

4 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, whatsapp or via the youtube link on our website www.christchurchnsfb.org

Welcome to Christ Church NSFB on Sunday 4 October 2020.

This morning we are looking at the calling of Peter from Luke's gospel. As Peter's nets are overflowing with fish, Jesus calls him to follow him. Throughout the bible we see water as an important image of life. The prophet Ezekiel sees a stream full of fish flowing from the temple as a sign of God's abundance and healing. The Psalmist too describes how the river brings gladness and life. Please say the words in bold.

Reading: Psalm 46.1-5,10

God is our refuge and strength,

an ever-present help in trouble.

²Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way

and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,

³though its waters roar and foam

and the mountains quake with their surging.

⁴There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,

the holy place where the Most High dwells.

⁵God is within her, she will not fall;

God will help her at break of day.

¹⁰ He says, 'Be still, and know that I am God;

I will be exalted among the nations,

I will be exalted in the earth.'

Let us be still in God's presence in quiet.

Be still

And know that I am God

What can we thank God for today?

Let us thank God for the world, for the gift of Christ to us and for each other.

Let us thank God for his healing power

Let us thank God for his love.

Reading: Luke 5.1-11

By Maeve Denham-Leahy

One day Jesus was standing on the shore of Lake Gennesaret while the people pushed their way up to him to listen to the word of God. ² He saw two boats pulled up on the beach; the fishermen had left them and were washing the nets. ³ Jesus got into one of the boats—it belonged to Simon—and asked him to push off a little from the shore. Jesus sat in the boat and taught the crowd. ⁴ When he finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Push the boat out further to the deep water, and you and your partners let down your nets for a catch." ⁵ "Master," Simon answered, "we worked hard all night long and caught nothing. But if you say so, I will let down the nets." ⁶ They let them down and caught such a large number of fish that the nets were about to break. ⁷ So they motioned to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. They came and filled both boats so full of fish that the boats were about to sink. ⁸ When Simon Peter saw what had happened, he fell on his knees before Jesus and said, "Go away from me, Lord! I am a sinful man!" ⁹ He and the others with him were all amazed at the large number of fish they had caught. ¹⁰ The same was true of Simon's partners, James and John, the sons of Zebedee. Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will be catching people." ¹¹ They pulled the boats up on the beach, left everything, and followed Jesus.

All age activity: Prayer fish

Take a 10cm by 2cm strip of paper. Cut a 1cm slit on each end, one from each side. Fold your paper around and slot the ends together to make a paper fish.

In our story today, Jesus told Peter where to catch lots of fish. Jesus is the son of God, so he was part of creating the world. Let's use our fish to thank God for all that he has made. What would you like to thank God for making? Maybe you have a favourite tree, or flower, or park. Let's thank God for blessing us. We'll do this by holding our fish in front of our noses and drop them. As they spin to the ground, we say thank you to God for blessing us. The fish spins like a blessing down from God to us. Is there anyone you think would like God's help? Do you know someone who is worried or sad. Think about that person and ask God to help them too as you drop your fish.

Thank you God that you bless us with a beautiful world.

Thank you God that you bless us with friends, family and church.

Help us to be blessing to everyone. Amen.

Sermon

I get teased a lot. I get teased that I asked Jesus to heal my mother-in-law. I get teased that I thought I could walk on water, and I couldn't. I get teased that I denied him 3 times, if my brothers really want to wind me up all they have to do is whisper a cock-er-du-loo. I don't mind it really, I'm headstrong, I tend to speak first and think later. And I've done plenty of stupid things in my life. But that day back when it all began with Jesus, I'll never forget.

It had been a difficult night; we hadn't caught any fish. And if you're a fisherman that's not great. We knew where the fish gathered, we'd fished that lake for decades. If there was

anything to know about that lake, we knew it. We made a good living from fishing and we were comfortable in our lives. But we were facing going home without any fish, going home without being able to sell and fish, and that meant no money for the day. Now we owned our boat, we worked in partnership with James and John. We offered local, organic fish fresh from the shores of Galilee or Gennesaret - whatever you want to call it. So, no fish for one night was a pain and explaining to the customers why they couldn't have their regular order wasn't pleasant, but we were not going to starve. We were, however, fed up. And a bit put out, we thought we knew everything about fishing and that night we didn't.

