



AT HOME SERVICE

Sunday 6th July 2025

compiled by Vicki Penfound – Lay Assistant

Opening words: *Psalm 66 v 1-4*

Make a joyful noise to God, all the earth;
sing the glory of his name;
give to him glorious praise.

Say to God, 'How awesome are your deeds!

Because of your great power, your enemies cringe before you.

All the earth worships you;
they sing praises to you,
sing praises to your name.'

Hymn 353 Singing the Faith

1] Jesus is Lord! Creation's voice proclaims it,
For by his power each tree and flower was planned and made.
Jesus is Lord! The universe declares it;
Sun, moon and stars in heaven cry: Jesus is Lord!

Jesus is Lord! Jesus is Lord!

Praise him with alleluias, for Jesus is Lord!

2] Jesus is Lord! Yet from his throne eternal
In flesh he came to die in pain on Calvary's tree.
Jesus is Lord! From him all life proceeding –
Yet gave his life a ransom, thus setting us free.

3] Jesus is Lord! O'er sin the mighty conqueror,
From death he rose; and all his foes shall own his name.
Jesus is Lord! God sends his Holy Spirit
To show by works of power that Jesus is Lord.

David John Mansell (b.1936)

Prayer:

Heavenly Father,
Thank you for this day.
May we fill this day with good things.
With worship, honouring your holy Name.
With joy, celebrating your gift of grace
And with service, sharing your love
With all who we have contact with today.

This is the day the Lord has made
We will rejoice and be glad in it. Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Hymn 481 Singing the Faith He makes me lie in pastures green,
He leads me by the still, still waters,
His goodness restores my soul.

*And I will trust in you alone,
And I will trust in you alone,
For your endless mercy follows me,
Your goodness will lead me home.*

2] He guides my ways in righteousness,
And he anoints my head with oil;
And my cup - it overflows with joy,
I feast on his pure delights.

3] And though I walk the darkest path –
I will not fear the evil one,
For you are with me, and your rod and staff
Are the comfort I need to know.

Stuart Townend (b.1963)

Reading: Luke 10 v 1-11

After this the Lord appointed seventy others and sent them on ahead of him in pairs to every town and place where he himself intended to go. He said to them, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore, ask the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest. Go on your way. See, I am sending you out like lambs into the midst of wolves. Carry no purse, no bag, no sandals; and greet no one on the road. Whatever house you enter, first say, "Peace to this house!" And if anyone is there who shares in peace, your peace will rest on that person; but if not, it will return to you. Remain in the same house, eating and drinking whatever they provide, for the labourer deserves to be paid. Do not move about from house to house. Whenever you enter a town and its people welcome you, eat what is set before you; cure the sick who are there, and say to them, "The kingdom of God has come near to you." But whenever you enter a town and they do not welcome you, go out into its streets and say, "Even the dust of your town that clings to our feet, we wipe off in protest against you. Yet know this: the kingdom of God has come near."

Reflection:

There is a discrepancy in scripture as to whether there were seventy or seventy-two sent out by Jesus, depending on which early manuscript you go by. That tells us that the exact number is not what's important here, so what is?

This is about going out into unfamiliar territory, going out of their comfort zone to declare the kingdom of God. Jesus gives clear instructions, and this is where we learn what is important and how we apply these principles in our own lives. The followers of Jesus are being sent as lambs in the midst of wolves, there is no guarantee of a welcome – on the contrary, it appears that the likelihood is a hostile reception. So, what are they to do to prepare themselves?

Firstly, no luggage. I would find that really hard. If I am going on a trip, I make a list of all that I want to take. Often, I come back from a holiday with half of the items in my suitcase unused. It's just that I want to be prepared for all eventualities, seems sensible to me, but Jesus has a different agenda, and it doesn't concern the variables of the British weather! They are to travel light and go with purpose, no nattering on the journey with people they might meet – they go straight to the town that Jesus is planning to visit.

Secondly, when they get to a house and they are welcomed, they greet them with a message of peace. They are not going as conquerors, dominating the household where they are invited in. They are to be humble and respectful. Jesus specifically tells them to accept the hospitality offered, not try again for a better offer. Their job is to bring the Good News, to make people's lives better by sharing the healing love of God. Telling them that Jesus is on his way.

Thirdly, when they are rejected (there is an assumption here that it will happen), they are to shake the dust from that place off their feet. It's a curious thing to do but there is a deep symbolic purpose here. By getting rid of the traces of that place of rejection, they are travelling on to the next place free of its influence. They will be able to enter the next town with their heads held high, their energy levels up and faith undiminished.

Jesus is calling us now to share the Good News and there are many and varied ways to do that. A conversation, testimony, or deed of kindness and it definitely can be outside our comfort zone, but Jesus didn't send any of the seventy alone. If it was seventy-two, it was another pair. We always have Jesus with us, so we are never alone. Like them, we need to trust God that our needs will be met and be grateful for the blessings, however big or small, along the way. And like them, following the way of Jesus isn't simply about improving our own experience of life, it's about the influence for good that our lives have on others.

What about the dust shaking? Fear of rejection is a big factor for a lot of people when it comes to sharing their faith with others. Bad experiences happen; Jesus is saying that rejection need not stick and impede us in our journey. We can be free of what has hurt us in the past and go forward in his strength. Interestingly, the end of our reading has Jesus saying, "Know this, the kingdom of God has come near." Those places of rejection, Jesus would still visit. A reminder that ultimately the work is God's, and that should take off the pressure and liberate us to be joyful labourers in his harvest.

Let us pray

Servant King, our Saviour

We pray for the needs of the world

Which are many, varied and desperate.

May your Spirit guide and comfort,

Convict and empower each person

According to your will and purpose.

We pray for those known to us

Who need healing of body, mind or spirit.

Guide us to be instruments of your peace,

Bearers of your image, voices of encouragement.

Show us Lord, how to bring in your harvest

In the little corners of the field where you have placed us.

In Jesus name, Amen

Hymn 664 Singing the Faith

1] Lord, you call us to your service,
Each in our own way.
Some to caring, loving, healing;
Some to preach or pray;
Some to work with quiet learning,
Truth discerning,
Day by day.

2] Life for us is always changing
In the work we share.
Christian love adds new dimensions
To the way we care.
For we know that you could lead us,
As you need us,
Anywhere.

Beyond by Gerard Kelly

Teach me God

To measure love

By action

Not by abstinence alone

To wade beyond

*A shallow **do no evil***

Into the deeper waters

*Of **do good***

Blessing:

May the peace of God be with you
The love of Christ be in you
And the joy of the Holy Spirit bring a spring in your step
As you journey onwards in faith. Amen.
Amen.

3] Seeing life from your perspective
Makes your challenge plain,
As your heart is grieving over
Those who live in pain.
Teach us how, by our compassion,
You may fashion
Hope again.

4] Lord, we set our human limits
On the work we do.
Send us your directing Spirit,
Pour your power through,
That we may be free in living
And in giving
All for you.

Marjorie Dobson (b.1940)