

## HOME SERVICE FOR SUNDAY 19<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2021

Today is "Peace Sunday". Welcome. This act of worship is for you to use at home on your own or with others. If you have internet access, there are [links in blue to click on](#) to take you to the songs, Bible reading and a spoken version of today's message. I would recommend that you say the words of the service aloud, rather than read them silently to yourself – this really does help. Whatever you decide to do, spend this time with God, knowing that other people are sharing this service with you, but in different places. Rev. Alan Boyd



### A GATHERING PRAYER AND CALL TO WORSHIP

Lord, as we come to the start of another new year, we thank you for your faithfulness, we ask you for your guidance, we listen to your voice, and we commit to follow you in the days, the weeks, the year ahead. AMEN

God the Father – fill our worship with your glory.  
God the Son – bless our worship with your presence.  
God the Holy Spirit – inspire our worship with your gifts

### A PRAYER OF PRAISE WITH A SUNG RESPONSE

We're going to praise God in prayer now. This will lead into a short time of confession and forgiveness. In between each section of prayer, please sing/read/pray/proclaim the words of the chant "Come all you people, come and praise your maker" from the Iona Community. If you don't know the tune, you can learn it by [CLICKING HERE](#). When you're ready, let's pray ...

**Come all you people,  
come and praise your maker,  
Come all you people,  
come and praise your maker,  
Come all you people,  
come and praise your maker,  
Come now and worship the Lord!**

Lord, we are here today to worship you, with our hearts open before you, with our voices raised in praise, with our minds and understanding, and with every fibre of our being. And we willingly offer ourselves and our gifts of money for your use and blessing.

**Come all you people ...**

We have all made our way to worship today, by ourselves or with others. We have made the journey many times. But our journey with Jesus isn't always so straight forward; there can be many pitfalls and distractions. We come before you today, Lord God, ready to be fully attentive to you, and ready to walk in your ways.

**Come all you people ...**

Each one of us is unique with different life stories, with different choices, made and to make; but the constant is that you are with us. We thank you, Lord, that you have made each one of us different, that you are our guide, that by following your word, and with the help of your Spirit, we can live with integrity, and make right choices in our lives.

**Come all you people ...**

### A TIME OF CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Gracious God - You have never ceased loving us. Throughout our lives you want us to keep discovering that this world is your world, and your way is the way of self-giving love. Forgive us that we often behave with disregard for you and others. Forgive us that, like Jesus' disciples, we often seek status or power for ourselves and fail to be open to receive from other people. Give us humility and make us a welcoming people again, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

**Come all you people ...**

## WHAT EXACTLY IS 'PEACE SUNDAY'?

---

Today, 'Peace Sunday', is the Sunday closest to the United Nations INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE (observed each year on 21 September). It offers a date for all humanity to commit to peace above differences and to contribute to building a culture of peace. Perhaps this year, and in these recent weeks more than ever, our world needs that sort of commitment to transform our world into one that is more equal, more just, equitable, inclusive, sustainable & healthier. As we continue to worship together, we'll be focussing on that in our gospel reading about "who is the greatest?" and in our prayers together for peace,

## FOR OUR YOUNGER PEOPLE

---

The disciples never seem to learn, do they? They try, and try, but sometime miss the point that Jesus is making by miles. Here it happens again. Instead of listening, they're arguing among themselves about who should be in charge with Jesus. It's all about: "Who is the greatest of all". Jesus overhears them and talks to them about what it means to be a follower. Have a listen to the Bible story first. After that, while we're thinking about what the Bible story might mean, you might want to print off and have a go at the activity sheet at the bottom of these pages. Let the others see what you've been doing!

