

South West Hants Group

Service for Sunday 6th June 2021

by Revd Mark Robinson

Hymns used by permission CCLI #25228

Opening - As we are gathered

Welcome

In the name of our gracious, empowering, liberating God
welcome

Where are you now?

Can where you are be considered home?

Is home a house,

a state of mind

a condition?

How do you or me or any of us care for home?

Is this earth our home, how do we care for it?

Caring for home is part of our responsibility as children of God.

Saturday was World Environment Day, when some of us might think about the care of the earth our home. Some of our Green Living Group joined together to Prayer in the Park and take action especially ahead of the G7 summit that will take place in Cornwall this month. The G7 summit will gather some of the most polluting nations in the world, one of the aims is to urge them to pledge action to bring down carbon emissions and help slow climate change. Let's protect our home, let's help protect the people of this earth and let's encourage others to do the same.

Hymn - All are welcome

Let us build a house where love can dwell

and all can safely live,

a place where saints and children tell

how hearts learn to forgive.

Built of hopes and dreams and visions,

rock of faith and vault of grace;

here the love of Christ shall end divisions.

All are welcome, all are welcome,

all are welcome in this place.

Let us build a house where prophets speak,

and words are strong and true,

where all God's children dare to seek

to dream God's reign anew.

Here the cross shall stand as witness
and as symbol of God's grace;
here as one we claim the faith of Jesus.
All are welcome, all are welcome,
all are welcome in this place.

Let us build a house where love is found
in water, wine and wheat:
a banquet hall on holy ground
where peace and justice meet.
Here the love of God, through Jesus,
is revealed in time and space;
as we share in Christ the feast that frees us.
All are welcome, all are welcome,
all are welcome in this place.

Let us build a house where hands will reach
beyond the wood and stone
to heal and strengthen, serve and teach,
and live the Word they've known.
Here the outcast and the stranger
bear the image of God's face;
let us bring an end to fear and danger.
All are welcome, all are welcome,
all are welcome in this place.

Let us build a house where all are named,
their songs and visions heard
and loved and treasured, taught and claimed
as words within the Word.
Built of tears and cries and laughter,
prayers of faith and songs of grace,
let this house proclaim from floor to rafter.
All are welcome, all are welcome,
all are welcome in this place.

Marty Haugen

Prayer of approach

Creator of all
may we move to a new space
a space where all you have made
is honoured.

A space where praise and thanksgiving
is freely offered to you,
where brothers and sisters live as family
in harmony, equity and truth.

May we move beyond the patters of this passing age
from it's violence and disease, it's disregard for the creation
to a world in love with peace, justice, wonder and your presence.

Forgive us for all the ways we have dishonoured you,
your creation and our brothers and sisters

We know that you are a God of mercy and loving-kindness
slow to anger and full of grace.
We know that through Jesus, we have all been offered forgiveness.
May we be forgiven
May we encounter you
in this and every space. Amen

The Lords 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.
Do not let us fall into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.

Scripture Reading Mark 3:20-35

Message

Whoever does the Will of God is my mother and my brothers and my sister
Whoever does the Will of God in first century Palestine across the generations and into
our twenty first century and beyond is my mother and brother and sister
Whoever does God's Will belongs to the family of God.

This text deals with relationship, with holding on, even in the face of trauma. It deals with
identity.

One of the features of Mark's gospel is that throughout, Jesus tries to keep his true identity hidden and his secret identity is only revealed to all the people in this gospel at his crucifixion.

This gospel is a call to reflect on Christ, his work, his care and his sacrifice. And while our reading today is a call to discipleship; it is identity that is at its core.

To speak with us about identity, it uses the idea of the house and the home. A place usually associated with relationships. Wherever we think of as home. And for each of us home may be a very different place. It may not even be a physical place, but it is home.

How many of us have been stuck indoors, maybe at the place we call home over the past few months, having to cope with all that the lockdown brought with it. I hope it wasn't too much of a traumatic experience.

Scholars agree that this Gospel was originally written for a people who had experienced the trauma of Roman oppression and over the next few Sunday's we may be hearing some of the words of this gospel again having experienced the trauma of a global pandemic.

And so we find Jesus at home in Capernaum. He is in his house.

Likely it is the same place where earlier in the text we heard that a crowd had gathered and it was so large that the only way some people could get their paralysed friend to Jesus, was to remove the part of the roof of the house above Jesus and lower their friend to receive a healing.

We see a similar scene today. Jesus has returned home and there is such a huge crowd trying to get into his house, so many have followed that they could not even eat. A crowd who have come to hear him speak, some would have come for a miracle, a blessing, a healing, maybe some just to listen and be at his feet.

