



Call to Worship

Come unto me all you who are weary from having to carry heavy loads and I will refresh you.”

Hymn - Singing the Faith 20 Be still for the presence of the Lord

Be still for the presence of the Lord,
The Holy One is here
Come bow before Him now,
With reverence and fear
In Him no sin is found
We stand on holy ground
Be still for the presence of the Lord,
The Holy One is here

Be still for the glory of the Lord,
Is shining all around
He burns with holy fire,
With splendour He is crowned
How awesome is the sight
Our radiant King of light
Be still for the glory of the Lord,
Is shining all around

Be still for the power of the Lord,
Is moving in this place
He comes to cleanse and heal,
To minister His grace
No work too hard for Him
In faith receive from Him
Be still for the power of the Lord
Is moving in this place

Prayers and Lord's Prayer

Let us pray,

We want to praise those, who have achieved, es, the Spanish football team as well!

We want to praise the Olympian sportswomen and men when they do well.

We want to praise you, Lord, because you give us a chance and ability to do things well.

We praise you for being the kind of God you bare.

Do we need to talk again of your truth, kindness, justice, and caring.

Help us to thank you by wanting to be like you. Even though we fail, help us to start again. We may feel we don't. You keep on giving us the strength to be different.

Give us the faith to believe so. Help us where faith falls short.

Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,
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 those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.

Hymn - Singing the Faith 479 The King of Love my Shepherd is

1 The King of love my shepherd is,
whose goodness faileth never.
I nothing lack if I am his,
and he is mine forever.

2 Where streams of living water flow,
my ransomed soul he leadeth;
and where the verdant pastures grow,
with food celestial feedeth.

3 Perverse and foolish, oft I strayed,
but yet in love he sought me;
and on his shoulder gently laid,
and home, rejoicing, brought me.

4 In death's dark vale I fear no ill,
with thee, dear Lord, beside me;
thy rod and staff my comfort still,
thy cross before to guide me.

5 Thou spreadst a table in my sight;
thy unction grace bestoweth;
and oh, what transport of delight
from thy pure chalice floweth!

6 And so through all the length of days,
thy goodness faileth never;
Good Shepherd, may I sing thy praise
within thy house forever.

Readings - The word Shepherd, one who looks out for the best interest of all, appears in both our readings.

Psalm 23 A psalm of David.

1 The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing.
2 He makes me lie down in green pastures,
he leads me beside quiet waters,
3 he refreshes my soul.
He guides me along the right paths
for his name's sake.
4 Even though I walk
through the darkest valley,[a]
I will fear no evil,
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff,
they comfort me.

5 You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.

6 Surely your goodness and love will follow
me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord
forever.

Mark 6:30-34, 53-56

The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. 31 Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest."

32 So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place. 33 But many who saw them leaving recognized them and ran on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. 34 When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things.

53 When they had crossed over, they landed at Gennesaret and anchored there. 54 As soon as they got out of the boat, people recognized Jesus. 55 They ran throughout that whole region and carried the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. 56 And wherever he went—into villages, towns or countryside—they placed the sick in the marketplaces. They begged him to let them touch even the edge of his cloak, and all who touched it were healed.

Hymn 249 Singing the Faith When you 're not able to get out, it's not always easy to remember what others have to do, and by thinking of them, we can still serve.

***Jesu, Jesu, fill us with your love,
Show us how to serve
The neighbours we have from you.***

Kneels at the feet of his friends,
Silently washes their feet,
Master who acts as a slave to them.
Jesu ...

Neighbours are rich folk and poor,
Varied in colour and race,
Neighbours are near and far away.
Jesu ...

These are the ones we should serve,
These are the ones we should love,
All are neighbours to us and you.
Jesu ...

Kneel at the feet of our friends,
Silently washing their feet,
This is the way we should live with you.
Jesu ...

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession.

Let us pray, Lord, we pray for those we know, our families, who have challenges of their own, our friends, who often have health concerns, or hospital visits, or who wait for an operation or a consultation. We thank you for being with them. Help us to be with them in prayer, or a phone call or a zoom, or a text sometimes.

