

## **Worshipping God Together**

### **Call to worship**

Minister:                                   The Lord has done great things for us,  
**All:**   **and we are filled with joy.**

**JP 78   He's got the whole world in his hands**

### **Opening prayer & The Lord's Prayer**

The Bible says: "Give thanks to the Lord for he is good; His steadfast love endures forever." Let us pray:

As we gather before you, Lord,  
help us to remember  
the things you have restored in our lives.

We bring before you all situations when  
circumstances, fortunes and relationships have been restored,  
and we praise you.

We come before you with differing needs,  
some major, some minor;

Whatever they may be, we have faith that you will listen,  
and restore the fortunes of your servants.

We ask this in the name of Jesus who taught us to pray:

**ALL:** 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 debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory for ever.

Amen.

### **Children's address**

**JP 140   Jesus loves me**

### **Reflecting on God's Word**

Reading:                                   Mark 10:46-52 (NT page 1015-1016)

Reader:                                   P Shiels

### **Sermon**

47 When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout,  
"Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

Our reading this morning reveals a different picture than the one we experience on a daily basis. It is only in all the big cities or towns that you get “beggars” but again not on the same scale as in other countries like India, Brazil or South Africa.

We in Scotland do not treat people with disabilities different. But I am afraid that was not the case in biblical times. People with disabilities were regarded as “unclean” in the eyes of the community, and were therefore excluded to worship in the temple. They could not engage in the traditional occupations of the day which forced them to begging next to the busy roads. However Judaism considered it righteous to help them.

Jesus is on his final journey to Jerusalem and on the way He passed Jericho.

Jericho was a prosperous town with a good climate, and Timaeus’s son no doubt received adequate support there. In New Testament times Jericho stood some distance to the south-east of the ancient one, and near the opening of the valley of Achor. Jericho is five miles west of the Jordan, six miles north of the Dead Sea, and twenty-one miles northeast of Jerusalem. It was considered to be a Judean city. Therefore Jesus had crossed back over the Jordan and was nearing the completion of his journey to Jerusalem. It was a rich and flourishing town, having a considerable trade, and celebrated for the palm trees which adorned the plain around.

In our reading it is clear that there was a blind man by the name of Bartimeus sitting next to the busy road, obviously begging.

Bartimeus would have been illiterate in the law and would have been in a position where he would only have knowledge learned from others reciting. They were thus not respected as religious persons, although they were protected under the law of Moses. But although Bartimeus could not read, when he heard that it was Jesus approaching, he started screaming out. He must have heard from all the people about the miracles Jesus performed previously. Jesus’ followers viewed this blind man’s loud pleas as an intrusion just like they have done previously in the way they had viewed the children. It is clear that Bartimeus was socially powerless.

By “stopping” and standing still, Jesus allows the blind man to come to Him. He stood up immediately, threw his cloak aside and came to Jesus. The “cloak” was an outer garment, used as a coat in cold weather and as bedding at night, and might have been spread before him for use in his

daytime begging if he had no pouch. His cloak would have been very important to him, most probably his most valuable possession. And to throw it aside meant business – serious business namely that he was now completely trusting Jesus that he will not need it again in future.

So when Jesus asked him what he wanted, he said “I want to see”. And Jesus healed him by saying: “Go,”, “your faith has healed you.”

But the story does not stop here. No Bartimeus followed Jesus along the road. So he did not only had faith, he also had commitment!

What is the meaning for us living in a total different context?

Well we are also sitting beside the proverbial road between Bethlehem and Jerusalem – waiting for the Lord of the Dance to touch our lives once again with His mercy and grace through celebrating Holy communion. But this time unlike Bartimeus Jesus will now be with us through His Holy Spirit. He will appear as the resurrected Jesus who already paid the price for saving us from sin, death and hell. He is the host on this day – reassuring us in our faith that He will be with us till the end of time.

I guess if there is one thing we do have in common with Bartimeus then it is having an “old coat” or something similar that we cling to, which we trust - either in the form of technology like a computer, Smartphone or an iPod or an Ipad or a “tablet”.

Yes we all have coats that we trust that is very dear to our hearts, But when Jesus calls, we need to trust Him completely even if it means to get rid of our “precious coats”. And we have an ideal opportunity this morning. Jesus is also calling out to you and me: “Come and celebrate - I have made you all well through faith. Communion is an opportunity for us all to renew our faith, trust and hope in God while we are reminded of His mercy.

And unlike the blind Bartimeus, we do not have to beg for it. God had mercy on our souls because of His unbounding love, grace and forgiveness. All that He expects from you and me is to trust Him unconditionally, to ask Him for challenge, a mountain to climb. All He wants is gratitude and commitment.

