

**Dorset South and West Circuit**

**Written Service – Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2021 - “Know me, as I Know you ” by Revd John Yarrien**

**Call to worship: -**

God is our Rock and our Salvation - **God is our Maker and Redeemer**

God is our Provider and Helper - **God is our Shepherd and Saviour**

Let us worship God in prayer and praise - **Let us worship God as the body of Christ. Amen.**

**Prayers: -**

Around the well of your grace, O God, are those who thirst for friendship and love;

**Help us to offer them the living water of community and connectedness;**

Around the well of your life, O God, are those who thirst for joy and safety;

**Help us to offer them the living water of playfulness and protection;**

Around the well of your presence, O God, are those who thirst for meaning and connection;

**Help us to offer them the living water of service and worship;**

May the life we have found in you be the gift we share with all who hunger and thirst, with all who are outcast and rejected, with all who have too little or too much, with all who are wounded or ashamed and, through us, may this corner of the world overflow with you living water.

***{We pause to bring the confessions of our hearts and minds to God}***

We are no different. We all have made mistakes, we all have fallen into the ways of the world, we all have hit our face on the ground. God lifts us up. God brushes the dust off of our knees, holds our face, and tells us that we will be all right. We are forgiven. We are loved. We are set back on the right path. Go and live into the Good News. Amen

**Song: - STF 277- My song is Love unknown (singing verse 1, 2, 3, 7)**

1 My song is love unknown,  
my Saviour's love to me,  
love to the loveless shown,  
that they might lovely be.  
O who am I,  
that for my sake  
my Lord should take  
frail flesh and die?

2 He came from his blest throne,  
salvation to bestow;  
but they made strange, and none  
the longed-for Christ would know.  
But O my Friend,  
my Friend indeed,  
who at my need  
his life did spend!

3 Sometimes they strew his way,  
and his sweet praises sing;  
resounding all the day  
hosannas to their King.  
Then 'Crucify!'  
is all their breath,  
and for his death  
they thirst and cry.

7 Here might I stay and sing,  
no story so divine:  
never was love, dear King,  
never was grief like thine!  
This is my Friend,  
in whose sweet praise  
I all my days  
could gladly spend.

Samuel Crossman (c. 1624–1683)

## Reading: John 4: 5 - 42

<sup>7</sup> A **Samaritan woman** came to draw **water**, and **Jesus** said to her, “Give me a drink.” <sup>8</sup> (His **disciples** had gone to the city to buy food.) <sup>9</sup> The **Samaritan woman** said to him, “How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a **woman** of Samaria?” (Jews do not share things in common with **Samaritans**.)<sup>[a]</sup> <sup>10</sup> **Jesus** answered her, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him, and he would have given you living **water**.” <sup>11</sup> The **woman** said to him, “Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living **water**? <sup>12</sup> Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well, and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?” <sup>13</sup> **Jesus** said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this **water** will be thirsty again, <sup>14</sup> but those who drink of the **water** that I will give them will never be thirsty. The **water** that I will give will become in them a spring of **water** gushing up to eternal life.” <sup>15</sup> The **woman** said to him, “Sir, give me this **water**, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw **water**.” <sup>16</sup> **Jesus** said to her, “Go, call your husband, and come back.” <sup>17</sup> The **woman** answered him, “I have no husband.” **Jesus** said to her, “You are right in saying, ‘I have no husband’; <sup>18</sup> for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!” <sup>19</sup> The **woman** said to him, “Sir, I see that you are a prophet. <sup>20</sup> Our ancestors **worshiped** on this mountain, but you<sup>[b]</sup> say that the place where people must **worship** is in Jerusalem.” <sup>21</sup> **Jesus** said to her, “**Woman**, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. <sup>27</sup> Just then his **disciples** came. They were astonished that he was speaking with a **woman**, but no one said, “What do you want?” or, “Why are you speaking with her?” <sup>28</sup> Then the **woman** left her **water** jar and went back to the city. She said to the people, <sup>29</sup> “Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah,<sup>[d]</sup> can he?” <sup>30</sup> They left the city and were on their way to him. <sup>31</sup> Meanwhile the **disciples** were urging him, “Rabbi, eat something.” <sup>32</sup> But he said to them, “I have food to eat that you do not know about.” <sup>33</sup> So the **disciples** said to one another, “Surely no one has brought him something to eat?” <sup>39</sup> Many **Samaritans** from that city believed in him because of the **woman**’s testimony, “He told me everything I have ever done.” <sup>40</sup> So when the **Samaritans** came to him, they asked him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. <sup>41</sup> And many more believed because of his word. <sup>42</sup> They said to the **woman**, “It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Saviour of the world.”

## Message for Today:

Christ Says – Know me, as I know you. So in our reading from John’s Gospel – Jesus is on his way to Galilee and he decides to take a shorter route through a town called Sychar. He was tired and thirsty, so he goes to Jacobs Well, just outside the city. It is here at the site of his ancestors that Jesus meets a Samaritan woman and asks her for a drink.

