

Dorset South and West Circuit – Written Service – Sunday 7th August 2022 – prepared by Revd John Yarren

Call to Worship

We celebrate the God of infinite power and love, who has called us into community.

We gather with God’s people of every age and place who have, by faith, found their true citizenship in heaven.

We journey together with hope, knowing that God who has fulfilled every promise in the coming of Jesus Christ will fulfill the promises of kingdom life for us and for all God’s children.

Thanks be to God for the faith that makes our life in Christ complete and promises life everlasting to all who believe.

Prayer of Adoration:

Your love, O God, is an active love: engaged, involved, immersed.

Your love, O God, is seen in what you do, not just in what you say:
in the blessing of children, in the meals with outcasts, in the touching of the untouchable,
in your presence, and your self-giving, in your opening of the way to life to all who will come.

And your love, O God, is expressed through people like us:
as we share our wealth in simplicity and generosity; as we share wholeness in care and healing of the sick and broken; as we share hospitality by being truly present to the lonely, the imprisoned and the marginalised; as we share peace in kindness, listening and acceptance with those who challenge us, confront us and threaten us.

As you have loved us in incarnate action, O God, may we learn to be little incarnations through whom your love is expressed and experienced in action. Amen.

Prayer of Confession:

Let us call to mind our sins. **Silence**

Lord Jesus, you came into the world to save sinners: Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

We have brought sorrow and hurt to you, to others and to ourselves: Christ, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**

You give yourself to heal and renew us, and to bring us strength: Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

<Pause>

Know that your sins are forgiven through Jesus Christ, our Saviour, and rejoice in his goodness and grace.

Amen.

Hymn: - STF 489 – All I once held dear

1 All I once held dear,
built my life upon,
all this world reveres,
and wars to own,
all I once thought gain
I have counted loss;
spent and worthless now,

compared to this.

*Knowing you, Jesus,
knowing you,
there is no greater thing.
You’re my all, you’re the best,
you’re my joy, my righteousness,*

and I love you, Lord.

2 Now my heart's desire
is to know you more,
to be found in you
and known as yours.
To possess by faith
what I could not earn,
all-surpassing gift
of righteousness.

3 Oh, to know the power
of your risen life,
and to know you in
your sufferings.
To become like you
in your death, my Lord,
so with you to live
and never die.

Readings:

Hebrews 11: 1 – 3, 8 - 15

Luke 12: 32 - 40

Sermon: -

A few weeks ago I heard of a man on a golf course, who carefully placed the ball on the tee, went through his pre-shot setup up. And then swung the club, and hit the ball. Anyone who plays golf, will know that it can be exhilarating and frustrating in equal measure. Well this day he hit the "Sweet Spot" of the ball, and it was probably his best shot.

The only problem was that the four-ball game going on ahead, hadn't cleared off the hole properly, and this man's shot hit one of the golfers in the group ahead. – This is a bit of big no no in golfing terms. The man preparing his apology speech, carried on. To his amazement, as he walked down the fairway, he saw a golfing buggy hairing towards him. The Golfer stormed out of the buggy, and placed the ball in the man's hand, with fire in his eyes. Then - the golfer seemed to loose the fire in his eye – OH its you he said to the man – your that preacher from the church – oh my wife and I did love your sermon last week!

The man said – I'm sorry for hitting you with my tee shot, and the golfer said – oh don't worry, hope you have a good round. And off her went! Last week in the parable of the rich fool we were told to not store up our treasures on earth. That we are not measured by what we have in our barns, cupboards or driveways. But we are measured by the people we have reached out and touched, and by those who have touched our lives.

Then this week our instalment from Luke tells us to not be afraid, to be prepared and ready for coming of Christ. Our golfer was not really prepared for hitting such a good shot, and he certainly wasn't prepared to be recognised by the golfer in front of him, and recognised as one of Christ's followers. So as we journey this morning through the passage in Luke – When the Lord comes again, we he find you ready and prepared to greet him. Will the stranger walking in off the street find a warmth of welcome amongst us?

So in Luke this morning Christ says – "You must be ready"! Last week in the Parable of the fool we learnt that being prepared for life with God meant not looking after only ourselves, but looking after each other – being a community that shares and grows together, not just building stores of treasure on earth that are useless to us when we die.

