

*Christ Church New Southgate  
& Friern Barnet  
20 June 2021*

*Communion service*

*Please find something to eat and something to drink  
to take part*

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Welcome

O worship the Lord in the beauty of  
holiness;  
**let the whole earth tremble before him.**

Tell it out among the nations that the Lord  
is King.

**O worship the Lord in the beauty of  
holiness.**

Tell out his salvation from day to day.  
**Let the whole earth tremble before him.**

Declare his glory among the nations  
and his wonders among all peoples.

**O worship the Lord  
in the beauty of holiness;  
let the whole earth tremble before him.**

SONG: The God who laid the earth's  
foundations,  
the God who's Lord of every nation,  
the God who tends each generation  
is here.

The God who left his throne so glorious,  
the God who walked the road before us,  
the God who rose from death victorious  
is here, is here.

*Hallelujah, he is here.  
Hallelujah, our God is here.*

The God who makes his home inside us,  
the God who teaches and inspires us,  
the God who leads and guards and guides  
us  
is here, is here.  
He is here,  
he is here.

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*Reading: Jeremiah 10.2, 6-8,10*

This is what the Lord says:

Do not learn the ways of the nations  
or be terrified by signs in the heavens,  
though the nations are terrified by them.

**6 No one is like you, Lord;  
you are great,  
and your name is mighty in power.**

**7** Who should not fear you,  
King of the nations?  
This is your due.

**Among all the wise leaders of the nations  
and in all their kingdoms,  
there is no one like you.**

**8** They are all senseless and foolish;  
they are taught by worthless wooden  
idols.

**10 But the Lord is the true God;  
he is the living God, the eternal King.**

*Reading 1 Samuel 17. 4-11, 26*

**4** A man named Goliath, from the city of  
Gath, came out from the Philistine camp to  
challenge the Israelites. He was nearly three  
metres tall **5** and wore bronze armour that

weighed about 57 kilogrammes and a bronze helmet. <sup>6</sup> His legs were also protected by bronze armour, and he carried a bronze javelin slung over his shoulder. <sup>7</sup> His spear was as thick as the bar on a weaver's loom, and its iron head weighed about 7 kilogrammes. A soldier walked in front of him carrying his shield. <sup>8</sup> Goliath stood and shouted at the Israelites, "What are you doing there, lined up for battle? I am a Philistine, you slaves of Saul! Choose one of your men to fight me. <sup>9</sup> If he wins and kills me, we will be your slaves; but if I win and kill him, you will be our slaves. <sup>10</sup> Here and now I challenge the Israelite army. I dare you to pick someone to fight me!" <sup>11</sup> When Saul and his men heard this, they were terrified.

<sup>26</sup> David asked the men who were near him, "What will the man get who kills this Philistine and frees Israel from this disgrace? After all, who is this heathen Philistine to defy the army of the living God?"

### *Prayers for Father's Day*

Mother Father God, creator and sustainer, we thank you for nurturing us like a mother. We praise you that your care and protection surround us like a father. On this Father's Day, we remember all the people who have nurtured us, especially the important men in our lives, those who have seen, not just with their eyes, but with their heart. Hear our prayer for fathers around the world.

Mother Father God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We remember men who, because of various circumstances, are unable to become fathers. We remember fathers who have adopted children and fathers who given up their rights as fathers.

Mother Father God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We remember fathers who helplessly watch their children suffer and die from malnutrition because of famine, drought, flood or war. We pray for the fathers where recent disasters have occurred and those taking their children in hope onto the high seas. We remember fathers whose children are sick or disabled and who will try anything to cure or help them.

Mother Father God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Nurturing God, thank you for those who have nurtured us. Open our eyes to the plight of so many fathers and mothers around the world for whom life is difficult. Help us share your love and mercy with them.

Mother Father God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

In the silence of this moment, hear the prayers of our hearts.

God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Merciful God, Mother and Father of us all, honour our prayers, spoken and unspoken, humbly lifted to you in faith. Amen.

### *Sermon*

How tall was Goliath? If you're reading the good news version here at church – he was nearly 3 metres tall. But there is a little note at the bottom of the bible that says – one ancient source says 3 metres while another says 2 metres. So how tall was he?

