

18 October 2020, 11am
Christ Church New Southgate
& *Friern Barnet*

Please join with us at 11am to read this service together at church, in printed form, whatapp or via the youtube link on our website www.christchurchnsfb.org

Welcome to Christ Church New Southgate and Friern Barnet on the 18th October 2020. We will be sharing communion together today, so please find something to eat and something to drink to take part, whatever you have to hand.

Psalm 42

¹ As the deer pants for streams of water,
so my soul pants for you, my God.

² My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.

When can I go and meet with God?

³ My tears have been my food
day and night,

**while people say to me all day long,
“Where is your God?”**

⁴ These things I remember
as I pour out my soul:

**how I used to go to the house of God
under the protection of the Mighty
One^[a]**

**with shouts of joy and praise
among the festive throng.**

⁵ Why, my soul, are you downcast?
Why so disturbed within me?

**Put your hope in God,
for I will yet praise him,
my Saviour and my God.**

⁷ Deep calls to deep
in the roar of your waterfalls;
**all your waves and breakers
have swept over me.**

⁸ By day the Lord directs his love,
at night his song is with me—

a prayer to the God of my life.

**ALL: Let us put our hope in God,
for we will yet praise him,
our Saviour and our God.**

Reading: Luke 6.6-11

Read by Felicity Bega

⁶ On another Sabbath Jesus went into a synagogue and taught. A man was there whose right hand was paralyzed. ⁷ Some teachers of the Law and some Pharisees wanted a reason to accuse Jesus of doing wrong, so they watched him closely to see if he would heal on the Sabbath.

⁸ But Jesus knew their thoughts and said to the man, “Stand up and come here to the front.” The man got up and stood there. ⁹ Then Jesus said to them, “I ask you: What does our Law allow us to do on the Sabbath? To help or to harm? To save someone's life or destroy it?” ¹⁰ He looked around at them all; then he said^[a] to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” He did so, and his hand became well again.

¹¹ They were filled with rage and began to discuss among themselves what they could do to Jesus.

All age activity – Remembering the 10 commandments

In our reading from Luke today, we see Jesus challenging the religious people about the sabbath. The sabbath is a day of rest, Christians have sabbath on Sundays. The idea of having a sabbath is from the 10 commandments given to the people of God through Moses. Who can remember what the 10 commandments are?

Let's use our hands:

1 Put God first - 1 finger point up

2 No idols – *Put one finger up, and make 1 finger bow down*

3 Watch your words – *Put 3 fingers to your lips*

4 Rest on Sunday – *Put 4 fingers together to make a stop sign*

5 Honour your mum and dad – *make a 5 finger salute*

6 Do not murder – *Hold one hand with 5 fingers up, shoot 5 with a 'gun' from other hand*

7 No adultery – *Put two fingers up, say two people in a marriage not 5 (hold up other hand)*

8 No stealing – *Use 4 fingers from each hand to make a jail across your face*

9 No lies – *Put up 5 fingers on one hand and 4 on the other 'Don't say 5 when it's 4'*

10 Don't be jealous – *Use all fingers to pretend to pick things up*

Can you remember them all? What was 1, 6, 4.

Let's pray:

Dear God – Help us to remember to rest on Sundays, just as you did when you made the world. Let us enjoy resting with you at church and at home. Amen.

We draw near to God in confession:

Lord we are sorry for the times
when work has consumed us,
when work and busyness
have been more attractive
than spending time in your presence.

Remind us again
of how to rest with you God,
To wait on your Spirit

And to delight in stopping
and being attentive
to your kingdom in this world.
Refresh and revive all of us
working hard to provide for our needs.
Grant us calm, rest and peace
to face the week ahead. Amen

Sermon: Jesus breaks our habits with healing

Did you know now in the UK we are buying more slippers than handbags and more tracksuits than suits? Did you know that loungewear – that is pyjamas and tracksuit sales - have risen by 322 % in the UK in the last seven months. Our habits changed in lockdown, didn't they? While we were all stuck at home in lockdown, we wore the most comfortable clothing we had. And now it seems even though we are not locked down, we have stuck with loungewear.