We thank you for always being there to talk to, that you do not get bored, that you do not suddenly remember that you have something else to do, but are always ready to listen.

That is why we talk about Gaza, and the West Bank, and Israel, Ukraine, Russia, the USA, our own country with a new government, and all the countries that simmer with tension but have not yet exploded into violence.

We pray for our community and communities, remembering those who are struggling with the cost of living, harsh treatment at work, and health pressures. May those they need be around for them at the right time, and help us to notice the signs of love all around us.

We pray for ourselves, that we may not only notice hope but be signs of hope to those around us.
AMEN

Hymn - Singing the Faith 530 To be in your presence

To Be in Your Presence
To Sit at Your Feet
Then Your Love Surrounds Me
And Makes Me Complete

***This Is My Desire, Oh Lord
This Is My Desire
This Is My Desire, Oh Lord
This Is My Desire***

To Rest in Your Presence
Not Rushing Away
To Cherish Each Moment
Here I Would Stay

This Is My Desire ...

SERMON - RESPECT FOR SOMEONE'S SPACE, RESPECT FOR SOMEONE'S NEED

'Being a Christian means more than behaving well, but it cannot mean anything less'. When I was at Minister school, fellow students used to criticise some sermons for not being Jesus centred.

Well, it all depends on what you mean by being Jesus centred. If they meant they were all about behaving well, and not enough about Jesus, maybe we could say, "Yes, Jesus should come into it, but if it is about how Jesus showed us to behave then I believe that is a Jesus centred sermon. This is one of those passages. I reckon that here Jesus is saying to us - Respect someone's space, and respect someone's need.

RESPECT SOMEONE'S SPACE.

We need our space.

If you go to the other end of Bestwood Country Park, by the Winding House, you will see a sculpture. It is of railway sleepers. Each sleeper looks the same as the other but there is a notice that tells you what it's about. It commemorates miners going down by train on holiday and describes what they would see. In the middle of each sleeper if you look very carefully you will see a seashell, a rock, or something else you would find on a beach. The point was that miners could go on paid holiday from work and people eventually got the point that you can't work all the time and be productive. The miners needed their space.

Do you ever see Kate Bottley, Rev. Kate Bottley, on your screens? She is a Vicar, and says that sometimes when the work, and family responsibilities, gets a little too much for her, she goes off into a cupboard, with a glass of wine, and hides away.

Another Minister, when inundated, and her children wanted something else from her, said, "I am not your Mother". I need my space.

Jesus knew that we needed our space. The disciples had just come back from the mission Jesus had sent them on preaching and healing, and he said, "They need a break", either because they'll be too excited or because they'll be exhausted. So, he sent them off to find a lonely place. There is a place in Galilee called Eremos which means a lonely place.

If we need our space, then we'll know that it makes sense to say that others do, too.

Does it mean being alert to people's needs? Does it mean seeking first to ask what these needs are?

I know that particularly as we grow older, it seems a pity not to be able to dispense all our wisdom while it's still around to give. Yet, maybe, the other person doesn't need our wisdom just at that point? Maybe it's better that they be alone. They need their space – from us.

I know there have been times when I've seen someone and know I've wanted to ask them something. So, I've said as soon as they came into the room, "Could you do this?" I haven't even said 'Good Morning.' I've not given them any space. Am I the only one? Sometimes, we may have gone to someone and wanted to tell them about a leak in the roof, or a blocked drain, without asking first, "Can they take this now?" Do they need a little space? Then, perhaps, we begin to realise that we have treated them as someone who does the jobs rather than a person.

Have you ever said to anyone, "I know it's your day off – but", how well does that make them feel their space is respected?

The crowds were no respecters of Jesus' space. Jesus and his friends set sail to go to a lonely place. There weren't many in Galilee, perhaps, that they could go to. The crowd got wind of their sails, sorry that was a bad one, knew where they were going and got there before them. I've got a

job for you to do Jesus. "Heal my leprosy", heal my son's deafness, heal that sickness, which I can't name." Not a thought as to whether Jesus was tired and needed a bit of down time.

