

## Service for personal use – 18<sup>th</sup> July 2021.



Call to Worship.

The Lord says, “ I will not break my covenant, nor alter a word that came from my lips”, Psalm 89 vs 34.

Hymn. “All praise to our redeeming Lord” 608 StF, 753 H&P, 19 MP.

Opening Prayer.

O Lord, our loving Heavenly Father, we are glad we can come to you in prayer and confidence. We come with this attitude because we have experienced your love, mercy and forgiveness. We believe you are near to us when we pray and we thank you that by faith we are able to enter your presence and you by the Holy Spirit have entered our lives. By that same Spirit, forgive us and take from our lives those things which stop us developing into fully adult Christians. May the light of Christ show us every corner of our personality, which is in need of renewal and re – building. We thank you that we can bring to you the small issues of life as well as the large ones and for reasons unknown to us, you are interested in all aspects of our lives. So look on us as a congregation of Christian people and please supply us with your perfect love and care, which is our daily need and lead us in true and humble worship today, for in Christ we pray. Amen.

Hymn. “Great is thy faithfulness” StF 51, 66 H&P, 200 MP.

Bible Readings

Mark 6 vs 30 – 34 & 53 – 56.

The disciples return from burying John the Baptist and they with Jesus went to a remote place for rest and relaxation, the afterwards witness the positive ministry of Jesus.

Ephesians 2 vs 11 – 22.

If I were to give this message a title it would be called, “Wonderful Reconciliation”, because the passage talks about the reconciliation between Jew and Gentile, so the barrier has been

broken down. The Jews always felt they were superior to the Gentiles. They were the chosen nation, the history of the Old Testament was God working with his people, they had a special covenant with God. The chosen Messiah was going to come from the Jewish nation. Gentiles on the other hand had no hope, they were a people of despair and there was no life after death, as it says in verse 12, "having no hope, without God in the world". Unfortunately we have divisions today, there is black and white, rich and poor, there used to be a division between the north and south of England, as one comedian said, "the north earns with wealth of the country and the Londoners spend it" !. The Christian church is terribly divided, how some of us yearn for unity, that there should be one church on the earth. There is then this hope of a fundamental lasting unity, the Apostle Paul is quite sure that this unity has been achieved in Christ, the wall of hostility between Jew and Gentile has been broken down, verse 14. The origin of this wall has a physical connection, because in some ways it refers to the wall in the temple, which separated the court of the Jews and the court of the Gentiles. This wall was 9 feet high and 18 inches thick, if anyone tried to climb the wall from the court of the Gentiles to the court of the Jews, he was immediately put to death, but in Christ this spiritual wall has been demolished. There is a story told of a priest who refused the burial of a person because he considered he was not a full believer, so his friends buried him outside the fence. The next day when his friends visited the grave, at first they couldn't find it, when they did , they were amazed because he was now in the graveyard, he had not been re buried, but in the night the priest moved the fence to include him. This is what Christ achieved, all now are welcome, as it says in Galatians chapter 3 vs 28, "there is neither Jew or Gentile, we are one in Christ". We use to sing a lovely chorus and one of the lines said, "There is room for all in my Father's house, where there's joy, joy , joy,".

In Christ therefore a new spiritual person has been created, not Jew, not Gentile, but Christian, its just as if two statues have been melted down and a new one has been made. 2 Corinthians chapter 5 verse 17 says, "if any person be in Christ, they are a new creation, the old has passed away and the new has come".

The musical, "West side story" is about the rivalry between 2 gangs in New York, the "Jets" and the "Sharks", they have regular fights, often with knives.

Tony from the Jets falls in love with Maria from the Sharks, tragically Tony is killed and Maria kneels beside his dead body. One of the Jets (the opposing gang) comes and puts a shawl around Maria's shoulders and as the body of Tony is picked up by the Jets, they allow one of the Sharks to help them. It took a death to unite these two gangs, so the death and resurrection of Christ can bind us together in love. Amen.

Hymn " Christ from whom all blessings flow". 676 StF, H&P 764.

Prayers of Intercession,

O God, our loving Heavenly Father, we come to you realizing you are the great God of wonders and yet you communicate with us and part of that is your reconciliation in Christ, because of this help us see life from your perspective, with all its opportunities, potential, goodness and beauty.

Show us where we see no future, your promise continues, where we see obstacles, you have planned the way ahead, where we see our limitations you see opportunities, where we see despair you see hope, where we see division you work toward reconciliation, and where we see sorrow you want to bring joy.

Give us the courage to dream dreams, to have a vision of the future for ourselves, our church and our world.

Let us bring before the Lord those in need .....

Lets pray for them now.

We bring all our prayers to you O God in Christ's name. Amen.

We say the Lord's Prayer together.

Hymn "In Christ alone my hope is found" 351 StF, 1072 MP.

We say the Grace together. Amen.