I'd met Jesus before, he'd been at my house a few times. I'd heard him teaching in the synagogue. So after our dull night, we were glad to see him coming down to the lake with a crowd following him as normal. Turning a boat into a pulpit was an obvious choice, the beach became like a little theatre and then everyone could hear him at least.

We'd just finished washing the seaweed off our linen nets when Jesus told us go fishing again. I remember thinking – but you don't know squat about fishing. But he had made my mother in law better, so we thought we might as well.

And then right there in the middle of the lake, we hauled in the biggest catch ever. It was then I knew: he wasn't a magician or a faith healer. As those beautiful fish flapped about in the nets, as we hauled our nets in with every ounce of strength – I felt my knees go.

We'd worked so hard, we thought we knew so much, and then we met Jesus. Jesus who knew where the fish were, Jesus who provided such an abundance of fish it was overwhelming. At that moment I glimpsed the very glory of God and his overflowing gift

of creation to us. I sensed the sovereignty of God as our creator like I never have before. Do you ever feel like that?

You can be just walking along in a park, and suddenly a beautiful tree takes your breath away, a delicate flower in the middle of a scrub yard makes you smile, or so much fish pours into your boat that is going break? I saw the hand of God at work, I saw his power and his grace. I didn't feel like a loopy tree-hugger, I felt like the smallest most ridiculous person in the world. For when I saw just what Jesus could do, how intimate his knowledge of creation was, I felt small and even smaller for questioning Jesus. That's why I fell to my knees. For when I met with Jesus and sensed his great love and power, it made me think about my life and it made me want to hide.

In all honesty I was scared. Why was Jesus hanging out with me? What would the road ahead look like? What was I gonna do with all these fish – did I even have enough salt and jars to brine them all? What was I going to do with the abundance of God's provision and love for me?

I didn't think I was worthy. My life was ordinary, some of my habits were questionable. I was not wise, or clever, not powerful or rich, what did Jesus want with me?

There were hundreds of people there that day, and yet Jesus spoke to me. And he said – do not be afraid. Now even I know, that when someone like Jesus says that – there is trouble ahead. Mary said that's what the angel said to her when Jesus was born. It's all over the scriptures. I'd asked him to go away, and he said don't be afraid. Then he dished out a dodgy pun – from now on you'll be catching people. You see I'd been catching fish all my life, so now I'd be catching people. It didn't make much sense to me either - what kind of rod would work?

Roll on a few years, after Jesus died and rose again, he sent the Holy Spirit to us all. It wasn't till that Pentecost day that I think I finally understood what he'd said all those years before. On that day 3000 people decided to follow Jesus because of my sermon. Just as I had met with Jesus on that boat, just as he had spoken with authority into my life, now I was calling on others to meet with Jesus in the same way.

Have you met with Jesus in that way? Have you come to a point when you suddenly realise who God is and greatness of his creation? Do you know just how much God loves us? Have you felt something of the abundance of God's grace overflowing every cup, vessel and boat with wonder? What did you do?

When I saw that my boat was breaking, creaking and groaning under so many fish. I found I had a bit of an itchy eye. Who am I kidding?! Men cry too you know. As I saw my boat struggling, I saw that Jesus was right there with me. His power and love were overwhelming everything I knew and I couldn't handle it. But I learnt that when I was honest with Jesus, he made me the best person I really could be. If he can use me – just a fisherman, to build the first church ever, imagine what he could do with you?

Response

As Peter falls to his knees he cries – kyrie – meaning Lord in Greek. This is the first part of kyrie eleison – which means Lord have mercy on us. It's a phrase that has created many songs and liturgies across denominations and churches around the world. We ask today what do we need to ask the Lord for mercy for? Let's kneel now and spend a short time in silence.

Eternal God

As Peter met with Jesus,

He became aware of his sin,
and knelt before him.
As we meet with Jesus,
Show us how to change
Help us not to hide from you.

Lord have mercy
Christ have mercy

Eternal God
Your love is forever
Through your Son Jesus,
You call us to love you
To love our neighbour
To love our enemy.

