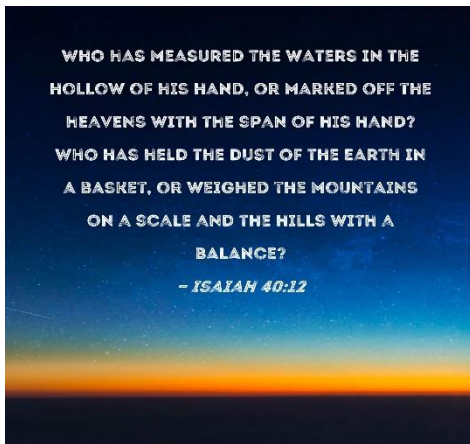


**Worship at Home for Sunday 4th February
with Local Preacher Jenny Brooks**



Call to Worship

How good it is to sing praises to our God;
for he is gracious, and a song of praise is fitting.’
So, let us praise the God who is
great in strength and mighty in power,
and whose love will never let us go.

Hymn: Singing the Faith 83

1. Praise my soul the King of heaven; to his feet thy
tribute bring. Ransomed, healed restored,
forgiven, who like thee his praise should sing?

*Praise Him, Praise Him, praise the everlasting
King!*

2. Praise Him for his grace and favour to his
people in distress; praise Him still the same
forever, slow to chide and swift to bless.

*Praise Him, Praise Him, Glorious in his
faithfulness.*

3. Father like he tends and spares us; well our
feeble frame he knows; in his hands he gently
bears us, rescues us from all our foes.

Praise Him, Praise Him, widely as his mercy flows.

Angels in the heights adore him; yes behold him
face to face; sun and moon bow down before him,
dwellers all in time and space.

*Praise Him, Praise Him, praise with us the God of
grace!*

Reading Isaiah chapter 40, verses 21-31

Reading Mark Chapter 1 verses 29-39

Prayers of Adoration and Confession

God of all, we praise you for your
care, commitment and compassion for all life.

Your energy never runs out.
Your well of love never runs dry.
Your grace never goes stale.
Your word is always alive and fresh and
lifegiving.
Thank you, God, our strength.
Thank you, Jesus, our Saviour.
Thank you, Holy Spirit, our Comforter.

God of compassion and peace,
forgive us when we don't hear the cries of
your children:
forgive us when we don't hear the silence of
the oppressed:
forgive us when we don't hear the words of
challenge:
forgive us when we don't hear our own words
of hypocrisy:
That we may serve you with all our hearts and
minds and souls.

Lord of our highs and our lows:
when we are sorry, you forgive us;
when we are weary, you refresh us;
when we are jaded, you encourage us;
when we feel forgotten, you reach out and
remind us of your ever-present and eternal
love.

And so we trust you for today, believe in you
for tomorrow and will praise you for all eternity
– in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

Hymn: Singing the Faith 649

1. God! When human bonds are broken and
we lack the love or skill to restore the hope of
healing, give us grace and make us still.

2. Through that stillness, with your Spirit come
into our world of stress, for the sake of Christ
forgiving all the failures we confess.

3. You in us are bruised and broken; hear us
as we seek release from the pain of earlier
living; set us free and grant us peace.

4. Send us, God of new beginnings humbly
hopeful into life. Use us as a means of
blessing; make us stronger, give us faith.

5. Give us faith to be more faithful, give us
hope to be more true, give us love to go on
learning; God! Encourage and renew!

Reflection

Isaiah was writing to a nation that had suffered and was still suffering. In his reflections addressed to the people of Israel, he was walking a line between getting impatient, because not everyone was ready to move on and kindly supporting those who continued to struggle with loss. He acknowledges the pain of those who feel abandoned. This is a difficult emotion for humans to live with, it can feel overwhelming and all consuming, stopping us from living in the here and now. For the community that Isaiah was writing to, they felt a communal abandonment by God, when their relationship with God has been the spiritual glue that has held them together in good and bad times. Isaiah reiterates both the greatness of God, his power and universality, alongside his care for individual people.

Mark is writing in a very different time and spiritual context, but also trying to change the mindset of the people he is writing for. There have been no Prophets in Israel for 500 years, so that the scribes and pharisees have become the dominant spiritual voices; giving their interpretation of the law of Moses. They spoke with deference and using other scribes and pharisees to back up their interpretations. Jesus is very different in his delivery and message, bringing his own authority and power, with an awareness of the most vulnerable in society. Jesus uses this power to heal and bring a narrative of forgiveness to everyone he meets. Verses 35-39 do sound like “a man on a Mission” - Get up early to pray, tell your friends “We need to go to nearby towns and proclaim the message”. Marks gospel has a pace and urgency about it that is different to the other gospels. This seems to be part of Marks style; Jesus has power and authority, alongside an urgency to share his Good News about the love of God for all.

Prayers of intercession

God of love,
you give power to the faint and strength to the powerless. Many of us are exhausted, responding to demands of work, family life or dealing with isolation, joblessness and fear.

Help us all to turn us towards each other in acts of loving service, then turn us outwards to carry your gospel of healing into the world.
God of love,
you call worlds into being; you number the stars and call us all by name.
You created a world of plenty and beauty, of magnificence and diversity.
stir us up to action to protect our planet.
May our feet tread lightly on the earth and our actions and priorities bring healing to our battered world. God of love, you defend the voiceless. Help us to be alert to the pain of others. May we hear the cries of the powerless and by our words, choices and actions, may we be agents of healing in the world.
God of love, you heal the broken hearted and you gather in all who are lost. For all who are mourning the loss of family members or friends, asking for peace, and for your healing presence in their need. Send your blessing on all who are afraid, or alone, or hungry, on those whose lives are being destroyed by abuse or violence, and on all for whom home is not a safe place. God of love, your kindness is everlasting, surround us with your arms of love; keep our eyes fixed on you and make us ready to follow where you lead, trusting that you will provide for us – today and always.
Amen.

Hymn: Singing the Faith 455

1. 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.
3. God's great goodness aye endureth, deep his wisdom passing thought; splendour, light and life attend him, beauty springeth out of nought. Evermore from his store new-born worlds rise and adore.
5. 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.

Blessing