## INTRODUCING OUR BIBLE READING

---

*There's a gap between Jesus and his friends. They had acclaimed him as Messiah – how could he speak of death? Here Jesus does it again. Like his other 2 'passion' predictions, it's immediately followed by a teaching about what it means to be a disciple of Jesus. In the second part of the reading from Mark, grown men argue about their own power. Jesus points out that our attitude to the most vulnerable people - children - measures how welcome he is among us*

## OUR BIBLE READING:

**[MARK 9:30-37](#) (CLICK HERE TO LISTEN)**

### Who is the Greatest?

---

<sup>30</sup>They went on from there and passed through Galilee. He did not want anyone to know it; <sup>31</sup>for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, 'The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and three days after being killed, he will rise again.' <sup>32</sup>But they did not

understand what he was saying and were afraid to ask him. <sup>33</sup>Then they came to Capernaum; and when he was in the house he asked them, 'What were you arguing about on the way?' <sup>34</sup>But they were silent, for on the way they had argued with one another about who was the greatest. <sup>35</sup>He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, 'Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all.' <sup>36</sup>Then he took a little child and put it among them; and taking it in his arms, he said to them, <sup>37</sup>'Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me.'

## LET'S SING BEFORE OUR REFLECTION ON MARK (STF 154 "Come, divine Interpreter")

---

### ["Come, divine interpreter" \(CLICK FOR MUSIC\)](#)

Sing/Read/Pray/Proclaim the words ....

- Come, divine Interpreter,  
bring us eyes your book to read,  
ears the mystic words to hear,  
words which did from you proceed,  
words that endless bliss impart,  
kept in an obedient heart.**
- All who read, or hear, are blessed,  
if your plain commands we do;  
of your kingdom here possessed,  
you we shall in glory view -  
when you come on earth to abide,  
reign triumphant at your side.**

*(Charles Wesley)*

## A REFLECTION ON THE READING

---

### [TODAY'S MESSAGE \(CLICK TO WATCH/LISTEN\)](#)

I'm sure that you've all felt something similar at some point, but our first car seemed a good idea at the time. It was a blue Morris, nice one, but the engine never did seem to start properly, run properly or stop properly - and then there was the oil leak. We seemed to have no control over the thing, our patience wore thin, our savings slowly trickled away and we thought we should get rid of it.

That was one of our better ideas. It turns out that the day that we part exchanged it, when the salesman tried to move it from the forecourt - the engine fell out onto the concrete. We eventually ended up with a VW Beetle. Great car. Solid. Sky blue. Air-cooled engine. Sounded

like a cement mixer. Drove like a wheelbarrow. Always started first time and kept on going whatever the odds. It always got you there.

Well, always got you there until that noise started that dark wet night on the M6 on the way down from Carlisle. At first it sounded like a twig caught under the car. Scritch, scratch, squeak, scratch. Nothing there. Scritch, scratch, squeak, squeak, squeak. Louder and louder. The car became harder to drive. We pulled over several times. Nothing to see. I was convinced that the car was doing it on purpose. As it got louder, and later, and darker, and wetter and the car became worse - that's when we regretted not having AA membership - and we've all been there I'm sure!

No luck on the emergency phone. Pull off into a really dowdy service area - most of it wasn't open. No garages open. Nowhere to stay. We'll have to sit here until morning - 8 or 9 hours away. I still remember that night all those years ago and that seized-up wheel bearing. It was cold, miserable, sleepless and powerless. Of all the things - that's what I remember the most - feeling helpless and powerless. There wasn't a darned thing that I could do about it.

I'm sure that you've had many experiences like that yourself. We've had a fair few since then. Feelings of helplessness, exasperation, powerlessness. It might have been the car. Or the holiday flight that was cancelled. Or the screw head that stripped. Or key that snapped in the lock. Or handle that came off in your hand. Or the letter from the bank. Or the bill that was impossible to pay. Or the decision about your future that was taken out of your hands. Or the job that just wasn't there anymore. Or the illness that floored you. Or the accident that finished things off. Or the operation that you just had to wait and wait and wait for.

Or the marriage of one of our children that just didn't work out and we couldn't live their lives for them. Or the wasting away of a mother, father, husband, wife or child that, in the end, you could do nothing about but simply had to do your best and watch it happen. Or the death that you dreaded but could do nothing to stop. You and I - any one of us - have done, do, and can experience exasperation, helplessness and - above all - powerlessness in so many ways

For some of our family, friends and fellowship - maybe even for you - that's the experience now.

