly believe in your promise
of Hope for all humanity.
Where Justice is the lifeline of Hope;
Hope is discovered through Love
And Love is the binding covenant we have with you.

Here is the Promise of God
Seen in the gracious gift of Jesus
Here is the Love of God
Seen in bread broken and wine shared.
Here is the Hope of God
Seen in the resurrection of Jesus Christ

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Closing prayer

May the Grace of God enrich you.
May the Love of Jesus love enfold you.
May the Dynamic Spirit lift you with hope and promise,
until the time approaches when we see you face to face.

Blessing

May the blessing of God that is truly beyond all human
understanding be with us now and forever more. Amen

Closing music

Organ Music **Nessie Black, Fleet URC**

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