What’s so important about a drink at a well you might ask? Women didn’t normally draw water from the well – and certainly not at noon – maybe that timing was a choice – to avoid being the talk of the town – because her reputation was questionable at best. The Samaritan’s were not a country particularly liked by the Jewish community. So Jesus talking to her was to break all the rules of religious and social norms at the time. What is even more surprising is that Jesus initiates the conversation – asking her for a drink of water from the well.

HE CROSSES ALL THESE BOUNDARIES – WHY? Well to share the Gospel with her.

There is something very significant about this encounter – that Jesus knew everything there was to know about this woman, and at the end of the passage, it is clear that the Women recognises that in fact Jesus was

the Messiah everyone is talking about, because how could you know everything he does, if he is not. This speaks to us of a need for our own intimate relationship with Jesus – knowing that Jesus knows everything about us, all our thoughts, and failures, joys and loves, and passions, and indeed all our desires and needs.

Jesus offers the living water that only he can give to this outcast Samaritan woman. The living water is still given for us, and we still face the choice: to receive it with faith, thanksgiving and worship, trusting in our Messiah and the life he offers, or to complain, grumble and allow our fear, self-interest and hard-heartedness to keep us from enjoying this life. The woman arrived at the well with an empty jar of water, but she left the well full of water, once she has an encounter with Jesus.

And in every community, there are those whose lives are dry and desolate, whether from their own destructive choices, or from the effects of what others have done. In all of these cases, what people long for is a community that will embrace and include them, bringing them into a safe place of love and belonging. She realised that the living waters were bubbling up in inside her, that this was the day that marked the point where she would never thirst again. This 'living water' which we have access to as followers of Christ can easily and freely be given to the 'Samaritan outcasts' in our midst and can make all the difference for them. We cannot afford to keep our life to ourselves, nor can we allow ourselves to become grumblers and complainers when the world doesn't fit our ideas.

The first thing that she does is to run to her town – to tell them of her life changing encounter with Jesus. When we start a relationship with Jesus for the first time, truly it can rock the foundations of all we know about life, and where we are in the world, and it can take time to fully understand the significance of that. I think there is a really important point to think about here at the well – that when we emphasise the importance of our knowing of God – we must always remember that we can only know God, because God first knows us – we can only love God because God first loves us. We are forever on God's mind, and there is no moment when his care falters. God so values our friendship he was willing to sacrifice his son for us – which makes our friendship with him priceless.

**Amen.**

#### **A prayer for the offering of our lives: -**

God of hope, you have called us to walk a journey of faith. Sometimes we follow closely. Occasionally, we wander off the path to explore something new that has caught our eye; and often we forget the journey all together. Then there are times when, in fear, we want to stop moving at all, and we cower in our uncertainty. May the offering we receive this morning remind us of why we are on the journey. May it be a reaffirmation of our trust in the one who leads and encourages us. May it be used to shine light in the dark places, so that others will follow on the journey as well. In Christ's holy name, we pray. Amen.

#### **Prayers of Intercession: -**

Lord Jesus Christ, we are reminded today, of the time you spent in the wilderness facing choices, wrestling with temptation, experiencing a period of testing, that would shape the course of your ministry. A time which reminds us of your humanity, which tells us you were one with us, tempted just as we are. In the wilderness of life today, **Be Present, O Lord.**

Lord Jesus Christ, we thank you that you came through that time the stronger, more sure of the path you must take and more confident of your ability to take it. So now we pray for those experiencing similar times of testing. In the wilderness of life today, **Be Present, O Lord.**

We pray for those facing difficult and demanding choices, choices which entail pain and self-sacrifice, which mean letting go of cherished dreams, which involve facing awkward facts about themselves and others. In the wilderness of life today, **Be Present, O Lord.**

We pray for those wrestling with temptation, torn between conflicting desires, unsure of where they stand, uncertain about their ability to stand firm. In the wilderness of life today, **Be Present, O Lord.**

We pray for those experiencing a period of testing in their lives, problems they fear they cannot cope with, challenges they feel unable to rise to, questions they would rather not face. In the wilderness of life today, **Be Present, O Lord.**

For in your name we pray. Amen

#### **Hymn: - STF 51 – Great is thy Faithfulness**

1 Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father, there is no shadow of turning with thee; thou changest not, thy compassions, they fail not; as thou hast been thou for ever wilt be:	2 Summer and winter, and springtime and harvest, sun, moon and stars in their courses above, join with all nature in manifold witness to thy great faithfulness, mercy and love:
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*Great is thy faithfulness! Great is  
thy faithfulness!  
Morning by morning new mercies I see;  
all I have needed thy hand hath provided.  
Great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me.*

3 Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,  
thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide;  
strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,  
blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!

Thomas O. Chisholm (1866–1960)

#### **Blessing: -**

We are God's people, loved and cherished - **We Go Out in Joy**

We are God's people, called and challenged - **We Go Out in Joy**

We are God's people, refreshed and forgiven - **We Go Out in Joy**

The Blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, rest, remain and abide with you all, with those you love, and those you are called to love. Now, in the name of Christ. **Amen.**