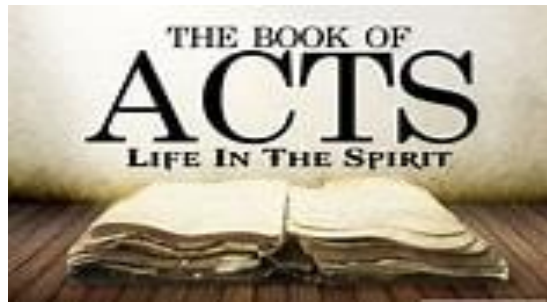


Worship for Fleet URC & Beacon Hill URC

Sunday 20th June 2021



'The Holy Spirit aflame as Church'

Who is Luke?

Led by Anna Crawford

Opening music: By all your saints still striving

Welcome & Gathering Prayer

Creator God,
you have called us to worship you,
chosen us to be your friends & invited us to extend that
friendship

to your people in all the world.

May we live as Jesus lived, serve as he served,
And love as he loved, to the glory of your name.

Amen

www.rootsontheweb.com

Call to worship

Paraphrase of Psalm 103

Just as the father shows his love to all his dear children, so
God bestows his love on those who worship him in fear. From

age to age God's love will last for those who do his will; and righteousness he will extend to children's children still.

Let us worship our loving God.

Hymn: Take up your cross

Charles W. Everett

Take up thy cross, the Saviour said,
if thou would'st my disciple be;
deny thyself, the world forsake,
and humbly follow after me.

Take up thy cross; let not its weight
fill thy weak spirit with alarm;
his strength shall bear thy spirit up,
and brace thy heart, and nerve thine arm.

Take up thy cross, nor heed the shame,
nor let thy foolish pride rebel:
Lord, for thee, the cross endured,
to save thy soul from death and hell.

Take up thy cross and follow Christ,
nor think till death to lay it down,
for only those who bear the cross
may hope to wear the glorious crown.

Opening Prayers

Father, we come to you in confidence. By your grace we have become your children; conceived by your love born through

faith in Christ. We come to you to be reminded all over again who we are, to be challenged to serve, to respond with confession and to ready to stand for your truth and your mercy. We have come because you have called us, because you have empowered us, because you have loved us. We have come to worship you with thanksgiving in our hearts in the name of Christ who has called us.

Lord, forgive us our daily acts of faithlessness, the anxieties that cripple our lives and the sense of hopelessness that hinders our growth.

Forgive our fear which prevents us from speaking out or from telling the good news of Jesus.

Forgive us our weakness which causes us to let you down, and our bitterness which makes it harder for others to find you.

Forgive our hard-heartedness which crushes hope for our neighbour and our self-centeredness which causes you pain.

Make us a source of hope joy and confidence for those who need our faithfulness and by your spirit enable us to be beacons of light and love.

Amen

With the assurance of pardon that Christ gives us let us say together the prayer that Jesus taught us.

**Our Father, which art in heaven, read by Hugh Le Fanu
hallowed be thy name.**

Thy kingdom come.

Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them 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.

Reading: Luke 1 v 1-4 read by Moray Henderson

1 Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, **2** just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. **3** With this in mind, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, **4** so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.

This is the Word of the Lord **Thanks be to God**

Acts1 v 1 -11 read by Moray Henderson

1 In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach **2** until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. **3** After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God.

4 On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the

gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about.

5 For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”

6 Then they gathered around him and asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?” **7** He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. **8** But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

9 After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. **10** They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. **11** “Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.”

This is the Word of the Lord **Thanks be to God**

Reflection:

For a long time the flute seemed to lie around the house. It was not played and it gathered dust. Occasionally, someone would get it out and struggle to get a tune out of it. It was decided that it was not a good instrument, perhaps useless and should be got rid of. This was mentioned to a family friend when he came to dinner. He asked that he might be allowed to handle it and play it. It had to be dusted off but it was given to him.

Somehow it looked special in his hands. Once he started to play, the family were all amazed at the beautiful sounds and music. His was a wonderful instrument and responded beautifully in the master's hands. It was just waiting for the right touch of a master.

In many ways the disciples were like this until they were filled with the Holy Spirit and were able to proclaim and enjoy 'His spirit is with us'.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j51yztm1rnk>

Sermon

I wonder if I asked you who made the most significant contribution to the New Testament, you would most likely say, Paul or Peter, and some would correctly say Jesus. But if I narrowed the question down to who made the most significant contribution in the terms of total number of verses?

Who was the only non- Jewish author of a book or letter in the New Testament?

And who of the gospel writers never meets Jesus?

The answer to all these questions is one person. LUKE. He has made the biggest contribution with two books making up one quarter of the New Testament. Luke was not a Jew, and as best as we can tell he never meet Jesus while he was alive. He learned everything through eyewitness interviews, research, and possibly supported in it all by a wealthy patron, Theophilus, to whom he dedicates both his books.

But let us look at who Luke was-

It is the year 67AD, and Luke is in Rome in prison with Paul, just before the end of his life, just weeks before Caesar orders Paul's head to be cut off just because he is a Christian. It would be more accurate to say Paul was in prison, Luke was there as his physician and to help with his letter writing. Paul is writing to a young man, Timothy, as he looks after a new church in Ephesus, Timothy's father was not a Jew the same as Luke's parents.