We were also tasked with sharing our treasures – our money, our gifts, our talents with those that would benefit from them now, not just when we are gone. So being prepared it seems is about looking and evaluating who we are, what we have stored up, and what we can release to others who might not be able to get those things for themselves.

It is also about be prepared in our hearts for the coming of the Lord. This is to say that we must learn and develop the treasure of Grace and peace in our hearts and minds, that when Christ come's he will know we are his servants, members of the church universal.

Jesus says that "For where your treasure is, there your heart will also be". This suggests that when we make our treasure in life, this is where our hearts truly lie.

So we are called, surely, to place our Treasure in God, in Christ, that we might enable and allow our hearts to be transformed, our minds renewed, in and through Christ. This mind-set shift, seems to imply a new reality and a new way of being. We seem to be obsessed with the accumulation of earthly treasure, the latest gadgets, and by money and wealth. The allure of money is that it creates the illusion of independence. It promises us that we can transcend the everyday vulnerabilities we contend with. But we are reminded that this is folly or foolish, we should instead be building up the treasure of faith and trust in God.

The world tells us, that we are defined by our consumption of "things" in the world – but Christ tells us we should be defined not by the treasures of our worldly consumption but by the treasures of our heart. By treasures of the heart I believe he calls us to be motivated by – Love, Peace, Hope and genorsity. Giving Generously, rather than storing up our barns of treasure, developing and growing community – rather than trying to journey with God alone, sharing life, encounter of God and Testimony, building one another up in faith and Trust, rather than breaking each other down in community and in the world at large.

[Pause]

The Passage also implores us to "not be afraid". But what are we so afraid of?

What are you afraid of – DO NOT BE AFRAID, says Jesus. Jesus says so clearly here, that there is no need to be afraid – I have your back, I will provide you with all you need, all the back up you need, to finish the race, to compete in the sprint, to complete the journey of life – just trust in me, because our Father in Heaven wants to give you the pleasure of his kingdom. So don't be afraid, build up the treasures of your heart.

In a moment sharing in the act of Holy Communion, Christ died, that all who follow him will life, and life in all its fullness. But that doesn't mean that we will get everything that want in life, just that God, Christ, the Holy Spirit will provide all that we need, with physical and spiritual nourishment for every aspect of life. This is where we centre ourselves and focus on building up the treasures of our hearts, by accepting Christ in, through the sharing of Bread and Wine. This gives us a kind of freedom, because all we need will be provided by God. So we are freed to show love, compassion and hospitality to those who do not yet know that provision, that ultimately they may come to know Christ, to Know God.

God provides all we need. So I urge us as a worshiping community to find ways to:

Do all the good we can, by all the means we can, in all the ways we can, at all the times we can, to all the

people we can, as long as ever we can. So that we can be prepared for the unexpected hour of the coming of the Lord, by filling our hearts with the treasure of heaven – Christ’s peace, hope and love. Amen

Prayers of Intercession

God of love, we pray for the life of your Church throughout the world . . . May every congregation be a community of love and every Christian a witness to your grace. Renew all who worship in this place that we may be a living fellowship in your Spirit and serve our neighbourhood.
Your kingdom come. **Your will be done.**

God of mercy, we pray for the life of the world . . . and for those who exercise power . . . Show us how to live as members of the human family; to reject the ways of war; to bear each other’s burdens and to work together for justice and peace.
Your kingdom come. **Your will be done.**

God of compassion, we pray for those who are ill or anxious at home or in hospital . . . We pray for those whose lives are filled with fear and despair . . . Draw near with your saving love and bring healing and hope.
Your kingdom come. **Your will be done.**

Merciful God, you have prepared for those who love you such good things as pass our understanding; pour into our hearts such love towards you that we, loving you above all things, may obtain your promises, which exceed all that we can desire;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Lord’s Prayer: -

As our Saviour taught his disciples, we pray:

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, The power and the glory, For ever and ever. Amen.

Prayer for the Offering and Gifts of our lives: -

Living God, you are the architect of our lives and the builder of the church of Jesus Christ. When you speak, you bring into being that which fulfills your will. By your Word and Spirit, you teach us to be wise about matters we cannot imagine. Thank you for the privilege of contributing to the life and mission of this congregation. Use our tithes and gifts to inspire deeper faith, hope, and love among people in our community. We pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.

Blessing

The blessing of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, remain with *you* always. **Amen.**