

After the Barbecue...

Worship Notes for Sherston, Sheldon Road and Luckington 10th May 2020

Intro Once again we meet together as the Church scattered and separated, we remember that we are united in praise and worship and joined by Jesus as He promised through the work of His Holy Spirit.

Prelude: [Love Lifted Me - James Koerts - YouTube](#)

Call to Worship: Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad;
let the sea resound, and all that is in it.
Let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them;
let all the trees of the forest sing for joy.
Let all creation rejoice before the Lord, for he comes,
he comes to judge the earth.
He will judge the world in righteousness
and the peoples in his faithfulness. (Psalm 96:11-13)

A Prayer:

Gracious and loving God You and You alone deserve all praise, majesty dominion and authority!
You created our every breath and by Your gracious hand we have life and everything we enjoy.
For You are the Holy and loving One; You are the just and forgiving One;
You are the Saviour of Your people through the self-giving service and sacrifice of Jesus.
It is our greatest desire to know you fully in Jesus and to follow Him with our whole heart,
yet we know our best intentions fall short even of our own ideals,
we acknowledge our lives, work, words and thoughts fail to do You justice and give You glory.
Forgive us, redeem us and renew us, we pray.
Pour out Your Holy Spirit upon and within us to create in us the image of Jesus,
to fulfil in us Your sovereign will and to enable us to participate in the work of Your Kingdom.
Be with us every day as You have promised in Jesus and may we be aware
of Your presence and power in this moment,
And this is our prayer in the Name of Jesus,
and through the power and working of Your Holy Spirit, Amen.

Songs: [Living Hope \(Lyrics\) - Phil Wickham - YouTube](#)
[Build My Life - Pat Barrett – featuring Cory Asbury\) - YouTube](#)

Read: New Testament Reading Based on John 21:15-25

After the Barbecue...

The recent sunny weather has spawned a raft of stories about barbecues; some of them concerning people travelling long distances to burn food in open areas, which they could have equally ruined in their own garden. Others a little self-righteous and envious - with a hint of jealousy at smelling food cooking in a neighbour's garden and realising you've not got the right food, a barbecue or charcoal yourself. Some were downright odd - I saw a video of a man trying to help his barbecue along by pouring petrol from a can on it - bad idea as the fuel and vapour all caught alight; his desperate attempts to quell the flaming can came to nothing. Fortunately his wife's quick thinking quenched the fire by pouring his beer all over it - who knew? I wonder what the conversation was like after THAT barbecue?

The final part of the story of Jesus meeting some disciples after their fruitless night's fishing centres around

a conversation after a fish barbecue on the beach. The final catch the disciples made under Jesus' direction had been impressive - John records 153 fish in all, one for every fish species found in Lake Tiberius - another name for Galilee.

As the fire began to wane and the food had been eaten, Jesus and Peter engaged in a conversation. Peter may well have felt waves of failure upon him after the slightly foolish exchange with Jesus over the foot washing incident (John 13:6-11), his rash claim 'Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you.' (Matthew 26:35), his reckless use of a sword in the Garden of Gethsemane (John 18:10), His denials at the High Priest's house (Mark 14:66-75) and his absence near the cross.

Before we come down too hard on Peter we need to stop. Many of you will have been in one of those meetings where someone declared, "Failure is not an option!" - Nonsense! Failure is inevitable, but Failure is NOT final... A boy was expelled from his Latin class for slow learning. He resolved to excel in English. He was Winston Churchill. The 75th Anniversary of VE Day celebrations we had on Friday owe no little debt to his discovery that Failure is NOT final.

In the conversation after the fish barbecue on the beach, it's clear that Jesus was reinstating Peter. There's no recrimination; no blaming; no acrimony. Some of you will or will have worked in organisations where blaming, naming and shaming are the order of the day - and it's very demoralising. But, there's another way, that some will be familiar with it's called "A Just Culture"; it recognises competent people make mistakes in complex systems and times "even if all the others deny you..."; that even competent individuals will develop unhealthy norms "Peter got out a sword"; that there's Zero tolerance for reckless behaviour "Put that away" said Jesus and a Just Culture balances a non-punitive/blame-free environment with accountability; "Peter replied, 'Man, I don't know what you're talking about!' Just as he was speaking, the cock crowed. The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoken to him: 'Before the cock crows today, you will disown me three times.'" (Luke 22:60-61).

Jesus could have brought all this back to Peter, but He had given His life, as Peter would later describe it "the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God" (1 Peter 3:18). Jesus embodied the just culture and deals with Peter by calling and commissioning him out from his failure. That's true for us, too. All of us have mistakes that weigh on our hearts, times and situations of failure. The Gospel of the Easter message is that Jesus has dealt with them. You, like Peter, are offered a new life to start!

