**Morning Praise Sunday 7th November 2021**

**Opening prayer**

Blessed are you, God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, you have blessed us with every spiritual blessing; enable us by your power to be true to our calling and live holy and blameless lives before you all our days, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. **Amen**

**Confession** Let us admit to God the sin which always confronts us.

**Lord God, we have sinned against you; we have done evil in your sight. We are sorry and**

**repent.** **Have mercy on us according to your love. Wash away our wrongdoing and cleanse us**

**from our sin.** **Renew a right spirit within us** **and restore us to the joy of your salvation,** **through**

**Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen** cf Psalm 51

**Absolution** May the Father of all mercies cleanse us from our sins, and restore us in his image

to the praise and glory of his name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.  **Amen.**

### Bible Readings Psalm 62:5-12 Mark 1:14-20

**Reflection from Ruth**

We have no idea how many generations the Zebedee family had been fishing on the sea of Galilee, but it was quite likely a lot more than four. In that country and culture, as in many countries and cultures to this day, a small family business can be handed on not only through generations but through centuries. It’s safe and secure; people know what they’re doing. If times are hard, the usual answer is simply to work a bit harder. But then along came the young prophet from Nazareth, and told James and John, and their neighbours Peter and Andrew, to drop it all and follow him. And they did.  
Only when you think a bit about the sort of life Peter, Andrew, James and John had had, and the totally unknown future Jesus was inviting them into, do you understand just how earth-shattering this little story was and is. Leave everything you’ve known, all your security, your family (and family solidarity was hugely important in that culture), and follow Jesus. Some people, maybe some people reading this, face that call today.  
The way Mark tells the story sends echoes ringing back through the scriptures, the larger narrative of God’s people. ‘Leave your country and your father’s house’, said God to Abraham, ‘and go the land I will show you.’ Abraham, like Peter and the others, did what he was told, and went where he was sent. Mark is hinting to his readers that the old family business of the people of God is being left behind. God wants a new poetry to be written, and is calling a new people to write it.  
If you were to walk down the street of any town or village with any Christian background and were to call out ‘Repent and believe the gospel’, people would think they knew what you meant: ‘Give up your sins and become a Christian.’ Of course, Jesus wanted people to stop sinning, but ‘repentance’ for him meant two rather different things as well. First, it meant turning away from the social and political agendas which were driving Israel into a crazy, ruinous war.  
Second, it meant calling Israel to turn back to a true loyalty to YHWH, their God. And, as anyone with a smattering of knowledge of the Bible would recognize, this was what had to happen before God would redeem Israel at last. The call to repent is part of the announcement that this is the time for the great moment of freedom, of God’s rescue.

**Affirmation of faith**

Do you believe and trust in God the Father, source of all being and life, the one for whom we exist?

**We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Son, who took our human nature, died for us and rose again?

**We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit, who gives life to the people of God and makes Christ

known in the world? **We believe and trust in him. This is the faith of the Church.**

**This is our faith. We believe and trust in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

**Prayers of intercession led by Philip**

Father we bring to you now the things that have troubled us in the past week.

The things that worried us, the things that have annoyed us. The things we can’t quite put our finger on.

We know some of these things we are right to be concerned about. Maybe worries to do with global environmental issues with the COP conference held in Glasgow.

Maybe they are things that irritated us. The dog poo on the path not cleared up; the lack of courtesy showed when it would easily have been given & frankly expected.

Maybe we have fears for our health, or for the health of loved ones.

Perhaps a fear of isolation, of loneliness as we head towards the Christmas period, when everyone else seems to be having such a good time.

Maybe we are worried about an exam, or about our work, or our business.

We still worry about Covid. Is it improving, is it getting worse?

Then there are stories about shortages of food on the shelves, of fuel bills rocketing.

Father we bring all these and any other fears and worries to you. We know that so many of them are out of our direct control. So we ask you to take them all Father; we ask you to lighten our burden. To help us to breath, to be ourselves.

We ask that you help us to focus instead on all the things that really matter to us. Our beliefs, our principles, our families, our friends, our health & that of those we love.

We bring this church before you Lord. We ask for your support as we find our way through the period of vacancy. Help us to be positive and to use this opportunity to reflect on the role of this church in our community.

We pray for any we know who are sick or in need of help.

We pray for our Queen as she has been forced to rest from some of her duties. We thank you for her life-long service and the example of her faith.

**Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen**

**The Lord’s Prayer** As our Saviour taught us, so 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 today 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***

**Closing prayer**

God give you grace to become the people He has called you to be,

that you may live and work to his praise and glory,

and the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit

be with us and remain with us always. **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. **In the name of Christ. Amen**