

**Trinity Methodist Church:**  
**Service for 15th August 2021**

**Prepared by Jean Shotton**

**Theme: Rest - and Recuperate!**

**A gathering prayer:**

Jesus says, 'Come away and rest awhile.' Gather us in, Lord and, as we wait upon Your word, be among us and touch us with Your love. **Amen**

**Hymn: Be still for the presence of the Lord**

David Evans

**StF: 20**

1. Be still, for the presence of the Lord,  
The Holy One, is here;  
Come bow before Him now  
With reverence and fear  
In Him no sin is found  
We stand on holy ground.  
Be still, for the presence of the Lord,  
The Holy One, is here.

2. Be still, for the glory of the Lord  
Is shining all around;  
He burns with holy fire,  
With splendour He is crowned:

How awesome is the sight  
Our radiant king of light!  
Be still, for the glory of the Lord  
Is shining all around.

3. Be still, for the power of the Lord  
Is moving in this place:  
He comes to cleanse and heal,  
To minister His grace -  
No work too hard for Him.  
In faith receive from Him.  
Be still, for the power of the Lord  
Is moving in this place.

**Prayers of discipleship, confession and thanksgiving:**

**Discipleship**

Gracious God, by whose Word Creation came into being and through whose words we know the fullness of life, help us to listen to Your story, so that it becomes our story. Make us its tellers: full of wise words and awesome stories so that we may share the Word in our words, spilling Your message wherever we go. We ask this through Your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, our teacher, our friend and redeemer. **Amen**

**Confession**

For the times when we have not listened to Your voice... and when we have heard You and then ignored Your call... **forgive us Lord.**  
Remembering our actions that have caused other people pain or sadness... and have failed to speak up for Your truth... **forgive us Lord.**  
For our poor love of You and all our lack of trust... our broken promises and feeble hope... **forgive us Lord.**

May God who knows us as we are, strengthen and renew us and make us whole.  
**Lord, speak Your words of assurance.** **Amen**

**Thanksgiving**

Give thanks to the Lord! **He leads us into peace.**  
Give thanks to the Lord! **He blesses us with love.**  
Give thanks to the Lord! **He makes us one in Christ.**

We ask these prayers in the name of Jesus who taught us to say:

**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 trespasses,  
As we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the Kingdom, the power and the glory,  
For ever and ever.**

**Amen**

**Hymn: Your words to me are life and health** George Currie Martin **StF: 164**

1. Your words to me are life and health;  
Pour strength into my soul;  
Enable, guide, and teach my heart  
To reach its perfect goal!

3. Your words to me are full of joy  
Of beauty, peace, and grace;  
From them I learn your blessed will  
Through them I see your face

2. Your words to me are light and truth;  
From day to day they show  
Their wisdom, passing earthly lore  
As in their truth I grow

4. Your words You have fulfilled on earth  
Yourself, the living Word;  
Within my heart your image print  
In clearest lines, O Lord

**Reading: Mark 6: 30-35 & 53-56** New International Version

**Context: John the Baptist beheaded by Herod - Jesus' grief at the death of His cousin - Jesus rejected in Nazareth - 5,000 people fed**

<sup>30</sup> The apostles gathered around Jesus and told him all that they had done and taught. <sup>31</sup> He said to them, "Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while." For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. <sup>32</sup> And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves. <sup>33</sup> Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they hurried there on foot from all the towns and arrived ahead of them. <sup>34</sup> As He went ashore, He saw a great crowd; and He had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and He began to teach them many things. <sup>35</sup> When it grew late, His disciples came to him and He made His disciples get into the boat and go to the other side, to Bethsaida.

<sup>53</sup> When they had crossed over, they moored the boat. <sup>54</sup> But people at once recognized him, <sup>55</sup> and rushed about that whole region and began to bring the sick on mats to wherever they heard He was. <sup>56</sup> And wherever He went, into villages or cities or farms, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and begged him that they might touch even the fringe of His cloak; and all who touched it were healed.

**Message: The rhythm of rushing and resting**

**Although Jesus needed some Rest and Recuperation by sailing away to a different location on the lake, He wound up ministering to the needy multitude, putting others first and Himself last.**

It's a universal problem. We grow tired and need to rest. Looking more closely at Mark 6 vs 30 & 31 it tells us only that the apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to Him all they had done and taught.

