

25 April 2021, 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

Video song: My lighthouse
https://youtu.be/OaW_4MWSE6I

Welcome to Christ Church NSFB on Sunday 25 April 2021. As we gather again in our homes and at church as this new season is upon us let us remember God is present with us now. For those of you watching online, please make use of the service order provided, music videos to watch after and children's activity packs.

Reading: Psalm 118

¹ Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his love endures forever.

⁴ Let those who fear the Lord say:
"His love endures forever."

¹⁴ The Lord is my strength and my song;
he has become my salvation.

²¹ I will give you thanks, for you answered me;
you have become my salvation.

²² The stone the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone;

²³ the Lord has done this,
and it is marvellous in our eyes.

²⁸ You are my God, and I will praise you;
you are my God, and I will exalt you.

²⁹ Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his love endures forever.

²⁹ Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his love endures forever.

Reading: Acts 4.5-12

Close your eyes and listen to the reading, try and imagine what the scene would have looked like.

⁵ The next day the Jewish leaders, the elders, and the teachers of the Law gathered in Jerusalem. ⁶ They met with the High Priest Annas and with Caiaphas, John, Alexander, and the others who belonged to the High Priest's family. ⁷ They made the apostles stand before them and asked them, "How did you do this? What power do you have or whose name did you use?"

⁸ Peter, full of the Holy Spirit, answered them, "Leaders of the people and elders: ⁹ if we are being questioned today about the good deed done to the lame man and how he was healed, ¹⁰ then you should all know, and all the people of Israel should know, that this man stands here before you completely well through the power of the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth—whom you crucified and whom God raised from death. ¹¹ Jesus is the one of whom the scripture says,

'The stone that you the builders despised turned out to be the most important of all.'

¹² Salvation is to be found through him alone; in all the world there is no one else whom God has given who can save us."

All age activity: Can you spot the mistakes this version?

Acts 4.5-12

⁵The next year the *Swedish* leaders, the elders, and the teachers of the Law gathered in *Friern Barnet*. ⁶They met with the High Priest Annas and with Caiaphas, John, Alexander, and the others who belonged to the High Priest's family. ⁷They made the *criminals* stand before them and asked them, "How did you do this? What power do you have or whose name did you use?"

⁸Peter, full of the *hot air*, answered them, "Leaders of the people and elders: ⁹if we are being questioned today about the *bad* deed done to the lame man and how he was healed, ¹⁰then you should all know, and all the people of Israel should know, that this man stands here before you completely *unwell* through the power of the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth—whom you crucified and whom God raised from death. ¹¹Jesus is the one of whom the scripture says,

'The stone that you the builders *loved* turned out to be the most important of all.'

¹²Salvation is to be found through *anyone*; in all the world there is no one else whom *the government* has given who can save us."

Peter full of the Holy Spirit spoke of the goodness of Jesus Christ to those who didn't believe. Let us be confident in Christ when we speak too.

Confession

Let us pray:

Lord we are sorry for the times we have not believed in your goodness.

Forgive us Lord

Lord we are sorry for the times when we have spoken against you not for you.

Forgive us Lord

Lord we are sorry for the times we have used your name lightly or wrongly.

Forgive us Lord

Remind us Lord of the goodness in your salvation. Remind us again and again that you are a God of love, hope and healing. Remind us Lord that as we seek you, we discover your salvation in Jesus Christ. Heal us and help us Lord. Amen.

Reading: Psalm 23

One of the ways that we can learn more about God, is by reading the bible. Let us read Psalm 23 together and hear afresh of his great love and care offered to us all, but especially to those who are lonely, hurting and oppressed.

Psalm 23 (Good News version)

The Lord is my shepherd;

I have everything I need.

²He lets me rest in fields of green grass
and leads me to

quiet pools of fresh water.

³He gives me new strength.

He guides me in the right paths,
as he has promised.

⁴Even if I go through the deepest darkness,

I will not be afraid, Lord,

for you are with me.

Your shepherd's rod
and staff protect me.

⁵You prepare a banquet for me,

where all my enemies can see me;

you welcome me

as an honoured guest

and fill my cup to the brim.

⁶I know that your goodness and love will be with me all my life;

and your house will be

my home as long as I live.

Prayer

Shepherd of all,
by laying down your life for your flock
you reveal your love for all.
Lead us from the place of death
to the place of abundant life,
that guided by your care for us,
we may rightly offer our lives
in love for you and our neighbours. Amen.

As we come
to your word Lord,
inspire us and challenge afresh.
Take what has been prepared
and minister to us please.
In the name of Christ, Amen.

Sermon: Speaking in the Spirit

This past week we have learnt what is truly despised in the UK: the creation of a football super league. The world of football was shaken by the announcement of the European Super League with 12 of the biggest football clubs to form a breakaway competition that could change the sport as we know it. The richest founder member clubs would always be assured of a place no matter if the match was won or lost. It was this idea that a losing a match wouldn't change your team's participation in league that drew thousands to the streets to protest, to the burning of football shirts outside clubs and led to a twitter media storm. The elite decided one thing, while the fans were not consulted. And they revolted!

Here in Acts 4.5-12 we see the ruling elite coming face to face with common man Peter. Peter whose accent was Galilean. The ruling elite – the high priest and his family who were far more hoity toity. Think super league boss vs docker football fan. Think privately educated, white, upper class landed gentry vs a white cockney working for Deliveroo.