Reflection: [The Lord's my Shepherd - Stuart Townend \[with lyrics\] - YouTube](#)

Jesus questions to Peter are fascinating, firstly, "Simon, son of John, do you love me like God loves - more than these others?" Peter responded, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you like a brother." Jesus reply was, "Feed my lambs." in other words the first commission was to nurture the young and young in faith. The calling of God's people right from Old Testament Times has been to be a people who embody and live out the faith we claim to hold. Directly following the *shema*, the call to acknowledge God as the only Lord, Deuteronomy 6 instructs the hearers and speakers that "These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up." (Deuteronomy 6:6-7). Ask yourself in what ways do we as Christians and as a Church family ensure that the children, young people, those exploring faith and those setting out of their faith journey are fed with the truth and taught to grow in fellowship, worship and service? While we're dispersed and when we are permitted to gather again, this must be a first priority.

Jesus asked a 2nd question "Simon, son of John, do you love me like God loves?" in other words without seeking reward, and Peter responded, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you like a brother." To this, Jesus says, "Tend my sheep." This commission is slightly different - to care for the mature, to ensure their ongoing well-being; Peter was always an impetuous and instinctive kind of leader, but Jesus was calling him to deliberately

cultivate in himself that care for others which puts their well-being first - just like the shepherds in Jesus' parables and teaching (Matthew 18:12-14, Luke 15:1-7, John 10:1-10); a shepherd in the Bible is a leader, and Jesus makes clear that leader has a calling to ensure the well-being of the "flock" those who are part of God's people and more than that to "seek the lost" - to work to bring those not yet part of the fellowship into the knowledge of God's love. One expression of our belonging is our Church Membership tickets and this week Members will receive them - some will have already. We are all aware of what we're missing just now while we can't meet - if we believe it's that good, we need to focus now and for the future on making it possible for others to become part of the interconnected community of the church.

If Peter was feeling challenged, Jesus' 3rd question stumped him, "Simon, son of John, do you love me like a brother?" (The text of John's Gospel shows the subtle changes in the questions, often lost in our English translations). Peter was grieved replied, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you as a brother." Why wouldn't he be exasperated? He's already said this twice before! But Jesus was showing, yet again, the way He comes down and shares *our* life and experience. Jesus command to Peter was, "Feed my sheep." - to make sure people who have embarked on the journey and life of faith keep growing... Here the fisherman becomes a shepherd - everything had changed and yet the task Jesus had called the disciples to!

We live in a fast changing world and beyond the Covid-19 time, much will change and indeed must change - as different as fishermen becoming shepherds! But, these things Jesus commissioned Peter and commissions us to do stay the same - the way we do it evolves. We, too, are called to nurture the young into faith and the young in faith, to express holistic care to those who have responded to the call of Jesus and to ensure that wholehearted discipleship is the norm among those of us who have been born again into God's Kingdom.

Jesus challenged Peter and challenges us with the call, "Follow me" - we are called to keep journeying, so we can do what He has called us to... This takes the indwelling, character form and empowering of God's Holy Spirit. But Peter looked over his shoulder saw John and asked, "What about him?" You may be tempted to ask the same. Jesus' reply is, "If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow me!" - you journey, you tell your story Peter. He says it to us, too, "You follow me!" In John's Gospel, he adds "This is the disciple who is bearing witness about these things, and who has written these things, and we know that his testimony is true." - John tells his story... And, so can you!

I want to invite everyone to think about telling your faith story - particularly how you came to put your trust in Jesus and what The lord is doing in your life just now. How about videoing it on your phone or computer and sending to us and we'll share them in the coming weeks and months... And if you're watching and wondering what this is all about, contact us via the web-site, by phone or e-mail me minister@sheldonroad.church and we'll get some information to you about becoming and being a follower of Jesus.

Hymn: [Jesus Calls Us O'er the Tumult - Songs of Praise - YouTube](#)

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Intercession from the 2020 Christian Aid Week resources

In each section, feel free to add your own prayers...

Let us pray:

God of abundant life,
we see your goodness all around us and
we thank you for every part of it;
from the plants and animals which play
their part in complex ecosystems,
to the dry deserts and stormy seas which

test the limits of life.
We pray that in this time of climate
crisis and ecological emergency,
you may help us to rediscover your
love of creation and to reflect that in
our own lives.
God, in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

God who speaks through unexpected people,
We thank you for contemporary prophets who are challenging us to act on climate change;
for indigenous people and their invaluable knowledge of the land and sea where they live,
for scientists dedicating their careers to warning us about changes to the planet, and for young people striking for their future.
We pray that you will help those in power to hear their prophetic voices.
Help them to see beyond short term political priorities and business plans.
and give them wisdom and courage when they face difficult decisions.
God, in your mercy
hear our prayer.

We ask all this in the name of your Son,
Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray together...

Our Father... *(in your preferred form)*

As you pray The Grace - think of those you usually share this prayer with...

**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
The love of God
And the fellowship
Of the Holy Spirit
Be with us all,
Evermore, Amen** *(From 2 Corinthians 13:14)*

After service music: [Jesus Calls Us \(edgy version\) - Koine - YouTube](#)

God of second chances,
we recognise the damage we have done to the earth
and the injustice we see in society every day,
all of it fuelled by worship of profit and possessions.
We pray for the coming of a better world with justice, kindness and humility at its heart.
We ask that you guide us to be co-creators of this new world.
Give us confidence to follow the prophetic voices
to stand against injustice to people and to planet.
So that together, in your strength,
we stop this climate crisis.
God, in your mercy
hear our prayer.