The question is - is it possible to find our voice again? Is it possible to feel purpose and sense and some sort of control in life again? Will we always be powerless?

Jesus is talking about power and powerlessness in this short reading from Mark. It's not the first or last time it'll come up. The story is in the middle of a patch in Mark's gospel when Jesus says something very directly about what we call his 'passion'. He's done it once already and he'll do it again later. Here, the 2nd time, as they walk through Galilee, he makes a private prediction to his disciples: "Someone's going to betray a man into powerful hands. He'll be killed. But 3 days later he'll rise again".

Not a flicker of recognition on the disciples' faces as to what, or who, he was on about and they're feeling too sheepish to ask. Let me think - someone's going to betray a man into powerful hands. No. Then he'll be killed. Still nothing. But 3 days later he'll rise again. Nope, haven't a clue.

As he does the other two times, Jesus follows this prediction with some teaching on what it means to be a disciple - to follow him and to follow his way. And the disciples give Jesus the opening and walk right into it. As they come into a house in Capernaum. Jesus asks them: "What were you talking about on the way here?" Well, he knew what they'd been on about really. A sheepish silence descends. You can just imagine their heads bowed and eyes turned way with a sort of "Aw shucks" look on their faces. They've been caught out.

They hadn't any understanding of what Jesus had been talking about, or what it might mean for the future and for them. Instead, they were arguing over which one of the disciples was the greatest. Yes - who was going to be the greatest and the most powerful? It would have been a very pointed story for the times in that early 1st century for the first Christian community, as they then spent a fair bit of time themselves arguing about who should be leader, who was the best leader and so-on. Any of Paul's letters tell you that.

So Jesus goes on to tell them that it's not going to be like that. Mark 9:35 "Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all". So, in this past year, in the middle of a climate catastrophe, a record number of environmental activists working to protect the environment and

land rights are killed - 227 - almost a third of the murders linked to resource exploitation - logging, mining, large-scale agribusiness, hydroelectric dams and other infrastructure

So, this month after the terror, horror, sacrifices and disaster of Afghanistan's wars and withdrawal - despite promises, the shutters already begin to come down in the UK and the west over those fleeing and seeking protection- while in the country itself, the freedom and voice of women begins to be wiped from the society again.

So, this week, in spite of all the evidence, an ongoing health and job crisis, protest, and needs - in 21<sup>st</sup> century Britain, for seemingly reasons of dogma - our government seems hell-bent on cutting back on the Universal Credit £20 lift-up next month. This means that families could struggle to keep warm and put food on the table this winter, while many folk won't be able to keep their heads above water and will be kept in poverty. Status, wealth, power, control, 'calling the shots', laying down the law, ruling the roost. Our rules. My wealth, Their class.

Mark 9:35 "Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all. Yes, most of the world thinks about status, wealth, power, control, 'calling the shots', laying down the law, ruling the roost. But to be a disciple - to follow him and to follow his way - that means something totally different. It's not a quest for status, wealth, power, control. But neither is it lying on your back with your legs in the air while the world and life steamrolls over you or anyone else. What is it then?

Jesus has used the image of a servant, but that doesn't quite do it. Then he brings a child into the middle of the group of the 12 disciples. Now, in those times, the child wouldn't have been brought into the middle a symbol of innocence. No, this was "children should be seen and not heard" to 'out Victorian' the Victorians. In those days, children were almost non-persons. They symbolised vulnerability, powerlessness, and low status.

So Jesus says: "Look, if you welcome one of these children, one of the powerless, you also welcome me, you welcome God, you truly follow me and my way, you truly follow God and God's way". To follow God's way means that we - and

God - protest the case of the powerless - that includes us.

What makes us feel powerless just now? Who should hear us? To follow God's way means that we - and God - stand alongside the powerless through thick and thin - that includes us. What is it that makes us feel helpless and alone just now?

To follow God's way means that we - and God - believe that the powerless, the exasperated, the helpless won't always stay that way - that includes us. What is it that convinces us that things are forever dark and hopeless?