Peter is in standoff with the High Priest. The same High Priest who sent Jesus to Pilate and to the cross. They have gathered every big wig they can muster, so many that Luke (even methodical Luke) doesn't bother to write them all down v6 'and all the others', and are set to interrogate Peter who they had imprisoned the night before.

Why the fuss? Why is the elite bothered with Peter? Because as it turns out rough old Peter's sermons have been turning heads. 5000 people became Christians 2 chapters back. And this time Peter and John have healed a man, a man who was disabled and despised. Left to beg in the colonnades of the temple, but Peter has healed him and the crowds are swelling.

The ruling elite don't understand this, they are in control, they have authority over what happens in the temple not this half-wit from Galilee. Not unlike a recent parish council meeting in Handforth, they cry – you have no authority here!

At the heart of life in Jerusalem, Peter is boldly declaring change to power. The old way of things kept the low lower, and the rich richer. For there was a new authority which had turned the tables on power. This ruling elite had sent Jesus to Pilate. Our God had raised him from the dead. This ruling elite had despised and rejected the one who healed and restored, our God had raised him to glory. God was speaking through Peter, calling those with authority to look afresh at the authority and power of Jesus Christ by whose name the lame had been healed.

In a different court this week, Derek Chauvin was convicted of the murder of George Floyd. Here a white police officer with authority and responsibility took the life of a black man down on his luck and struggling with addiction.

I wait with bated breath to see if he would be convicted. The history of such trials and experience of structural racism in all of societies mean that I didn't believe they would. But they did. What did you think? There was a short video on the BBC in a hairdressers salon where Alicia Whitfield on hearing Chauvin was guilty, guilty, guilty said:

'That's everything. We're glad we got the verdict that starts the healing for some of our community where we can finally breathe. To know that there is finally someone in our corner to say, we're not gonna stand for this. Thank you for the justice, for the jurors, for the people that stood there and recorded, who got up there and said something and didn't just stand back and keep their mouths closed. I had no faith they were gonna do it, I'm glad they did. Thank you Jesus.'

The Spirit spoke through Peter. He declared that the healing of a lame man had come from the power of the name of Jesus Christ. Not Jesus but Jesus Christ. In the name of Jesus Christ is the story of God who sees all who are despised, rejected and oppressed and raises us up. In the name of Jesus Christ, a black man murdered gets justice. In the name of Jesus Christ, they were not afraid to speak with authority on what happened.

How will each of us speak? Will we use our privileges to speak up? Will allow the Spirit to fill us and declare God's healing, God's justice and God's salvation? How will each of us speak when we are challenged, when we are put on the spot about our faith, when our ethics are put to the test, when we see injustice, how will we speak?

If we submit to God, if we are filled with the Holy Spirit then our words will declare the goodness of God, the salvation, healing, justice and power that comes in his name, the one and only name of Jesus Christ. The son of God who became a servant, made himself low, suffered and died. The son of God who

walked through the valley of the shadow of death and knew our pain. The same Lord who died falsely accused, having the breath of life squeezed of him.

But we do not worship a dead God. We worship the God of new life, who saw the rejection of Jesus and raised him from the dead.

May our words and actions likewise see, really see every slight, slur, and suffering of others and speak God's truth of healing and restoration every single time. May we draw strength from Jesus Christ in whom we can find healing from brokenness. How will we speak today and tomorrow of the name of Jesus Christ? May we declare his love, grace, mercy and healing for the despised and raise our brothers and sisters up in the name of Jesus Christ.

Reflection questions:

What does the name of Jesus Christ mean to you?
How might the Holy Spirit change our speech?

Intercession

O God, your Son remained
with his disciples after his resurrection,
teaching them to love
all people as neighbours.
As his disciples in this age,
we offer our prayers
on behalf of the universe
in which we are privileged to live
and our neighbours with whom we share it.

Lord we remember all those who are desperate for healing, those whose bodies, minds and souls ache for restoration. May your presence be a balm to brokenness, may your hand heal the sick Lord.

Lord hear us, **Lord graciously hear us**

Lord we remember all those who speak truth to power. Let their voices be heard and their requests met with grace. May you grant them courage, joy and peace.

Lord hear us, **Lord graciously hear us**

Lord we remember all those protesting and trying to change the world for the better. Let the cry for justice not fall on closed ears. May all those who need justice receive it.

Lord hear us, **Lord graciously hear us**

Lord we pray for the family of George Floyd. Lord we ask that you protect Floyd's family, bless them with a sense of healing and grant them relief that true justice brings.

Lord hear us, **Lord graciously hear us**

Lord we pray for Derek Chauvin. Lord we ask that his journey as an offender will be marked confession, and a willingness to discover a new way to live.

Lord hear us, **Lord graciously hear us**

Lord we recognise that each of us, even in the church play a part in racism. Lord challenge our thinking, shape our attitudes, reform our behaviour to those who are different to ourselves. Holy Spirit show each of us to make a change in our lives, to welcome others and not to fear what is different.

Lord hear us, **Lord graciously hear us**

Open our hearts
to your power moving around us
and between us and within us,
until your glory is revealed

in our love of both friend and enemy,
in communities transformed
by justice and compassion,
and in the healing of all
that is broken. Amen.

Blessing

Let the majesty of the Father
be the light by which you walk,
the compassion of the Son
be the love by which you walk,
the presence of the Spirit
be the power by which you walk.

Our final song is 'Build my life', please follow the link on our website to watch this video to close.

Song: Build my life

<https://youtu.be/4jLxyKpr5MY>