



Order of Service

23th January 2022

10.00 am

Worship led by Rev Dr AJ Groenewald
Music from Martin Petty



Welcome and Announcements

Good morning

Hope all of you are well. Good to see some people back in church after contracting Covid.

Next week we will have conduct the baptism of Lily Lloyd who lives in Australia with her parents but is now here with her parents Karen and Ed and grandparents in Scotland.

Worshipping God Together

Call to worship:

The precepts of the Lord are right, giving joy to the heart.

The commands of the Lord are radiant, giving light to the eyes.

Beloved, I greet you in the Name of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Amen

MP 799 ALL I once held dear

Opening prayer and The Lord's Prayer

Let us pray

A gathering prayer

Just as we are, Lord, we gather in your presence.

Help us to be the body of Christ in this place;

to stand together with our neighbours;

to bring the good news to the poor;

to help set the oppressed free.

In your strength and in your name, we pray.

Amen.

A prayer of approach

Today, Lord God, we come before you as is our custom;

as was the custom of Jesus growing up in Nazareth.

We await your Word to us now, just like those who waited

while he spoke in the synagogue after his ministry had begun.

May we hear your call and stand with him and with one

another, to serve freely in the work you have given us.

Amen.

A prayer of adoration

God of heaven and earth, we kneel in adoration
before the mystery made manifest in your Son,
Jesus,

who stood with us, as one of us.

So, we stand with one another in adoring you
by living the way of love and life he showed us,
setting us free to serve in the fullness of your
grace.

Amen.

A prayer of confession and an Assurance of
forgiveness

A prayer of confession

Lord, we confess that we tend to see our calling as individual.

‘What would you have me do?’ we ask. ‘Where might I be best used?’ And, of course, that is part of our calling, for you see us as individuals.

We are also called to stand alongside one another in our service, and we sometimes forget this.

But you, Father, always see the bigger picture.

Forgive us for being so caught up in our own spheres that we

fail to see the need to stand with our brothers and sisters, to

serve together in the advancement of your

kingdom.

Amen.

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.

Reading: Luke 4:14-21 – Margaret Forsyth

Jesus rejected at Nazareth

¹⁴ Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. ¹⁵ He was teaching in their synagogues, and everyone praised him.

¹⁶ He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, ¹⁷ and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

¹⁸ 'The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners
and recovery of sight for the blind,
to set the oppressed free,

¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.'

²⁰ Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. ²¹ He began by saying to them, 'Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.'

Brother, sister, let me serve you

Sermon

When I was chatting with my good friend in South Africa while we were cooking meat on an open fire, he told me how much the “millennials” irritates him! I was immediately curious as to why. He then said to me that as the chairman of a teacher parent council of their local school, he finds it frustrating that they have a “I know it all attitude”, while adding that he have to

all too often deal with the collateral damage and upset some of their remarks causes.

I just laughed and said, were we not the same when we were younger?

When I read our passage, I could not help to think about the conversation I had with my friend. Jesus was still so young, with no authority or “learnedness” – someone who was the son of a peasant Joseph and yet he spoke in public, challenging the “so-called establishment of his day”.

Some will find it strange Jesus went to the synagogue – and not the temple? There was only one temple in Jerusalem but there were synagogues all through Palestine and in the Greco-Roman world where the

Jewish men would congregate especially when they did not live in close proximity to the temple.

Usually in the synagogues they would have a priest and or a Levite and or a teacher of the Law present. They followed a specific worshipping Order of service whereby they would recite Deuteronomy 6 “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.[a] 5 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength”, followed by the reciting of the 18 benedictions... THEN they would have readings from the LAW, and the Prophets. After the readings, a teacher of the Law would interpret the prophetic reading and then a blessing would follow.

In our reading Jesus was asked to read Isaiah 61 which He did. BUT then He sat down like a teacher and

“interpreted” the Prophetic reading implying that He is the fulfilment of that prophecy.

Can you imagine the shock on the people’s faces? Jesus who is not even a teacher of the LAW or a Levite or a priest, saying such a profound thing. No wonder they asked: IS he not Joseph’s son? Meaning is He not crossing an important social boundary, almost pretending to be someone that He is not.

If you read more verses of this chapter, you will see that when He spoke again of Himself as the fulfilment of the Messianic prophecy, they all rejected His claim!

And this rejection would continue until his death on the cross...and even beyond His resurrection! There are still so many people doubting the mission of Jesus as

the Son of God, who came to save humanity, reconciling the relationship between God and man, to proclaim good news to the poor, proclaiming freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, And setting the oppressed free”.

Jesus’ ministry would be one of strife and sacrifice but also of blessing to all people. In His ministry He included all those who were excluded and marginalised. He stood for everything that is TRUE and RIGHTEOUS in the eyes of God.

He never backed off. He did what God called Him to do...

I think there is a message for us all... it is not whether we are young, middle aged or old that matters, it is not how we look or appear...it is whether we are obedient

and true to our calling as followers of Jesus. It is not us that matters but our MESSAGE that we have to bring to our world.

And let's face it, if there was ever a time for God's prophetic voice to be heard, it is now.

The institutionalised CHURCH is holding on to the safety of an ancient structure that is no longer sustainable..., Christians are afraid to speak out ... and you and I feel so often alone and vulnerable because of our personal circumstances of suffering, challenge and hardship.

No one ever said it will be easy to be a Christian!

Maybe it is time that we also should challenge our establishment like Robert Burns did in his own way... and let them hear the Words of God...not being afraid of the consequences or trying to cover the Gospel message with political correct language but saying it as it was intended...

Because if we do, our voice will lead to other voices professing the same truth and before we know it – there will be chorus of similar voices, encouraging us to continue and speak the truths of God's word.

It is indeed true that we need the fellowship of our brothers and sisters to make the prophecy of Isaiah true to all. Jesus did set us free from the bounds of sins, He did make us see that we belong to God, He did model to us a lifestyle of service to all people, the rich

and the poor.... Something that Robert Burns aspired to do and so eloquently expressed in his poem “For a” that” Where he emphatically stated that all men are equal and that no-one should feel inferior to any other human being...

And this is the second part of the meaning of our reading.... The Jews did not SEE what was standing RIGHT in front of them. They ignored their best chance to experience the Salvation. They missed the proclamation of the year of the Lord’s favour.

They were so set in their own ways that they did not open their minds and hearts to change for the better. Sometimes we have opportunities too, right in front of our eyes to make a difference, to change someone else’ life for the better, to sit down with our children or

grandchildren just talking about the things that really matters...

May we all take heed and recognise the presence of God when He sends us or other people to make a difference ... setting the captives free, looking after the poor, proclaim His truth...

Amen

Bind us together, Lord

Prayer of thanksgiving Kay Coul

O for a thousand tongues to sing

Blessing Receive the blessing of God and go in peace:

God, you call us to be the body of Christ in this place.
Side by side, hand in hand, help us to stand together,

to stand with our neighbours,
to break free from all that holds us back
from making the world as you want it to be.
In Jesus' name....

Congregation sing Amen, Amen, Amen

Prayer

We praise you for the freedom we take for granted, Lord –
the freedom to serve you every day of our lives,
openly and seldom challenged.
We give so little thought to this freedom
that we sometimes fail to exercise it.
So, we thank you, Lord,
for every opportunity that comes our way
to be your hands, your eyes, your heart in this world;
to do your will, to see things as you do, to share your love.
We praise you that in serving, we stand alongside

our sisters and brothers in Christ, in a ministry stretching down
the generations from Jesus himself.

All thanks and praise be to you, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Amen.