To follow God's way means that we - and God - are convinced that just as in Jesus' words "Someone may betray a man or woman into powerful hands, even into death, but 3 days later he'll rise again" so those who feel the burden of powerless, exasperation, helplessness won't be crushed in the end but will rise and find a voice and life and hope again - that includes us.

This is a resurrection promise. Amen to that. From a resurrection God. Amen to that. And we are resurrection people. AMEN TO THAT.

#### PRAYERS FOR THE WORLD

---

On this 'Peace Sunday', in our prayers for the world we'll be using the words from a hymn in our Methodist hymn book written by Alan Gaunt. I'd encourage you to read each verse slowly, and guided by each one, offer your own prayers for the world, each other and ourselves.

**We pray for peace - but not the easy peace built on complacency and not the truth of God; We pray for real peace, the peace God's love alone can seal.**

**We pray for peace- but not the cruel peace leaving God's poor bereft and dying in distress; We pray for real peace, enriching all the human race.**

**We pray for peace - and not the evil peace defending unjust laws and nursing prejudice, But for the real peace of justice, truth and love.**

**We pray for peace -holy communion with Christ our risen Lord and every living thing; God's will fulfilled on earth, and all his creatures reconciled.**

We pray for peace - and, for the sake of peace, look to the risen Christ, who gives the grace we need to serve the cause of peace and make our own self-sacrifice.

God, give us peace - if you withdraw your love, there is no peace for us, nor any hope of it. With you to lead us on through death or tumult, peace will come. AMEN

And now bring everything together with 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.  
Do not bring us to the time of trial  
but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours  
now and forever. AMEN.

**OUR FINAL HYMN,**  
(Singing the Faith 409 'Let us build a house')

["Let us build a house" \(CLICK FOR MUSIC\)](#)

Sing/Read/Pray/Proclaim the words ...

- 1 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.**
- 2 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.**

- 3 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.**
- 4 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 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.**
- 5 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)*

---

#### **A PRAYER OF BLESSING**

The kingdom lies before you - walk towards it with hope and confidence. The Kingdom lies at hand - grasp and live its values today. The Kingdom lies within you. Let it shine through your love for others. AMEN

*Some prayers and hymns are taken from, based on, or inspired by, those in 'Companion to the Lectionary', 'Roots', 'Action for Children' and Christian Aid Week worship resources, with some words from the United Nations. Hymns are used by permission under CCL.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

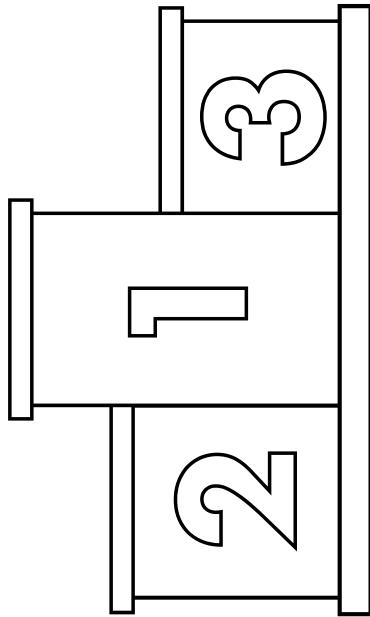
# ROOTS Activity sheet

19-25 September 2021



**Mark 9:30-37**

The disciples are confused by Jesus' talk of betrayal and death, and end up arguing about which one of them is the greatest.



Jesus' disciples argued about who was 'number one'.



Unscramble the words to fill in the gaps in what Jesus says.

**If you nwta to be the ateestrg, you must be rapredep to be the teasl important.**

-----  
-----  
-----  
-----



Have a look at these people. Colour the ones you think are important in green and the unimportant ones in red. If Jesus was doing the colouring, which colours do you think he would use for each person?

The Prime Minister	Policeman	Doctor	Rubbish collector
Child	Teacher	Shop worker	Factory worker
Parent	Homeless person	Refugee	Actor
	Homeless person	Judge	



Draw a picture of the disciples arguing about who was the most important.