All of this was disturbing for the scribes from Jerusalem. They were saying that it was actually evil that was driving his popularity, and that it was through evil that he was healing others. How very disappointed and disgusted he must have felt. Many were suggesting that he was' mentally unstable ... translated as "has gone out of his mind" but the actually text literally says that "he has stood outside" Reference again to the house. As though Jesus is outside of the house of God's blessing and as if he is in league with wrongdoing.

This of course disturbed his mother and she comes with the family in toe, his brothers and his sisters they want to take Jesus away from his house. Take him home to the family house, where they will keep him safe away from all the trouble. They will restrain him if needs be. Mary thought she was doing the right thing. The text says differently, it says that his mother and brothers came, and that they in fact were standing outside. They

were outside the house. Those who should be closest to him, were outside. Saying almost the same thing that the scribes had said about him. He is stood outside.

But this is about identity.

It is about identifying with the work of Jesus and as the children of God.

His mother and his brothers and sisters thought they were doing the right thing. But they were listening to the talk of detractors, they were listening to the talk of those who would drive a wedge in healthy relationships.

Looking at those gathered around him, in his house he declared them as being his mother, his brothers and his sisters. Those who would listen for the word of God, those who seek to bring justice and equity to the world. Those who love kindness and walk humbly with God, those are my mother and my brothers and sisters.

Where are your relationships?

Where is it that you call home?

Is it a physical place or a different space?

Is it a building?

Does the church building seem like a home to you? Where you value your relationship with other members of the congregation and with God?

Or is it somewhere else? Has our experiences of the last year brought anything else into focus?

Has it brought into focus where your identity lies with God and the household of God. Is God's household a church building? Is it a physical place at all or rather a space. A space of justice, of equity, of loving-kindness and of / for identifying with God.

Reflection

Hymn - Crown him with many crowns

Crown him with many crowns,
the Lamb upon his throne;
hark, how the heavenly anthem drowns
all music but its own!
Awake, my soul, and sing
of him who died for thee,
and hail him as thy matchless King
through all eternity.

Crown him the Son of God,
before the worlds began:
and ye, who tread where he hath trod,
crown him the Son of Man;
who every grief hath known

that wrings the human breast,
and takes and bears them for his own,
that all in him may rest.

Crown him the Lord of life,
who triumphed o'er the grave
and rose victorious in the strife
for those he came to save:
his glories now we sing,
who died and rose on high,
who died eternal life to bring
and lives that death may die.

Crown him the Lord of love!
Behold his hands and side,
rich wounds yet visible above
in beauty glorified:
All hail, Redeemer, hail!
for thou hast died for me:
thy praise shall never, never fail
throughout eternity.

Matthew Bridges & Godfrey Thring

Prayers for our neighbours

Gracious God,
may we open that place in our hearts and minds
to you where loving-kindness will flow
to every aspect of our lives

A place where we see,
Your beauty in all of creation.
A place where we recognise,
that through Christ all people
are our brothers and sisters
A place where we know,
that it is our responsibility
to care for each other and Your world.

Loving God,
may we be guided by You
to offer what we can
to those places and people
that are in need of compassion
care, equity and generosity.

Guided to offer prayers
of healing and Grace
Guided to offer a helping hand
and a listening ear
Guided to build up and be a support.

May we be challenged
pushed, disturbed and ready
to help make this world a better place
for our nations,
for our cities and towns
for our communities and our families
for our brothers and sisters
and for You. Amen

Hymn - All my hope in God is founded

All my hope on God is founded;
he doth still my trust renew.
Me through change and chance he guideth,
only good and only true.
God unknown,
he alone
calls my heart to be his own.

Human pride and earthly glory,
sword and crown betray our trust;
what with care and toil is builded,
tower and temple, fall to dust.
But God's power
hour by hour
is my temple and my tower.

God's great goodness aye endureth,
deep his wisdom, passing thought;
splendour, light and life attend him,
beauty springeth out of naught.
Evermore
from his store
new-born worlds rise and adore.

Daily doth the almighty giver
bounteous gifts on us bestow;
his desire our soul delighteth
pleasure leads us where we go.

Love doth stand
at his hand;
joy doth wait on his command.

Still from earth to God eternal
sacrifice of praise be done,
high above all praises praising
for the gift of Christ his Son.
Christ doth call
one and all;
ye who follow shall not fall.

Robert Bridges altd.* based on Joachim Neander

Blessing

Proverbs 24:3-4 "By wisdom a house is built, and by understanding it is established; by knowledge the rooms are filled with all precious and pleasant riches."

1 Samuel 25:6 "And thus you shall greet him: 'Peace be to you, and peace be to your house, and peace be to all that you have.'"