Well thinking about the reality of this giant, leads us to think about the bible and how it

has come to us in this form. The bible now is a copy of lots of different scrolls. Scrolls created in the 7-10 century AD by Masoretes – they say he was 3 metres tall. Other copies of ancient scrolls of scripture are known as the Septuagint, scrolls from the Qumran cave 4 or from Josephus, they all say nearly 2 metres. So Goliath was somewhere between 6.6ft to 9ft tall.

How tall was Goliath? It's a bit like the story of how big the fish was that you caught on that sunny day. This big, no, no, this big, no no, no, no, no, it was actually bigger than me. In reality how tall Goliath actually was isn't important. What is important is that he was definitely taller than anyone else on that battlefield and it made the Israelites panic.

All they could see was a man bigger than them, taunting and teasing them : who dares to fight me? Not only was he taller, he had the biggest, most impressive armour ever seen. Facing this huge man, with all the show of wealth in expensive and heavy armour, the Israelites and king Saul were terrified.

And they did nothing. And they did nothing. And they did nothing. They stood still, afraid and unable to decide what to do. So they did nothing.

We know this happens in our lives too, doesn't it? When something awful happens, we often shut down, shut up and stop the clock. We keep the bedroom just how she had it. We keep going to work despite being sacked. We push another final demand into the bin. Faced with a giant of a problem, quite often we just do nothing.

Churches specialise in this behaviour. In my research about the church meeting, most people said something like 'oh it's always been like that' or 'we probably should change but I don't know how'.

Churches are good at knowing the problem – less people coming to church but are quite often doing absolutely nothing about it. How tall is Goliath? Well he's bigger than me, so I don't know what to do. So I will stand still and do nothing.

But when David sneaks along the frontline to his brothers on a bread and cheese mission, he hears and sees Goliath taunting the Israelites and he says v26 'who is this heathen Philistine to defy the army of the living God?' The one thing that David knows about God is that he isn't one for standing still.

He knows that God is the creator of the world. He knows that God breathes life into everything in creation. He knows that the Spirit brings life, because it has brought life to him since being anointed in the previous chapter. He knows that God is not far away but present in our world and interested in us. And this living God does not call us to be like him and expect us to do nothing.

There are times when we all benefit from being still in God's presence, all of us need to be still in times of prayer and retreat for our sanity and for an opportunity to listen to God. But when faced with a giant of a problem, we cannot fail to act.

So in fact, it doesn't matter at all how tall Goliath was. But it really did matter that the Israelites did nothing. For God looked at the world, in all our sin, structural, institutional and regular everyday horrid sin, and did not stand still. He sent his son into battle for us, who died for us and rose again. His death and resurrection gives all of new life. Life for living, life for renewal, life for dancing in the Spirit of God.

When we are faced with a goliath, let us instead fix our eyes on the lord. The lord who is bigger, greater and infinitely wise than any other thing or person. While the army were

only looking and trembling at Goliath, David looked to the lord. David knew that the Lord who protected him from lions and bears, would be the same God who would protect him from Goliath.

How tall was Goliath? It doesn't matter. How big are your problems, it doesn't matter. What does matter is that we take all of our problems to the living Lord. And as we take them to him, we must be willing to be open to his new life. We need to be open to his leading to act.

Do you need to call someone today who you've been avoiding? Do you need to get rid of possessions that you have built around yourself to protect you? Do you need to honest face the pain in your heart rather than cover it over with addiction, selfish behaviour, or total retreat from the world?

May I encourage us all, as a church facing deep challenges to see our development plans succeed, and as a church nationwide facing mission in a whole new world, may we not be bamboozled by the size of the giant. May we not stand still and do nothing.

Instead may draw strength from the living Lord who made us, loves us and gives us his Spirit to seek new life wherever he may lead us.

Song: Living bread in mercy broken,  
Jesus' body for our need;  
we give thanks as we receive it  
for this bread is life indeed.

Cup of wine, the blood of Jesus,  
poured out freely for our sin;  
as we drink we know forgiveness  
for this cup has grace within.