Jesus had earlier sent them out to preach, teach and do miracles in His name. Evidently this time they had been successful. They were "up" emotionally but needed to relax. While sharing their good news, it was Jesus who saw something which had escaped the disciples - the weariness that their work brought them. He saw the signs of exhaustion, of physical exertion. He recognised the consequences that all this would have upon His dear friends if they did not stop and rest a while.

The crowds were flocking around the Master and His followers, with their many demands. But it was then that He told His weary disciples that they needed to **rest** and **recuperate**.

In studying the passage in Mark 6, I noted the **consideration** Jesus gave to His dearest friends. The demands of the crowds were part of the reason for the group's departure, because the crowd were following Jesus and the disciples whenever they could. And though He was tired, He turned again with **compassion** towards the crowd.

You can be so excited that You don't even realize that your energy is being spent, but there comes a point where You are drained. The scripture here says there were so many people coming and going, the disciples didn't even have a chance to eat. Then Jesus and the disciples tried to 'make their escape'. He said, "**Come with me and get some rest. So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place.**"

In v 33 many who saw them leaving recognised them and ran on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them! It was about 10 miles around the lake but only 4 miles across. But if the wind was too still or blowing in the wrong direction, it was faster on foot to head around to the opposite side than to take a boat across. These people hungered to hear more of the word of God and be in the presence of Christ. They didn't let the distance deter them.

And in v 34 when Jesus landed and saw the large crowd, He had compassion on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So He began to teach and to heal. He wasn't annoyed at the intrusion. He knew that sheep follow the shepherd, they need feeding, can get lost and get into dangerous situations.

In vs 35 - 44, Jesus had the disciples participate with Him in the miracle of feeding the 5,000. After He had taught them, fed them and sent them back to their homes, He went away to the mountains to pray.

Jesus went into the hills not to escape, but to equip... Prayer to recharge, re-focus on the matter in hand. Jesus recognises the tired, but also reassures the disciples and reaches out to the crowd:

- You can enjoy and desire to serve Christ continually, but your body requires relaxation;
- You may pray without ceasing but You cannot serve without ceasing;
- So take time to relax, be quiet, be still... in order to renew and start over.

As soon as they got out of the boat, the people recognised Jesus. "They ran throughout that whole region and carried the sick on mats to wherever they heard He was. And wherever He went, into villages, towns or countryside they placed the sick in marketplaces. They begged Him to let them touch even the edge of His cloak, and all who touched Him were healed."

Jesus went from one crowd to another, but He had been renewed, refreshed and energised. He didn't worry about provisions. He wasn't in a hurry, but He was never too late. We can try to imitate Christ in our limited physical ways. But we need to take time out to rest and pray.

How many of You know that if You decide to relax, the phone rings, there's mail that requires a reply, You gaze out the window and realise the garden needs attention?

Matthew 11:28 says “**Come unto me all ye who are weary and heavy laden and I will give You rest.**”

We are like rechargeable batteries; we run down and need to be plugged back into the recharging base. We need to get away to pray. It can be a fast prayer, like a quick charge, but then it lasts for only a short time and we need to get away again soon. So set aside time to pray. If we are too busy to rest, we can't serve God with our best. The rhythm of life is to go from people to God and then from God to people.

Christ who commissions us to work, also calls us aside to rest. He has compassion on our physical pain and comes to comfort us in our circumstances. After proper rest and food, we are more capable of showing compassion and putting our ministry into action, making efforts to meet others in need.

Ministry involves not only sharing the message of the gospel but also showing kindness. We are **ministering** whether we care for an elderly parent, a sick spouse or friend, baby-sitting or visiting a lonely neighbour or one who is isolating.

God **calls** people into His plans and purposes with a role for each one of us. The times have been difficult, our efforts to remain faithful and dedicated to our Lord have been a struggle at times. It is right to acknowledge the situations we have worked through over the past 17 months.

We go to the doctor when our bodies are aching and our health is giving concern sometimes receiving a prescription to relieve the pain. The prescription for our weary spiritual health is **rest** and God will work in and through each one of us. Be grateful for the peaceful periods in your life and wait for the Lord to guide you towards your next role.

Jesus seems to have been recognised and followed by crowds wherever He went, with little time to rest or even eat on occasions. No wonder that Jesus' desire, for Himself and His disciples, was to get away and have some 'quiet time' – even though His plans had to be adjusted.