Our habits around church have changed too, before lockdown, we would all come to church on a Sunday at around 11am. Now our habits have changed, no longer is church only available on Sunday mornings, now 1/4 of people watch the online service on Saturday, 1/2 on Sunday and the final 1/4 on Monday or Tuesday. Sundays used to be different in the UK. In 1985 there was a big campaign to stop shops opening on a Sunday, Sundays were a day of rest where no-one should be required to work. Back in the 1950s, church was pretty much the only thing that you could do on a Sunday. It was frowned upon to go out for lunch, to have a party, and not possible to shop.

The reason Sunday was special was because it was understood to be the sabbath. The concept of Sabbath is found in our bible story today in Luke but also right across scripture. In Exodus 20 as Moses is given the 10 commandments the people of god are asked to rest as God did on the 7th of creation. The

fourth commandment is to observe the sabbath rest for God rested. In Deuteronomy 5, the people of God are called to observe the sabbath and remember that God had saved them from Egypt. The practice of keeping a sabbath is rooted in principles of Judaism that form our old testament. And sabbath of course is an English was of saying shabbas or shabbat – which is Hebrew for sabbath.

I had not really thought much about sabbath until at New Year, we had the privilege of visiting Jerusalem. In our hotel we noticed two unusual things – first there were two lifts. One ordinary lift – press your floor button and off you went. But the second was a lift that stopped at every floor and had no floor buttons. This was a shabbat lift, so a Jewish person could just get in the lift and not have to work by pushing a button and still use a lift on the sabbath. The second unusual thing at the hotel was that some rooms had two locking doors, one you could use with an electronic key card and one with a physical key. Either door would secure the room. The door with real key was for shabbat use as you cannot use electricity on the sabbath in Jewish practice. Work is forbidden, and all who follow God must rest.

From the fourth commandment – remember and observe the sabbath - had come a flurry of rules – 39 prohibited acts of work on the sabbath. Now these 39 ancient rules have been interpreted for the modern context. These interpretations can seem complex or even ridiculous to the non-Jewish person. But at the heart of keeping the sabbath is a recognition that God is creator and has saved his people. The practice of shabbat meal today recognises these themes in lighting candles – God created light and led his people by a pillar of fire, through prayer – keeping the sabbath deeply connects a person to God through prayer, and through challah – bread, God is provider and sustainer.

I watched a great video on YouTube about modern shabbat in Jewish practice on a channel called ‘Myjewishmommylife’. A young mother reflected on the habit of sabbath, that since Moses gave the 10 commandments, the people of God had kept the habit of the 7th day as a day of rest. She talked about a continuous sense of sabbath, that every single week since Moses, the people of God have remembered God’s creation power and his command to rest. This week in week out, sabbath habit is a perpetual sign of a relationship between God and his people. A covenant relationship where God creates and loves and saves, and his people love, worship and obey.

Here in Luke’s gospel - Jesus disrupts the habit of sabbath. On ‘another’ sabbath Luke writes. Not only on one sabbath, but on another sabbath again. Jesus interrupts the sabbath to pick corn, he interrupts the sabbath to heal. Jesus interrupts the sabbath. Jesus calls into question the habit of the sabbath, not its rationale of remembering God as creator and saviour but questions the habits of the people of God.

What does Jesus break the sabbath with? Healing a man with a paralysed hand. Jesus breaks sabbath with healing. In Jewish law there is always a care for those in a medical emergency. If the man had a heart attack and needed urgent healing – then that would be fine on the sabbath. But this man only had a paralysed hand. This is not dismissing his disability, but it was not a life-threatening condition. Therefore, it was work, and work was not for the sabbath.

Jesus breaks the sabbath with healing. He interrupts the habits of sabbath, he disturbs the religious, he challenges the application of the law.

What habits do we have that Jesus might interrupt? Our church habits have been

challenged, haven't they? No longer can we sing together, no longer can we hug each other, no longer can we share a brew together after church. For some of us, this is too much to handle. We would really rather have church as it always was, as we think it should be. Covid 19 and ensuring our worship is covid compliant is not sent from the Lord. But it is disrupting our habits, and forcing us to consider: did we dress a certain way for church because of what others might think? Did we sing certain songs to feel better? Did we really only like sitting in one particular spot in church because we could hide?