Loving saviour, bread of heaven,  
here you meet us with your grace;

daily may we know your presence  
and abide in you always.

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### *Communion*

Jesus shared meals in all kinds of places.  
Today we share in this meal at home and at  
church together.

Come, living Jesus, be our guest  
here in our homes.

Come, living Jesus, be our host  
here at your table. Amen.

### **Sharing the peace**

### **Thanksgiving**

Lift up your hearts!

### **We lift them to God!**

Let's give thanks to the source of life!

### **We bring our thankful praise!**

Life-giving God,  
with gladness we acknowledge  
that in the death  
and resurrection  
of Jesus Christ  
you have interrupted our lives  
with your grace:  
a new beginning  
has been announced  
and the world  
will never be the same.

### ***Forgive us***

***when we continue to live  
in the old ways,  
frozen with fear,  
not daring to believe our eyes,  
denying life.***

Living Lord,  
come to us,  
as you came to your first disciples:  
surprise us with your peace  
and forgiveness

and continue in us  
your work of transformation.

Lord have mercy  
*Christ have mercy*

### **The story of the Lord's Supper**

Let's hear, again, the story of Jesus' supper with his disciples on the night before he died, as it's been recorded by the writer of the Gospel of Matthew:

While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, [*take bread*]  
and after blessing it he broke it, [*break bread*]  
gave it to the disciples, and said, 'Take, eat; this is my body.'

Then he took a cup,  
and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.'

And so we pray...  
Come, Holy Spirit  
pour out your blessing  
on our bread and wine  
and on us, your gathered people.  
We don't need an altar,  
a silver chalice or starched table linen.  
It's your presence  
that makes these ordinary things holy.  
Amen.

Here is bread:  
broken, as the body of Christ was broken  
broken, as the heart of God was broken  
broken, as the seal of the tomb was broken  
broken to make us whole.  
The body of Christ, broken for us.

Here is wine:  
a cup that brings us together, even in our social distancing  
a cup of forgiveness and blessing.  
The blood of Christ, poured out for us.

*Prayer after communion*

Please pray with me...

Thank you for the grace that makes space for us at your table.

Thank you for the closeness we experience through technology, and through sharing this meal together.

May we continue our lives  
having been nourished and strengthened,  
filled with your uncontainable love  
that spills over to bless the world.  
Amen.

*Liturgy adapted from Cara Heafey*

Living Lord,  
you came to one  
who was overwhelmed by grief,  
and said, 'Why are you weeping?'

We pray for all who are sorrowful and  
experiencing the pain of loss ...

Living Lord,  
you came to those who were fearful and  
without hope  
and said, 'Peace be with you'.

We pray for all who face anxiety  
and dejection ...

Living Lord,  
you came to one  
who had denied you  
and said, 'Feed my sheep'.

We pray for all who have  
little confidence in their own ability  
to serve you faithfully ...

We pray for:  
World • Church • People

SONG: Let us kneel at Calvary,  
wonder at this mystery,  
with the words 'Father forgive',

Jesus dies that we might live.  
He was stripped so we might dress  
in his robe of righteousness.  
Bore the burden of our sin,  
as the nails pierced his skin.

*We will kneel in adoration at our King's sacrifice,  
see the scandal and the glory as his death  
brings us life.  
All our hope and our salvation are in his sacrifice,  
at the cross.*

At the hill they call the skull,  
he was crushed; we are made whole.  
Jesus drank our bitter cup,  
pouring out his precious blood.  
God forsaken all alone,  
Jesus made our shame his own.  
Suffered hell on earth to save  
those who drove him to the grave.

*We will kneel...*

He cried out, then breathed no more,  
as the temple curtain tore,  
made the new and living way  
back to God for us that day.  
Why seek Christ among the dead?  
He is living as he said!  
He was raised at God's command,  
in the life of Christ we stand.

*We will stand in celebration for our King is alive,  
see the joy and restoration as we share his new life  
We are free, no condemnation for our King is alive  
yes he lives, Jesus lives. Yes he lives, Jesus lives!*

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