

**THE BRIDE VALLEY CHURCHES:  
Telephone Service for Sunday 20 June 2021 – Trinity 3**

The service for today has been prepared by Liz Howlett, and can be accessed by phone on Sunday morning on **01308 293062**.

Welcome to this act of worship for the Bride Valley churches for the 3rd Sunday after Trinity.

The Lord be with you

**And also with you.**

*Psalm 107, verses 23 and 24*

Those who go down to the sea in ships and ply their trade in great waters, these have seen the works of the Lord and his wonders in the deep.

*Hymn: All people that on earth do dwell*

1 All people that on earth do dwell,  
sing to the Lord with cheerful voice;  
him serve with fear, his praise forth tell,  
come ye before him, and rejoice.

4 For why? the Lord our God is good;  
his mercy is for ever sure;  
his truth at all times firmly stood,  
and shall from age to age endure.

2 The Lord, ye know, is God indeed;  
without our aid he did us make;  
we are his folk, he doth us feed,  
and for his sheep he doth us take.

5 To Father, Son and Holy Ghost,  
the God whom heaven and earth adore,  
from men and from the angel-host  
be praise and glory evermore.

3 O enter then his gates with praise,  
approach with joy his courts unto;  
praise, laud, and bless his name always,  
for it is seemly so to do

*William Kethe, (fl 1559-died 1594) CCLI Licence 2370586*

*Invitation to Confession*

The grace of God has dawned upon the world with healing for all. Let us come to him, in sorrow for our sins, seeking healing and salvation.

*Prayers of Penitence*

God be gracious to us and bless us, and make your face to shine upon us:  
Lord, have mercy.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

May your ways be known on earth, your saving power among the nations:  
Christ, have mercy.  
**Christ, have mercy.**

You, Lord have made known your salvation, and reveal your justice in the sight of the nations:  
Lord, have mercy.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

*Absolution*

May the God of love bring us back to himself, forgive us our sins, and assure us of his eternal love in Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

*The Collect*

God our saviour, look on this wounded world in pity and in power; hold us fast to your promises of peace won for us by your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ.  
**Amen.**

*First Reading*

**Job 38: 1 – 11**

Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind:  
 “Who is this that darkens counsel by words without  
 knowledge?

Gird up your loins like a man,  
 I will question you, and you shall declare to me.

“Where were you when I laid the foundation of the  
 earth?

Tell me, if you have understanding.

Who determined its measurements—surely you  
 know!

Or who stretched the line upon it?

On what were its bases sunk,

or who laid its cornerstone  
 when the morning stars sang together  
 and all the heavenly beings shouted for joy?

“Or who shut in the sea with doors  
 when it burst out from the womb?—  
 when I made the clouds its garment,  
 and thick darkness its swaddling band,  
 and prescribed bounds for it,  
 and set bars and doors,  
 and said, ‘Thus far shall you come, and no farther,  
 and here shall your proud waves be stopped’?

*Gospel Reading***Mark 4: 35 – 41**

On that day, when evening had come, Jesus said to them, ‘Let us go across to the other side.’ And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him. A great gale arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him, ‘Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?’ He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, ‘Peace! Be still!’ Then the wind ceased and there was a dead calm. He said to them, ‘Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?’ And they were filled with great awe and said to one another, ‘Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?’

*Reflection*

As we reflect on the gospel reading set for today, let’s take some time to consider our own boat ride across the choppy seas of life.

I wonder what kind of ride you might be experiencing at the moment. Perhaps it is like the canoe journey embarked on by a family on a Sunday afternoon, with the parents at the helm, all wearing life jackets, heading down a gently flowing river, under a warm sun with a soft breeze. The little ones have small paddles so they can begin to learn in a relaxed and enjoyable way how to handle a boat safely for themselves in due course. Does that scenario ring any bells for you? Do you find yourself living life like that sometimes? Either as an experienced person, enabling small or inexperienced ones to learn and grow, or perhaps as a beginner at something yourself, with encouraging and wise teachers helping you discover new talents and skills. Let’s give thanks to God for such times in life, for they are precious.

I wonder how often your boat ride in life more closely resembles the scenario Mark vividly describes in our gospel reading. Perhaps you are going through some really turbulent times at present – a sudden squall of ill health, or family difficulties; urgent unexpected repairs are required on your property, a breakdown in relationships – all of a sudden, the calm sea becomes a raging storm above and beneath and life can suddenly seem very fragile and flimsy.

Mark describes an all too human situation... Jesus and no doubt his disciples are exhausted after a day of what appears to be non-stop teaching in the open air, from the boat to the crowds on the shore. Nothing has been said about their eating or resting all day, so we can imagine all of them thankfully starting out to cross over to the other side of lake to escape the demands of the people. Jesus welcomes the comfort of the cushion in the stern and falls asleep. I wonder if we can allow ourselves to take the rest that we need when we become really tired after a long day of exertion. I wonder how the disciples felt – they were tired too – was there some resentment that they had to keep working by rowing the boat across the lake? I wonder how often we find ourselves feeling that we must carry on, no matter how we feel, even though

others have taken the rest that they need.