Lord have mercy
Christ have mercy

Eternal God
Your kingdom is justice and peace,
You call us to be citizens of hope,
Overflowing with integrity.

Lord have mercy.
Christ have mercy

Eternal God
In Jesus you show us that to be holy,
Is to sit with the outcast,
To welcome the unloved,
To love with heart and mind
With all our strength.

You call us to leave everything
And to follow you

Lord have mercy
Christ have mercy

Christ Jesus came into the world
to save sinners just like us.

To all who confess sin
and choose to lead a new life

Jesus says: our sins are forgiven.
And he also says: follow me.

Intercession

Anthea Denham will lead us in prayer now.

Dear Lord and Father, help and guide us to have enduring patience in this next wave and more restrictions to avoid a lockdown. We must strive to adhere to the rules, to prevent getting the virus or spreading it.

We pray for our church today opening today for the first time in many months. We rejoice that this this service will be online as well as live today. We thank you Lord for Ruth who has been leading our wonderful services on Youtube and for John's wonderful accompaniment on his saxophone. We remember Diana and Clare who have been instrumental in enabling these services to happen.

Father please keep us positive and as we plan to sell Grove Rd to rebuild Christ Church. Help us to delight in each others company and thank the Lord for bringing us together in a successful union between our two churches. We thank God for the willingness and bonding between us. We are thankful for past leaders of the church, especially Robert Barthram. Bless every member of our congregation Lord.

We pray for an effective safe vaccine will soon be available to our nation. We are crying out to our Lord for protective wings. Many Christians feel under threat in our country with changing beliefs. Bind us together and make us steadfast.

Our economy has been devastated and many are without work and despairing of the future. Fill us with hope and positivity. Lift the hearts of those who are struggling.

October is a month of Black history month. Children are learning about black scientists, inventors, actors and reformers. Help us to believe in equality and knowledge about other cultures. Help us to put racism down and behind us forever. We pray for the university students found locked down with

the virus spreading among them. We pray earnestly for this pandemic to end. For life to become more normal.

Brexit plans are also causing concern. We seek real justice and guidance from our government.

God our father in heaven, practically every country in the world has been affected by Covid 19. No matter how the virus has been handled, the virus has had a second wave everywhere. It has affected economies and tensions between countries. Refugees are resorting to dangerous routes across seas in flimsy boats. What must have they endured. Fill us compassion Lord.

There is the constant threat of global warming, each of us must try to do our part to protect your beautiful creation. We ask all this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, amen.

Notices

Next Sunday we begin in-person services for all to attend. Please book a ticket using the Eventbrite link in the weekly church email or contact Clare our secretary and complete the personal risk-assessment.

We value every person equally at Christ Church. We believe everyone has a right to access public worship and will continue to try to offer every person the same opportunity. Therefore, we will still post services online and offer an in-person service. This is to support those who are shielding or in high risk groups to stay safe. In person services will be a screening of our online service and opportunity for prayer and fellowship together at church. Please also check out our video of how services at church will look on our website and on Facebook.

There is a song called 'The Kingdom is Yours' to listen to today. It's from a new source of creative song writing called the Common Hymnal, it is an encouragement and blessing to us all.

The kingdom is yours

<https://youtu.be/1VW1a1JyJ04>

Blessed are the ones who do not bury
All the broken pieces of their heart
Blessed are the tears of all the weary
Pouring like a sky of falling stars

Blessed are the wounded ones in mourning
Brave enough to show the Lord their scars
Blessed are the hurts that are not hidden
Open to the healing touch of God

*The kingdom is yours, the kingdom is yours
Hold on a little more, this is not the end
Hope is in the Lord, keep your eyes on him*

Blessed are the ones who walk in kindness
Even in the face of great abuse
Blessed are the deeds that go unnoticed
Serving with unguarded gratitude

Blessed are the ones who fight for justice
Longing for the coming day of peace
Blessed is the soul that thirsts for
righteousness
Welcoming the last, the lost, the least

Blessed are the ones who suffer violence
And still have strength to love their enemies
Blessed is the faith of those who persevere
Though they fall, they'll never know defeat

Blessing

**The blessing of God Almighty
The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit
Be among you, and remain with you
always.**

Amen