

## Bride Valley Telephone Service 19 June 2022: Trinity 1

**Welcome** to our telephone service, wherever you are

God promises: *I will be a little sanctuary for you in the places where you are.*

so we turn to the Lord and pray

*Lord, whether in our churches or in our homes, make your presence known to us. Fill our hearts with your Spirit.*

*Lord, open our lips, and our mouths shall declare your praise. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen*

Our first **hymn** is: New ev'ry morning *by John Keble*

1 New ev'ry morning is the love, our waking and uprising prove

Through sleep and darkness safely brought, restored to life and power and thought.

2 New mercies each returning day, hover around us while we pray

New perils past, new sins forgiv'n, new thoughts of God, new hopes of heaven.

3 If on our daily course our mind be set to hallow all we find,

New treasures still of countless price God will provide for sacrifice.

4 The trivial round the common task, will furnish all we ought to ask

Room to deny ourselves, a road to bring us daily nearer God

5 Only, O Lord, in thy dear love fit us for perfect rest above;

And help us, this and ev'ry day, to live more nearly as we pray

The **Collect** for today, the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Trinity

O God, the strength of all those who put their trust in you, mercifully accept our prayers and, because through the weakness of our mortal nature we can do no good without you, grant us the help of your grace, that in the keeping of your commandments we may please you in both will and deed; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Our 1<sup>st</sup> **Reading** Galatians 3: 23-end (p1170)

23 Before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed.

24 Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

25 But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.

26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

29 And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

This is the Word of the Lord **Thanks be to God**

Our 2<sup>nd</sup> **Reading** Luke 8: 26-39 (p1038)

26 Then they sailed to the country of the Gadarenes, which is opposite Galilee.

27 And when He stepped out on the land, there met Him a certain man from the city who had demons for a long time. And he wore no clothes, nor did he live in a house but in the tombs.

28 When he saw Jesus, he cried out, fell down before Him, and with a loud voice said, "What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg You, do not torment me!"

29 For He had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For it had often seized him, and he was kept under guard, bound with chains and shackles; and he broke the bonds and was driven by the demon into the wilderness.

30 Jesus asked him, saying, "What is your name?" And he said, "Legion," because many demons had entered him.

31 And they begged Him that He would not command them to go out into the abyss.

32 Now a herd of many swine was feeding there on the mountain. So they begged Him that He would permit them to enter them. And He permitted them.

33 Then the demons went out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd ran violently down the steep place into the lake and drowned.

34 When those who fed them saw what had happened, they fled and told it in the city and in the country.

35 Then they went out to see what had happened, and came to Jesus, and found the man from whom the demons had departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid.

36 They also who had seen it told them by what means he who had been demon-possessed was healed.

37 Then the whole multitude of the surrounding region of the Gadarenes asked Him to depart from them, for they were seized with great fear. And He got into the boat and returned.

38 Now the man from whom the demons had departed begged Him that he might be with Him. But Jesus sent him away, saying,

39 Return to your own house, and tell what great things God has done for you." And he went his way and proclaimed throughout the whole city what great things Jesus had done for him.

This is the Word of the Lord **Thanks be to God**

### Reflection

Jesus was a revolutionary - always about turning things round, upside down, inside out, and back to front - he didn't fit the mould. he didn't stay in the box, he wasn't restricted by the opinions and expectations of others.

Luke tells us how villagers avoided the graveyard of Gadara on the shore of Galilee out of fear of a violent madman who lived there in an empty tomb. What stories the children must have been told about this man who was a danger to society, a misfit, and an unwanted problem to the area. Everyone steered clear of him.

Do we have our list of 'acceptables' and 'unacceptables'; people to welcome and people to avoid?

Jesus broke the mould because he cares for the excluded - just like Father God who said in the Old Testament

reading Isaiah 65: *I have stretched out My hands all day long to a rebellious people, to those who walk according to their own thoughts in a way that is not good. They are a people who continually provoke Me to My face; who sacrifice (to foreign gods) in gardens, and burn incense on altars of brick; people who sit (like the man of Gadara) among the graves, and spend the night in the tombs; who eat forbidden pig's flesh, and who hypocritically say, 'Keep to yourself, Do not come near me, For I am holier than you!' (Proudly religious) These are smoke in My nostrils. .... And yet my arms are open to them inviting them to return and repent*

Similarly Jesus, with open arms, went out of his way to help this man who'd slipped into sin, opened his life to evil and now was possessed by an army of demons. Jesus broke the taboos as he literally faced this man's demons.

When the man said *Leave us alone*, Jesus still came to him, talked with him, went to the source of his problems, dealt with his demons, freed him from the power and control of evil, and gave him a new start.

Now, you would think that the villagers would have been happy, wouldn't you.

But when all the neighbours arrived and found the man *sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind* they followed the example of the man whom they had ostracised by saying to Jesus '*Leave us*'

It is easy to be frightened by the unexpected, to be uncertain about the miraculous, and to reject the spectacular!

Anyway, when Jesus got into the boat, to go away to where he was wanted; the Bible says: *Now the man from whom the demons had departed begged Jesus that he might be with Him.*

You would have thought that that was what Jesus would want - another committed, appreciative follower

But Jesus had other plans. He sent him back, saying, "*Return to your own house,*

- quite the opposite to the call to discipleship of Peter, Andrew, James and John, Matthew and Nathaniel: *Leave your work, leave you family, leave your securities, take up the cross and Follow me*

This time, in contrast, he said to this man: You have a family and a community, and your responsibility is to them. *I'm* asked to go, but I want *you* to stay. I need you to be my light in the darkness.