Busyness, with all the stress and strain, is a common problem. For some, the idea of rest as a way of 'recharging the batteries' only puts off the inevitable...exhaustion.

However, are we not in a better position to show compassion to others if we first look after ourselves? Anyone who has flown will have been told during the safety briefing before take-off, that in an emergency they should put on their own oxygen mask before looking to assist anyone else - putting oneself first is not always the wrong thing to do. Where do we go to for our spiritual 'me time'? And do we seek rest when we most need it?

So, how are we each reacting to the easing of restrictions after so many months, individually and as congregations? Our family visited the Isle of Man earlier this month and people were wearing masks indoors and keeping a distance in the shops... We remain cautious!

For everyone, change causes us to think about the routines and patterns in our lives. I have missed the 'rhythm' of my daily life... Keep Fit, Choir and Church Fellowship. The past 17 months has meant isolation, separation...hard to connect even in our local area and only recently in church. Our perspective has been narrow and is just beginning tentatively to extend beyond family and close friends. Our view of the world has been governed by national statistics, rather than global situations.

But for some life has been even harder than the difficulties we have encountered. People today have the same needs as those in the Gospel reading. A key difference between then and now is that Jesus' death and resurrection instigated what St Paul called 'one new humanity' something much larger and more diverse than the crowd gathered by the lakeside.

The Gospel reading reiterates Psalm 23 and Jeremiah's shepherd-king, the one who had real concern for all God's sheep.

Do we care about the situations in the headlines? The threat of the Taliban in Afghanistan; wildfires in California, Turkey, Greece and dozens killed by the blazes in Northern Algeria? Temperatures approaching 49°C?

Can we balance between the demands of family, friends and fellowship, our concerns for the world-wide crises?

As the Covid situation changes and hopefully improves, can we pause, take time to reflect and pray, bringing God into our new circumstances, seeing where our walk with Jesus fits into and influences our changing routine?

### **Prayer:**

God promises to hear us because He loves us and wants a relationship with us.

Lord, let me step aside from the busyness of the world and in my moments and my days, let me experience You anew. **Amen**

**Hymn:**      **Father I place into Your hands**      Jenny Hewer      **StF: 519**

1. Father, I place into your hands  
The things I cannot do,  
Father, I place into your hands  
The things that I've been through.  
Father, I place into your hands  
The way that I should go,  
For I know I always can trust You.

2. Father, I place into your hands  
My friends and family.  
Father, I place into your hands  
The things that trouble me.  
Father, I place into your hands  
The person I would be,  
For I know I always can trust You.

3. Father, we love to see your face,  
We love to hear your voice.  
Father, we love to sing your praise  
And in your name rejoice.  
Father, we love to walk with You  
And in your presence rest,  
For we know we always can trust You.

4. Father, I want to be with You  
And do the things You do.  
Father, I want to speak the words  
That You are speaking too.  
Father, I want to love the ones  
That You will draw to You,  
For I know that I am one with You

**Prayers of Intercession:**

We hold before God, those in need of care.

For those in distress, whose faith is tested... that they will be strengthened and encouraged in midst of difficulties.

We lift to God those we hold in our hearts, praying for their health and well-being... their hope and expectations.

Father, we thank You for Your constant love and protection... we pray for renewed commitment in our life of service. **Amen**

**Hymn: All I once held dear**

1. All I once held dear, built my life  
upon  
All this world reveres and wars to own  
All I once thought gain I have counted  
loss  
Spent and worthless now, compared to  
this

**Knowing You, Jesus; Knowing You  
There is no greater thing  
You're my all, You're the best  
You're my joy, my righteousness  
And I love You, Lord**

2. Now my heart's desire is to know  
You more

Graham Kendrick

**StF: 489**

To be found in You and known as  
Yours  
To possess by faith what I could not  
earn  
All-surpassing gift of righteousness

**Knowing You, Jesus...**

3. Oh, to know the power of Your risen  
life  
And to know You in Your sufferings  
To become like You in Your death, my  
Lord  
So with You to live and never die  
**Knowing You, Jesus...**

**Blessing:**

As we go from here, give us the vision to see things as You see them.

Grant us the space to **centre** ourselves on You and the **courage** to be **changed** by You.

And the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. **Amen.**