But how did Luke get to meet Paul? We need to go back to AD 52, Paul was in Troas about 100 miles north of Ephesus, Paul was on his second missionary journey, he had just come from Lystra, where he had been stoned and left for dead. Luke as a doctor would have been called to treat his wounds, and from there they sailed together to Macedonia.

As Luke administered to Paul and they travelled Paul would have told Luke his story of persecution of the Christians to his conversion on the Damascus road. To Luke the concept of Messiah would have been very strange.

After the sea crossing they did not meet again for five years, Paul was then travelling through Philippi on his final missionary journey, revisiting all the places he had been before. He would have been much older and suffered many injustices and punishments, imprisonment, beatings, hunger, shipwrecks and snake bites.

In all his trials, even appealing to Caesar, he shared how the light of God had touched him. This is where they are in Acts, in Rome, with Paul in prison. Paul, a man who had lived for

others, was alone apart from Luke. His body would have been failing, but with his training Luke was able to help relieve the pain and bring comfort. Paul's suffering abounded but then so did his certainty of hope and life in Jesus.

Together from prison Paul wrote to Timothy. 'Therefore, do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me a prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel. For Jesus abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, which is why I suffer as I do'

Paul followed wherever it led him, which often entailed suffering. And as he did this, he had a certainty about his life and mission. He had a certainty about the hope of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and that certainty freed him to love even when it was costly.

It is thanks to Luke's training that taught him to observe, interpret and record, he saw and worked with suffering people. It has been said that a minister sees people at their best, a lawyer at their worst, while a doctor sees people as they really are. So he saw and listened to Paul and was able to record, he gives us the weaknesses and the virtues of the early Christians in his two books. Above all he gives a true picture of the perfect Son of Man, both on earth and operating from his place in glory. Luke tells us little of himself, but he had a favourite prescription. It was prayer being a certain remedy for all ills.

Amen

Intercessory prayer

When I say, The Lord Hears our Prayer, please respond,
Thanks be to God

Let us pray

Father we pray for the whole church, which you called into being through your son.

We are aware that it was always your intention that your church should be a blessing to all people everywhere. We ask that by your holy spirit your church may be daily renewed and empowered for the task for which you gave it life.

The Lord Hears our Prayer

Thanks be to God

We pray Father, that we and all our fellow Christians may be ready for any sacrifice, any action any declaration that will clearly demonstrate faith hope and love to our neighbour, our family, and our friends, to those with whom we have contact on the wider world.

The Lord Hears our Prayer

Thanks be to God

We pray for Christians who have trusted you and for whom obedience has brought sorrow and loss; for those who as an act of discipleship, have felt led to involvement in feeding the hungry, seeking the lost, healing the broken or enabling the defeated.

The Lord Hears our Prayer

Thanks be to God

We pray for those who, because they know God has made them special people do all they can to make others special too. For those who care for the sick and the dying, especially all in our NHS. for all those who care for others in care homes, at home or the wider community, who have given so much in the last months of themselves, whose lives and emotions are also in need of health and healing.

The Lord Hears our Prayer

Thanks be to God

We pray for those who have been reduced to despair, for those whose joy has been crushed by the indifference of others; for those who have suffered great grief, who are left numb by sorrow and loss; for those still overwhelmed by the separation that death brings from someone they loved and who loved them.

The Lord Hears our Prayer

Thanks be to God

We pray for our-selves, In the face of life's uncertainties and sorrows, hurts disappointments and failures, we ask that the assurance of Christs presence power and love may give us strength, hope and faith.

We ask all this in the name of Jesus Christ who died and rose again and gave us The Holy Spirit to be our companion.

Amen

Hymn: The Head That Once was Crowned with Thorns

R&S 257 Thomas Kelly (1769 – 1855)

The head that once was crowned with thorns
is crowned with glory now;
a royal diadem adorns
the mighty Victor's brow.

The highest place that heaven affords
belongs to him by right,
the King of kings and Lord of lords,
and heaven's eternal Light:

The joy of all who dwell above,
the joy of all below,
to whom he manifests his love,
and grants his name to know.

To them the cross, with all its shame,
with all its grace, is given;
their name an everlasting name,
their joy the joy of heaven.

They suffer with their Lord below,
they reign with him above;
their profit and their joy to know
the mystery of his love.

The cross he bore is life and health,
though shame and death to him;

his people's hope, his people's wealth,
their everlasting theme.

Blessing

We go from wherever we have been worshiping in the knowledge of Christ's resurrection, in the promise of his power and with the assurance of his living presence with us. We go from worship, but we go with him, in him and for him, because he goes with us. He gives us his blessing. Let us with this assurance declare his grace to the world. Amen

Closing Music: Go tell it on the mountain

Responses led by Hugh Le Fanu

Opening music from

<https://www.smallchurchmusic.com/2011/Snippet/S-ByAllYourSaints-Nyland-PipeLC-48-CAM.mp3>

Closing music from

<https://www.smallchurchmusic.com/Snippet/S-GoTellItOnTheMountain-PipeLC-48-CAM.mp3>

Hymns: ["Take Up Thy Cross" UMH 415 on Vimeo](#)

<https://www.smallchurchmusic.com/2017/Video/V-TheHeadThatOnce-PipeL1C-128-CAM-Video-JD.mp4>

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