We are healed from the destruction of sin, death and hell – that is why Communion is a feast, a feast of redemption through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. But we need to follow him, every moment of every day.

We need to commit ourselves to Him in everything we do say and think, even when the going gets tough. We need to listen to His voice and obey his commands.

We need to do what people often do in the most adverse situations: jump in faith into the arms of God, knowing that He will always catch us.

The question we need to answer is: Are we going to remain sitting between Bethlehem and Jerusalem or are we heading to Bethlehem, along with all our brothers and sisters in faith to celebrate once again the birth of our Lord and redeemer? Are we going to be healed and get on with our lives as if nothing has happened this morning or are we going to celebrate with joy, thanksgiving and gratitude that Jesus made us well?

Let us sing the words of the well known hymn Amazing grace as we travel to Bethlehem: Amazing grace – how sweet the sound – that saved a wretch like me! I once was lost but now am found, was blind, but now I see

Amen

**MSP 582**

**Rock of ages**

### **Communion**

This is the table,  
not of the Church, but of the Lord.

It is to be made ready  
for those who love him

and who want to love him more

So, come, you who have much faith

and you who have little, you who have been here often

and you who have not been for a long time, you who have tried to follow  
and you who have failed.

Come, not because it is I who invite you:

it is our Lord.

It is his will that those who want him should meet him here.

**The story of the sacrament of communion**

Now let us hear the story  
of how this sacrament began.

On the night on which Jesus was betrayed  
he sat at supper with his disciples.  
While they were eating, he took a piece of bread,  
said a blessing,  
broke it and gave it to them with the words,  
'This is my body. It is broken for you.  
Do this to remember me'

Later, he took a cup of wine, saying,  
'This cup is God's new covenant,  
sealed with my blood.  
Drink from it, all of you, to remember me"

So now, following Jesus' example and command,  
we take this bread and this wine,  
the ordinary things of the world  
which Christ will make special.  
And as he said a prayer before sharing,  
let us do so too.

**Communion prayer**

Gratitude, praise,  
hearts lifted high,  
voices full and joyful ...  
these you deserve.

For when we were nothing,  
you made us something.  
When we had no name  
and no faith and no future,  
you called us your children.  
When we lost our way or turned away,  
you did not abandon us.  
When we came back to you,

your arms opened wide in welcome.

And look,  
you prepare a table for us  
offering not just bread, not just wine,  
but your very self  
so that we may be filled, forgiven,  
healed, blessed and made new again.  
You are worth all our pain and all our praise.  
So now, in gratitude,  
we join our voices  
to those of the Church on earth and in heaven as printed in the order  
of service:

**All:**            ***Holy, holy, holy lord,  
God of power and might.  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes  
in the name of the lord.  
hosanna in the highest.***

**Prayer of consecration**

For us you were born,  
for us you healed,  
preached, taught  
and showed the way to heaven;  
for us you were crucified,  
and for us, after death,  
you rose again.

Lord Jesus Christ,  
present with us now,  
for all that you have done  
and all that you have promised,  
what have we to offer?

Our hands are empty  
our hearts are sometimes full of wrong things.  
we are not fit to gather up the crumbs  
from under your table.

But with you is mercy  
and the power to change us.

So as we do in this place  
what you did in an upstairs room,  
send down your Holy Spirit  
on us and on these gifts of bread and wine  
that they may become for us your body,  
healing, forgiving and making us whole;  
and that we may become,  
for you,  
your body,  
loving and caring in the world  
until your kingdom comes.  
Amen

### **Taking and breaking the bread**

*(taking and breaking the bread)*

Among friends, gathered round a table,  
Jesus took bread, broke it and said,  
“This is my body  
it is broken for you.”

*(Taking the cup of wine)*

And later he took the cup of wine and said,  
“This is the new relationship with God,  
made possible because of my death.  
‘Take this – all of you – to remember me.’”

### **Sharing the Peace**

LAMB OF GOD  
YOU TAKE AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD,  
HAVE MERCY UPON US.

LAMB OF GOD,  
YOU TAKE AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD,  
GRANT US YOUR PEACE.

Let us share it with each other saying: *“The Peace of our Lord will be with you!”*

**Responding to God’s love**

Our offerings are given for the ministry and mission of the church while we sing **MSP 456 “Make me a channel of your peace”**.

Prayer of thanksgiving: Dora Bennet

**JP 91**

**Lord of the dance**

**Benediction Receive the blessing of God and go in peace:**

Look forward in hope

To the coming of the Saviour;

Prepare the way for Christ your Lord;

Welcome him with love and faith

That he may be born anew in you.

And the blessing of God almighty,

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

Be with you - with all whom you love

and all whom you seek to love this day and for evermore”

**MP 612 & 613**

**Spirit of the living God**