

27th August, 2023

The paper-version Service



To Begin: Find a Bible and a comfortable place. If safe,

light a candle and read prayerfully through the service. If you have access to worship music, choose a song and listen to it as you begin or read, or even sing, the song from this Sunday's Service.

Opening Prayer: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Song:

God is working this purpose out,
as year succeeds to year;
God is working this purpose out,
and the time is drawing near;
nearer and nearer draws the time,
the time that shall surely be:
when the earth shall be filled with the
glory of God
as the waters cover the sea.

From utmost east to utmost west,
where human feet have trod,
by the mouth of many messengers
goes forth the voice of God:
"Give ear to me, ye continents,
ye isles, give ear to me,
that the earth may be filled with the
glory of God
as the waters cover the sea."



Let us go forth in the strength of God,
with the banner of Christ unfurled,
that the light of the glorious gospel of
truth
may shine throughout the world.
Let us all fight with sorrow and sin
to set the captives free,
that the earth may be filled with the
glory of God
as the waters cover the sea.

All we can do is nothing worth
unless God blesses the deed.
Vainly we hope for the harvest-tide
till God gives life to the seed.
Yet nearer and nearer draws the time,
the time that shall surely be,
when the earth shall be filled with the
glory of God
as the waters cover the sea.

The Sermon by

God is our Home. Read Psalm 90 and John 14:1-7

This psalm, '*A Prayer of Moses the Man of God.*' is possibly the oldest Psalm in the book, though there are other psalms/songs in the Bible, including another by Moses and his sister Miriam (Exodus 15.) This psalm is attributed to Moses and we've no reason to believe it's not.

Moses endured much luxury, an adopted son of royalty, but huge hardship, on the run from Egypt for 40 years, then, leading the people of God out of Egypt, for a further 40. He, himself being barred from the promised land through his own disobedience.

God is our home (Read verses 1-2).

For Moses wandering the desert, homeless, Egypt was not his home, and neither the desert he ran to, nor now the wilderness.

For the people of Israel, Egypt was the place where they lived, now they're homeless in the wilderness. But for the people of God, God will always be home. Read Hebrews 11:13-16. So, where is our home?

God is our true home. As people we long for eternity and the 'happily ever-after', we were made like this. For God calls us to himself and in him we find our longing for home satisfied. God is our true and dependable home. He is secure – '*... from everlasting to everlasting ...*' (:2). His home offers such certainty and permanence. And there is room for us (John 14:2-3) and we are welcomed by Jesus.

But we're under God's judgement (Read verses 3-11)

In contrast to God's permanence, we are so temporary and under God's judgment. This Psalm is very blunt about our death, and though recognising we deserve judgment, and nothing better, Moses pleads for God to recognise our helplessness compared to his awesome nature.

Moses had recorded the story of the fall, and the subsequent curse. He has experienced God's judgement following his own angry outbursts and disregard for God's command. He has witnessed the death of a generation that refused to follow God, and therefore died in the wilderness – probably around ½ million people.

God's judgement is real. '*... people are destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, ...*' (Hebrews 9:27). Even those of us who think we're

pretty good people, recognise we're not good enough. God lays out all our secret sins (v.8). They are seen in the light of his presence, into the light are brought all darkness and shadows – the thoughts, the actions, the habits we hide from others are known by God.

This all sounds hopeless but God gives us hope. The whole of the quote from Hebrews is: *'Just as people are destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.'* Read also, 2 Corinthians 5:21

God of Grace (Read verses 12-17)

And so Moses asks for God's help: *'Teach us to number our days...'* (v.12). *Job says, 'My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and they come to an end without hope.'* (Job 7:6.) and *'My days are swifter than a runner; they fly away without a glimpse of joy.'* (Job 9:25). Our lives are short and we are to use the wisely. Read Ephesians 5:15-17.

'You turn us back to dust' we read in verse 3, now in an echo of this, Moses asks God to 'turn back' himself, to relent, and show mercy. The plea is for love, joy, and gladness to balance with the suffering. Following the death and resurrection of Jesus, we have such a clearer vision of this hope: *'For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.'* 2 Corinthians 4:17

Moses asks that God will restore permanence: see v.17 And, through Jesus, what is perishable becomes imperishable, read 1 Corinthians 15:50-58.

Conclusion: God is our home – and what God establishes is permanent. He invites us in. That home is not yet – there is a journey, a battle to make our way there, but the victory has been won through Jesus. We are not worthy of this home, read Romans 3:10-11.

But through the mercy, kindness and grace of God, we can find home with God – and the longing of hearts satisfied in him. Read 1 Peter 2:4-10.

And so, we number our days, responding wisely in right-living, following Jesus and living in grace, joy, hope, and generosity.

Prayers: *Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. (Philippians 4:4-6)*



- Pray for this day, and the coming week.
- Pray for justice, mercy, peace, and hope.
- Pray for individuals, neighbours, and for family & friends.
- Pray for the Church.

Collect: Twelfth Sunday after Trinity: *Almighty and everlasting God, you are always more ready to hear than we to pray and to give more than either we desire or deserve: pour down upon us the abundance of your mercy, forgiving us those things of which our conscience is afraid and giving us those good things which we are not worthy to ask but through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.*

The Lord's Prayer: *Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.*

Blessing to be declared over yourselves, The Good Shepherd, the communities around us and our whole nation. 'The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face towards you and give you peace.' (Numbers 6:24-26 NIV).

The Notices: We are now holding services in the building on Sundays at 8am and 9.30am, and are live streaming the 9.30 service. This Paper Service will continue for the moment and is generally available the week after the service.

- Tea and Chat & Bowls: Wed. 20th Sept. at 2pm, Church Hall and Church.
- Coffee and Questions: Wed. 27th Sept at 11am in Church Hall.
- Tea and Praise TBA.
- COGS Tots: 2nd Mondays.
- COGS Tinytots: Monday mornings.
- Messy Church: Second Sundays of the month.