Sometimes, the space that people are seeking is space with God, or with the spiritual, however they see that. Jesus is saying to his friends, after they return from their mission, have some time with me, before you go out again. In Mark, this may be more important than telling him all they'd done. We'd want to respect that time most of all, even though we all make mistakes.

Charles Kingsley, the Victorian author, a few may remember reading the book, "The Water Babies" as a child. He was asked what was the biggest influence on his life. He said it was seeing his mother wrapped up in prayer. He said, "The highest I knew on earth was bowed to a higher in heaven." He honoured both her and so he honoured that she needed her space with God.

Respecting each other is part of what it means to respect others and what God requires.

The crowds were not Jesus' followers. Jesus calls his followers, knowing that they need space, to respect the space of others, too.

But not simply respecting each other's space, respecting each other's needs, too.

It's your day off. You hear that someone's loved one has died. You can't settle to enjoy yourself when this has happened. You can't enjoy yourself. You go out to see them. They need you.

There is something called TOIL time off in lieu, if you get the chance, and, even if you don't, you believe that God will make it up to you somehow.

It seems the way of Jesus. The crowds flocked to him when all he wanted was to be alone with his friends. They all wanted a piece of Him, but He did not say, "It's my day off." It was an inconvenience, but He did not say, "I need my space." There was a need here. He did not say, "I want to be alone." They would misunderstand what He was all about, thinking of Him as only the healer, and not so much more. There was need here, and where there was need, Jesus had to be. He looked at them with compassion because they were like sheep without a shepherd. He preached to them, and taught them. Then he made sure they were fed with bread and fishes.

Jesus met people where they were, in their need. Yes, our own times of space should be respected, but there may be occasions that are more important than even our space, that we have to meet and leave our wellbeing to God.

I remember one Methodist teacher talking of the need for a day off, and to have space, saying, "There are some who have learned the lesson too well."

We can make talk of our need for space as a God which we worship almost as much as God Himself.

He only saw need. He saw people as people. He responded as a person to a person. He did not say, "I'm sure I'll never see any of them again once they've got what they want from them."

He did not say, "I can ignore them – they are not card-carrying Jews many of them." He performed a miracle of Bread and Fishes, not necessarily this one, among non card-carrying Jews. He did feel let down sometimes. To be let down is the price of loving. He did respond as a person who could help another person in need.

He met them where they were in their understanding. He did not say, "They do not know who I really am, and so I can ignore them." He would let them take what they understood of Him. They did not come to Him as God in human form but as a miracle worker first and a teacher second.

They even touched the tassels of his garments which he wore as a good Jew to remind him of God's commandments, which included the idea of caring for those in need.

So, we meet people as people in their need, and in their understanding, as they are, affirming and meeting, as best we can our need. When we're not sure whether our response should be one or the other, being a follower of Jesus and as the disciples did turning to him can guide us.

Jesus has shown us some pretty down to earth things about what it means to follow Him. Being a Christian means more than respectful behaviour but it cannot mean anything less. He has shown us that to respect others and to respect Him, loving them, in fact, includes a respect for each other's space and a respect each other's needs. AMEN.

Hymn - Singing the Faith 681 Community of Christ

Community of Christ,
 who make the Cross your own,
 live out your creed and risk your life
for God alone:
the God who wears your face,
 to whom all worlds belong,
 whose children are of every race
 and every song.

Community of Christ,
 through whom the word must sound
 cry out for justice and for peace
the whole world round:
disarm the powers that war
 and all that can destroy,
turn bombs to bread, and tears of anguish
 into joy.

Community of Christ,
 look past the Church's door
 and see the refugee, the hungry,
and the poor.
Take hands with the oppressed,
 the jobless in your street,
 take towel and water, that you wash
 your neighbor's feet.

When menace melts away,
 so shall God's will be done,
 the climate of the world be peace
and Christ its Sun;
our currency be love
 and kindness our law,
 our food and faith be shared as one
 forevermore.

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Blessing.

You are invited to think of your family, friends, your community, country, and the world as you say the Grace,

The Grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with us all now and always
AMEN.