Friend, *Go home and tell them what great things God has done for you.*

And that is the word that has stuck in my mind: Christ's command to *Tell what great things God has done for you*

The question is: What has God done for us? Are we aware? Are we appreciative about what he has done?

To the Christians in Galatia St Paul in Gal3:26 said This is what God has done:

- *you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.*

- if you are *Christ's*, then you are Abraham's seed, and *heirs according to the promise*

- you are *justified by faith* - just-as-if-I'd never sinned

- you are *no longer slaves to sin and Satan* (like the man of Gadara) *but you are free*

Can we put our name to that?

What has the Lord done for us? Think about it for a moment .....

Generally, God has provided for us: peace (no war/conflict), we have food, a home, our family, domestic services (like clean water, electricity, and gas), a job, a pension, and so much more

and, specifically. Has he answered prayers? (what about sunshine for the Platinum Celebrations - certainly for Tots since last June when we have had only three Fridays inside). Maybe he has restored us to health and strength (I'm grateful for that!). Maybe he has protected us in danger, There are so many things He has done.

Do you remember the old song sung by Harry Seacombe: *Count your blessings one by one, when dawn appears, and day has just begun, they will light your life with happiness, make each hour bright, and bring you light and gladness. Count you blessings one by one, when twilight falls and toil of day is done; and in sweet peace they'll come again to you, if you will count your blessings each day through.*

David, the Psalmist, said: *Bless the Lord O my Soul and forget not all his benefits*

Jesus says: *Tell what great things God has done for you*

So let us, **Recall** what God has done for us, and let us **Recount** what God has done - to our family, friends and the people we meet or phone today.

Our second **hymn** is: Give thanks with a grateful heart. by Henry Smith

Give thanks with a grateful heart, give thanks to the Holy One;

Give thanks because he's given Jesus Christ his Son.

Give thanks with a grateful heart, give thanks to the Holy One;

Give thanks because he's given Jesus Christ his Son.

And now let the weak say 'I am strong', let the poor say 'I am rich',  
because of what the Lord has done for us

And now let the weak say 'I am strong', let the poor say 'I am rich',  
because of what the Lord has done for us. Give thanks.

Let us **pray**, first using the traditional General Thanksgiving

Almighty God, Father of all mercies, we thine unworthy servants do give thee most humble and hearty thanks for all thy goodness and loving kindness to us and to all men. We bless thee for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all for thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ. for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. And we beseech thee, give us that due sense of all thy mercies, that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful, and that we show forth thy praise not only with our lips but with our lives, by giving up ourselves to thy service and by walking before thee in holiness and righteousness all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost be all honour and glory, world without end. **Amen**

We pray for our world - naturally and nationally, environmentally and socially

For the church - locally and internationally, living and serving in plenty or in poverty, in ease or in extremity

For those who need our prayers - the young and old, the healthy and the sick, the tearful and the thankful

For those needing the good news of Christ crucified, risen and coming again, and for those sharing the good news of Jesus publically and personally.

And so we pray:

Almighty God, who hast given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplications unto thee; and dost promise that where two or three are gathered together in thy Name thou wilt grant their requests; fulfil now, O Lord, the desires and petitions of thy servants, as may be most expedient for them; granting them in this world knowledge of the Truth, and in the world to come life everlasting **Amen**

We sum up all our praises and petitions in **the Prayer our Lord 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 them that 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

Our final **hymn** is: Tell out my soul *by Timothy Dudley-Smith*

1. Tell out my souls the greatness of the Lord; unnumbered blessings give my spirit voice

Tender to me the promise of his word; in God my Saviour shall my heart rejoice.

2 Tell out my soul the greatness of his name; make known his might, the deeds his arm has done;

His mercy sure, from age to age the same; his holy name, the Lord, the Mighty One.

3 Tell out my soul the glories of his Word; firm is his promise, and his mercy sure

Tell out my soul the greatness of the Lord to children's children and for evermore.

### **Blessing**

Now unto him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless in the presence of his glory with exceeding joy; to God only wise our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever

**Amen**

And the Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you, the Lord turn his face toward you and give you his peace. **Amen**

*Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England,*

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Isaiah 65: 1-9 (p751)

1 "I was sought by those who did not ask for Me; I was found by those who did not seek Me. I said, 'Here I am, here I am,' to a nation that was not called by My name.

2 I have stretched out My hands all day long to a rebellious people, Who walk in a way that is not good, According to their own thoughts;

3 A people who provoke Me to anger continually to My face; Who sacrifice in gardens, And burn incense on altars of brick;

4 Who sit among the graves, And spend the night in the tombs; Who eat swine's flesh, And the broth of abominable things is in their vessels;

5 Who say, 'Keep to yourself, Do not come near me, For I am holier than you!' These are smoke in My nostrils, A fire that burns all the day.

6 "Behold, it is written before Me: I will not keep silence, but will repay - Even repay into their bosom -

7 Your iniquities and the iniquities of your fathers together," Says the LORD, "Who have burned incense on the mountains And blasphemed Me on the hills; Therefore I will measure their former work into their bosom."

8 Thus says the LORD: "As the new wine is found in the cluster, And one says, 'Do not destroy it, for a blessing is in it,' so will I do for My servants' sake, that I may not destroy them all.

9 I will bring forth descendants from Jacob, And from Judah an heir of My mountains; My elect shall inherit it, And My servants shall dwell there.