As Jesus draws the man with the paralysed hand out, he draws attention to the need in the community for healing. Not spectacular healing, not raising someone from the dead, but healing that restores the ordinary and enables someone to live a normal life. It helps him take part in living, working, resting in a normal way. It recognises the ordinary as valuable to God and restores a body to glorify God.

When we have forgotten the reason behind our habit, it's time to stop.

When we have forgotten the reason behind a rule, it's time to stop.

When we have forgotten that God has disrupted the world by sending Jesus to us, it's time to rethink.

The healing that Christ offers the man is one that restores him, sees him as a whole person and offers him total salvation. The healing that Christ gives reminds Jesus' accusers of God's power to create and renew. It shows Christ's authority. It shows his love rules over all. It shows that his restoration, his healing that we find in his presence is more precious than any Christian or Jewish habit. For God breaks our habits with healing.

As we rethink what kind of clothes we now, as we reach for loungewear over suits. What

habits might God be interrupting now? As a church, what habits is Christ asking us to reflect on? As individuals, where is God asking us to reconsider our habits? As individuals, where do we need to be willing to stretch out and receive Gods healing? Jesus Christ is the Lord of all the earth, and that means he is more important than any religious practice we might hold dear. May we know Christ healing as we think again about our habits. May we know Christ's healing as we rethink what a sabbath might mean now. May we know Christs healing and the freedom which he gives us as creator and saviour of the world. May our new habit be seeking God's healing in our lives and in our community.

At communion we remember God's love, just as the commandment to remember God as creator and saviour on the sabbath is found in scripture. As we remember at this meal, we remember the past – all that God's healing love has done for us. As we remember, we recognise his healing power present now among us. As we remember, we proclaim God's healing for the future and hold onto him in hope.

Communion: Remembering Christ

We gather around this meal
to celebrate life:

the life of God in the world,
Jesus living in us.

We come to remember the body
that was broken:

the *hands* that touched the untouchable,
healed the hurting and did no violence;

the *feet* that got dusty along city streets
and at the lake's shore;

the arms that welcomed the stranger

and loved the outcast;

the *legs* that entered homes and synagogues
and danced at celebrations;

the *eyes* that blazed against injustice,
knew how to cry
and saw the potential in everyone;

the *belly* that shared table
with unexpected people
and shook with laughter;

the *lips* that told stories
and painted pictures
of a new community and a better world.

**ALL: This holy body
that was broken, abused and rejected,
we come to remember,
for we are called to be the body of Christ.**

As you Risen Christ remember our lives, so
we remember you.

**ALL: And not only at this table,
but in our life together
may we share your kingdom
and remember your life in the world.**

We thank you
for the acceptance and kindness.

**ALL: You have transformed our shame
into dignity and loved us into life;**

We thank you
for cherishing the potential in us
**ALL: You are calling us to be partners
in your vision for this world.**

We call on your Spirit
to come alongside us,

**Together may we give ourselves
to the task of remembering you,
of being the body of Christ,**

of living your life in this world. Amen.

Share bread and wine

Now may these hands be the hands
**of Christ in the world,
may they do no violence.**
May these eyes
see those who are overlooked,
may these ears
listen to those who are unheard,
may these voices
**be raised for the voiceless,
lest our songs of praise be empty.**
May these feet
take us where Christ leads,
and may these hearts and minds
be open to your Spirit.

Christ has remembered us,
may we remember Christ. Amen.

Lord's prayer

**ALL: Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.**

Blessing

May God our creator and saviour
heal, restore and bless us.
In the name of the Father,
Son and Holy Spirit.
Amen

Your grace is enough – Chris Tomlin
<https://youtu.be/vpYtYYaTFGQ>

Great is Your faithfulness
oh God You wrestle with the sinner's heart
You lead us by still waters in to mercy
And nothing can keep us apart

*So remember Your people
Remember Your children
Remember Your promise*

*Oh God Your grace is enough
Your grace is enough
Your grace is enough for me*

Great is Your love and justice God
You use the weak to lead the strong
You lead us in the song of
Your salvation
And all Your people sing along

Heaven reaching down to us
Your grace is enough for me God
I see your grace is enough
I'm covered in your love
Your grace is enough for me for me