

Bulletin for Sunday 6th June 2021

Good Morning, friends.

Let's pause as we prepare to worship..... and then praise God as we sing:

Hymn: For the beauty of the earth (R&S 41)

Prayer: Loving God, we praise and thank you
for the beauty of the world that we see around us,
and for the love that we experience in our lives.
You have made us members of your family,
welcoming us all, openly and equally:
so, as siblings, neighbours and friends, we worship you!
Living God, as you teach us to build community
we ask your blessing on everything we do,
and everything we give in your service,
today and every day.
We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen

followed by The Lord's Prayer

Readings: Mark chapter 3 verses 20 to 35

Reflection: Jesus was healing many people who had been suffering and in pain for a long time, with no hope of a solution. This was why the crowds followed him in such numbers that he couldn't talk to them without getting into a boat, or have a meal with his disciples without being interrupted. Many in these crowds were very needy. Not polite, restrained people who listened for a while and went quietly home again, but desperate folk who fully recognised their need of Jesus. They had illnesses, physical or mental, which set them apart from their communities, and made them socially unacceptable.

Religious leaders came all the way from Jerusalem to see what was happening - and concluded that it was a bad thing. Jesus' family heard rumours about it too. They all decided that he must be 'out of his mind', and should be stopped... made to be sensible... restrained... brought into line. What they saw was a chaotic situation, with socially undesirable people and unconventional behaviour. But what Jesus saw was needy people desperate to be healed and accepted back into community. He did what he could for them in terms of healing; and then, when crowds, religious investigators and anxious family were all listening, he explained his rationale: Jesus considered all of them

equal, and equally precious members of his community - and indeed of his family. Wow! These weren't people that everyone would have wanted as neighbours, let alone family.

It's difficult not to draw lines between people we find easy to love, and others. May we learn to accept needy, vulnerable people, and outsiders, as Jesus did. Amen

Hymn: Brother, sister, let me serve you (R&S 474)

Prayer: Loving and Compassionate God
whose family includes absolutely everybody,
we pray for the world, for its places and people
struggling with conflict, inequality and need....
we pray for one another:
for the needs and burdens of those we know
and for the wider community around us....
and we pray for ourselves:
for a deeper relationship with you
and for a whole-hearted love for all our neighbours.
Loving God, hear our prayers, spoken and unspoken,
in Jesus' name Amen

Hymn: Put peace into each other's hands (R&S 635)

Blessing: May our church communities be attractive, open, safe and welcoming;
and may the blessing of God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
be with us and with all those we love
now and always. Amen

In all our churches morning worship at 10.30am is now being held indoors.
Please remember masks and social distancing; congregational singing is not allowed,
services are short and well ventilated!
Please let your Church Secretary know you want to attend.

On Zoom, the evening 'Sunday at Six' service, with hymns, is at 6pm. All welcome.
And the best chances to chat are at the 11.30am 'After Church Coffee' Zooms!

Anne Lewitt