

South Leicestershire Group United Reformed Church



For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." Matt.18:20

'Feast of the Passover' Bouts, Dieric, 1415-1475; <http://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-image>

14th Sunday after Pentecost 6th September 2020

This presentation is a free resource for personal use SW CCL 543786

CALL TO WORSHIP

Come, now is the time to worship

Come, now is the time to give your heart

Come, just as you are to worship

Come, just as you are before your God

Come, now is the time to worship,

Come, just as you are before your God Brian Doerkson

Gathering Prayer

We gather as Community, united in Jesus Christ

We come to worship God,

Father, Son and Holy Spirit

One in Three and Three in One,

Hallelujah, Amen

Amen

Father, we praise you, now the night is over;
active and watchful, stand we all before you;
singing we offer prayer and meditation:
thus we adore you.

Monarch of all things, fit us for your mansions;
banish our weakness, health and wholeness sending;
bring us to heaven, where your saints united
joy without ending.

All-holy Father, Son and equal Spirit,
Trinity blessed, send us your salvation;
yours is the glory, gleaming and resounding
through all creation.

attrib. Gregory the Great (c.540-604)

tr. Percy Dearner (1867-1936) altd.

Rejoice & Sing 26 Tune Christie Sanctorum

<https://youtu.be/Qg4xN5nNQX4>

Prayers of Approach

Loving God we praise you, we adore you, we glorify you.

We give you thanks that we are part of your community,

Gathered to bring to you praises in hymns, Psalms and Prayers,

We also bring ourselves in the knowledge that sometimes we have not behaved as we should.

We have been judgemental, we have not shown compassion,

We have not loved our neighbour as we should; we have not loved you as we should.

For all those things that we should have done and didn't, we are sorry.

We seek your forgiveness.

(Pause for a moment or two here, as we reflect upon things that could have been done better)

God forgives us our sins, let us not sin again. Amen.

Moses receives instructions on how to survive the night of the First Passover. One community survives, one is decimated.

Exodus 12:1-14

- ¹ The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt:
- ² This month shall mark for you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year for you.
- ³ Tell the whole congregation of Israel that on the tenth of this month they are to take a lamb for each family, a lamb for each household.
- ⁴ If a household is too small for a whole lamb, it shall join its closest neighbour in obtaining one; the lamb shall be divided in proportion to the number of people who eat of it.
- ⁵ Your lamb shall be without blemish, a year-old male; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats.
- ⁶ You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month; then the whole assembled congregation of Israel shall slaughter it at twilight.

⁷ They shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it.

⁸ They shall eat the lamb that same night; they shall eat it roasted over the fire with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.

⁹ Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted over the fire, with its head, legs, and inner organs.

¹⁰ You shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn.

¹¹ This is how you shall eat it: your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it hurriedly. It is the passover of the LORD.

¹² For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike down every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both human beings and animals; on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the LORD.

¹³ The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live: when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

¹⁴ This day shall be a day of remembrance for you. You shall celebrate it as a festival to the LORD; throughout your generations you shall observe it as a perpetual ordinance.

Paul continues to outline what makes a loving Community of Faith

Romans 13:8-14

⁸ Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. ⁹ The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet"; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, "Love your neighbour as yourself."¹⁰ Love does no wrong to a neighbour; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.

¹¹ Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; ¹² the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armour of light; ¹³ let us live honourably as in the day, not in revelling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarrelling and jealousy.¹⁴ Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

Jesus gives advice on how to deal with conflict within a faith community

Matthew 18:15-20

¹⁵ "If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one. ¹⁶ But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses.

¹⁷ If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.

¹⁸ Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

¹⁹ Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. ²⁰ For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."

¹⁹ Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. ²⁰ For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." Matt.18:19-20

The survival of the fittest is a mantra that does not sit well with me. It goes in the face of the Gospel imperative to love your neighbour. What we read in our Old Testament reading is the formation of a blessed community and the decimation of another community. What does develop out of this reading is a tradition that developed for a special community, the Israelites. Their tradition carries on to this day, part has been appropriated by the Christian Church in our communion service. A Tradition, that binds us in communion with the wider church and God. Tradition, 'We have always done it that way', ask any Minister who wants to bring about change, not just for the sake of it, but to improve the worship experience and the spiritual life of any church, and they will tell you that change whilst possible, is not always forthcoming. Following on from last week's theme of zeal, this reading from Matthew's Gospel is about community cohesion and formation. You will always get tensions within a church community, after all, we are all quite self centred about our thoughts on various topics and how things should be done, question is, how do you reduce the tensions when one awkward person is simply not listening to your point of view?