Then the great windstorm arose, and the boat was being swamped by the waves. Now over-tiredness is mixed with fear and anxiety for the disciples. They snap at Jesus, 'Don't you care?' and perhaps we can imagine a mixture of feelings at work in Jesus' response to them, 'Don't you have faith?' For the disciples, exhaustion and fear make it impossible for them to access what they might have been learning about Jesus over recent weeks and they snap. For Jesus, his exhaustion and sudden awakening may have provoked disappointment – and he snaps back. Good communication is lost for a time through tiredness and fear and disappointment – I wonder how often that is part of your experience too.

Those first disciples were completely aware of Jesus' humanity – they shared fully in his life on a daily basis – they saw him teach and heal; get tired and hungry; express anger; demonstrate great love and care – all through his humanity. What they had to grapple with was the growing realisation that this fully human being was also fully divine. When they cried out to Jesus in fear for their lives in the boat, he calmed the waves and rebuked the wind and that gave them pause for thought. 'Who is this?', they asked amongst themselves, for they knew from their scriptures that it was God who brought calm and order and peace out of chaos – as in the ancient story of creation. And in our Old Testament reading today, God sets Job a divine quiz - (with God as the answer!)

"... who shut in the sea with doors  
when it burst out from the womb?—  
and prescribed bounds for it,

and set bars and doors, and said, 'Thus far shall  
you come, and no farther, and here shall your  
proud waves be stopped'?

So for the first disciples, it was Jesus' divinity that they needed to grapple with. He was doing things that only God could do. For many of us today, perhaps, we can find it easier to accept and acknowledge Jesus' divinity, whereas it can be harder for us to accept his full humanity – that he really did get overtired and need a rest in the boat; that he needed the companionship of close friends; that he may have snapped back at his followers, as we might when our patience is wearing thin. It is so important, however, that we do embrace Jesus' humanity as well as his divinity, for if he were only pretending to be human, he can be of little help to us humans, as we seek to live and love for God in this world.

In our boats that we sail on the seas of life, we can and do experience turbulence, and upset, calm and rest. May we become more aware of the ways in which Jesus makes his presence felt alongside us in the boat, whatever the state of the waves or the sea above and below us. Amen.

*Hymn: Dear Lord and Father of mankind*

1 Dear Lord and Father of mankind,  
forgive our foolish ways;  
re-clothe us in our rightful mind;  
in purer lives thy service find,  
in deeper reverence, praise.

2 In simple trust like theirs who heard  
beside the Syrian sea  
the gracious calling of the Lord,  
let us, like them, without a word  
rise up and follow thee.

3 Drop thy still dews of quietness,  
till all our strivings cease;  
take from our souls the strain and stress,  
and let our ordered lives confess  
the beauty of thy peace.

4 Breathe through the heats of our desire  
thy coolness and thy balm;  
let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;  
speak through the earthquake, wind and fire,  
O still small voice of calm.

*John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-1892) CCLI Licence 2370586*

*Prayers*

Jesus said: 'Whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant.'

Saviour, we hear your call.

**Help us to follow.**

Jesus said: 'Unless you change and become humble like little children, you can never enter the kingdom of heaven.'

Saviour, we hear your call.

**Help us to follow.**

Jesus said: 'Be merciful as your Father is merciful; love your enemies and do good to them.'

Saviour, we hear your call.

**Help us to follow.**

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**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,**

Jesus said: 'Love one another, as I love you; there is no greater love than this, to lay down your life for your friends.'

Saviour, we hear your call.

**Help us to follow.**

Jesus said: 'Go to people everywhere and make them my disciples, and I will be with you always, to the end of time.'

Saviour, we hear your call.

**Help us to follow.**

God of mercy,

**you know us and love us and hear our prayer:**

**keep us following in the footsteps of Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.**

*The Lord's Prayer*

**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**

*The Blessing*

May the Spirit, who hovered over the waters when the world was created and set the church on fire upon the day of Pentecost, be with you and guide you on your way at every change and turn; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.

**Amen.**

*Hymn: Thou whose almighty word*

1 Thou whose almighty word  
chaos and darkness heard,  
and took their flight;  
hear us, we humbly pray,  
and where the Gospel-day  
sheds not its glorious ray,  
let there be light.

2 Thou, who didst come to bring  
on thy redeeming wing  
healing and sight,  
health to the sick in mind,  
sight to the inly blind,  
O now to all mankind  
let there be light.

3 Spirit of truth and love,  
life-giving, holy Dove,  
speed forth thy flight;  
move o'er the water's face,  
bearing the lamp of grace,  
and in earth's darkest place  
let there be light.

4 Blessed and holy Three,  
glorious Trinity,  
Wisdom, Love, Might;  
boundless as ocean's tide  
rolling in fullest pride,  
through the world far and wide  
let there be light.

*John Marriott (1780-1825), Thomas Raffles (1788-1863) CCLI Licence 2370586*