Or to put it another way, are you listening to theirs? There has to be a dialogue, sometimes the dialogue will become strained, tense, no one is giving ground and we all know that some people can be abusive while they are making their point of view known. I have had that experience, it isn't pleasant and can lead to discord, anger and hurt. At the end of the day, all that a Minister wants are people who comfortable worshipping together and being community together and will grow together in mutual love for one another. Just as Paul exhorts us to do in his letter to the Romans, let us not give into our selfish desires but always consider the other. It is when we are so focussed on our own point of view and our way of getting things done, then the danger is we fail to acknowledge that others may have an equally valid point of view (in their eyes) and so a compromise has to be reached, we need to adopt a pathway of love that becomes our guiding theme for good living, and not a recipe for exclusion.

Jesus also realises this and points out that in any community that there will be tensions and these tensions can lead to a great amount of discord, mistrust and generally not what you would expect within a loving Christian community. So the easiest way to diffuse these tensions is to simply be honest with one another; get the problem out into the open. I generally prefer not to go to one person by myself I just skip to step two, I take someone with me, sadly through experience I have learnt that some are expert at manipulating events and twisting words that had been spoken and quote them out of context; we all know of politicians who have stumbled through television interviews, and some royal princes have also regretted words that they had said. To live as a Christian takes hard work, we are constantly struggling with who we are and struggling with our human nature to live in a Christian way.

Paul emphasises that salvation is nearer now than when we became believers, as Christians we should be growing all the time, not only in

our knowledge of Jesus Christ, but also in our own spiritual development, enabling us to live in a way worthy of our declaration to be Christians and in a way that Jesus wants us to live. His pathway is one of love, peace and harmony, if we follow that pathway, we are well on our way to creating a church of integrity, a place of sanctuary for those who are the least, and for those who feel lost. We live knowing that our churches are places of healing and places of hope, for the lost and the found, for those in sorrow and those who live in joy, a place where we can know Jesus and his love for us, a place where we can find God and be at peace. Amen.

Memory verse

²⁰ For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." Matt.18:20

There's a quiet understanding
When we're gathered in the Spirit.
It's a promise that he gives us,
When we gather in his name,
There's a love we feel in Jesus,
There's a manna that he feeds us
It's a promise that he gives,
When we gather in his name.

And we know when we're together
sharing love and understanding
that our brothers and our sisters
Feel the oneness that he brings.
Thank you, thank you, thank you, Jesus.
For the way you love and feed us,
For the many ways you lead us,
Thank you, thank you Lord
Thank you, thank you Lord

Tedd Smith (1927-) <https://youtu.be/BqJ-JY3-nfU>

THE OFFERTORY

Bring your gifts to God, not just your money but yourselves
Help to build the Kingdom of heaven here on earth
Your gifts will be gratefully received.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come to this table, all is prepared for you,
Come from the North, the South, the East and the West.
As Jesus stretched his arms out on the cross,
So now he stretches them out in welcome,
All are welcome at the Table,
Come and join the feast

An upper room did our Lord prepare
for those he loved until the end;
and his disciples still gather there
to celebrate their Risen Friend.

A lasting gift Jesus gave his own
to share his bread, his loving cup;
whatever burdens may bow us
down,
he by his cross shall lift us up.

And after supper he washed their
feet,
for service, too, is sacrament;
in him our joy shall be made
complete—
sent out to serve, as he was sent.

No end there is! We depart in
peace;
he loves beyond the uttermost;
in every room in our Father's
house
he will be there, as Lord and
Host.

F. Pratt Green (1903-2000)

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Rejoice & Sing

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The Narrative of the Institution of the Lord's Supper According to the Apostle Paul.

²³ For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, ²⁴ and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." ²⁵ In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." ²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

1 Corinthians 11:23-26 New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

Communion

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

We give you thanks and praise

Loving God that in all times and places you have sustained us through the power of your Holy Spirit; You call us to follow you, to trust that we will become agents of change in the world, therefore with all your people in heaven and on earth we sing the triumphant hymn of glory:

Holy, holy, holy Lord,

God of power and might,

heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

Let us proclaim the mystery of Faith

Christ has died

Christ has Risen

Christ will come again

Lift up the Bread and wine read and wine and say:

Loving God bless these ordinary things
so that they become extraordinary for us today.

Let your Holy Spirit inhabit us and these gifts of bread and wine

(Put the wine down and keep hold of the bread)

Saying:

as we remember that on the night when Jesus was betrayed,
he took a loaf of Bread, gave thanks for it,

Blessed it, Broke it, and gave it to his disciples saying:

'Take, Eat, This is my body given for you, do this to remember me'

Eat the bread

Pick up the wine

After supper Jesus picked up the cup and said to them

'This is my blood of the new Covenant,
shed for you and for many for the remission of sins.

Drink this to remember me'

Drink, then say 'Amen'

Lord Jesus, we thank you for this bread and wine,

these wonderful gifts that bring us close to you
and our heavenly Father,

help us by your Holy Spirit to tell your story to the world
and to share your love with everyone,

Amen

Prayers of Intercession

Today we pray for peace in the world, a world that is torn apart by the ambitions of political systems that divide nations. Let those in Government see that there is a better way to live, a way of sharing and caring for all our neighbours across the world. We pray for those who are fleeing the country of their birth due to war and dispute. We pray for the countries who give refuge to them, help our country to do what little we can.

WE pray for all who are returning to work, and to school; we pray for our Universities, that they can provide the necessary secure and safe space for learning.

We pray for Christian Fellowships returning to gather for the first time since March. Help to give them understanding of the safety precautions that they must take. Keep all who use our buildings safe from harm. We pray for all who Minister and give thanks for the induction of Reverend Martin Ferris as he begins his work as the resource Minister for the South and East Area of Leicester. We give thanks for the support he receives from his wife Charlotte, and we look forward to getting to know them.

We pray for all who are not so well at this time, surround them with your healing love and let them know that they are not alone.

We pray for those who mourn and we remember especially at this time the family of Mary Rhiannon Osmin. Give to them comfort and reassurance that Rhiannon is safe in your care.

We remember Gill and Mark Standley as they prepare to say goodbye to John, we give thanks for all the love and care shared within that family in the good and also the bad times. We give thanks for John, for his life and witness and for all his work with Young people over the years.

Prayers for Others

Shirley and James; Tony and Pauline and family; For Cis Johnson (Whetstone),

Those still feeling the hurt of grief. Norman, Sally and Marion Jean A., enduring a painful illness. We pray for Jane battling with illness, surround her with your healing care.

For Paula going through a tough time, give her strength and courage.

We pray for Jasu and the family as they support Cano through his time of illness. For Dorothea {Whetstone}

We give thanks that Linda is feeling better.

Finally Lord we pray for ourselves, give to us courage and confidence to face the future, knowing that you are with us always, even to the end of the age.

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.

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,

for thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory,

forever and ever, Amen.

Bless the Lord oh my soul Oh my soul
Worship His Holy name
Sing like never before
Oh my soul I'll worship Your Holy name

The sun comes up It's a new day dawning
It's time to sing Your song again
Whatever may pass
And whatever lies before me
Let me be singing
When the evening comes

Bless the Lord oh my soul Oh my soul.....

You're rich in love And You're slow to anger
Your name is great And Your heart is kind
For all Your goodness I will keep on
singing Ten thousand reasons
For my heart to find

Bless the Lord oh my soul
Oh my soul Worship His Holy name
Sing like never before Oh my soul
I'll worship Your Holy name
Bless You Lord

And on that day, When my strength is
failing, The end draws near
And my time has come
Still my soul will Sing Your praise
unending Ten thousand years
And then forevermore, Forevermore

Bless the Lord oh my soul
Oh my soul Worship His Holy name
Sing like never before Oh my soul
I'll worship Your Holy name
Bless You Lord

Matt Redman

May the Lord bless us and keep us,
May the Lord make his face shine upon us
And give us peace.

May we be a united community
Praising God forevermore
Amen

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Acknowledgements

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Rejoice & Sing 26 Tune Christie Sanctorum

Youtube Christianna Hellwig

There's a quiet understanding Tedd Smith

www.divinehymns.com

An upper room did our Lord prepare

F Pratt-Green, Stainer and Bel

10,000 reasons Matt Redman https://youtu.be/DXDGE_IRIDE

Prayers and Liturgy R. Eastman