

Worshipping in Isolation but together Linton Team Churches



Now those who were scattered went about preaching the word Acts 8:4

Virtual Sunday

21st June 2020

[Luminous Max Richter](#)

Our buildings might be closed but the church is still alive

Whilst walking towards the church recently I felt sustained by the building in the distance, supporting from afar. The churches might be closed but we are still worshipping and praying.



Preparation

Keep a short silence , breath deeply, still your heart, reach out mentally to all worshipping at the same time, apart but together.

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful people, and kindle in us the fire of our love; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

Collect

Lord, you have taught us that all our doings without love are nothing worth: send your Holy Spirit and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of love, the true bond of peace and of all virtues, without which whoever lives is counted dead before you. Grant this for your only Son Jesus Christ's sake, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

Psalm 69: 8-11. (12-17). 18-20

In your great mercy, answer me O God.

Surely, for your sake have I suffered reproach, *
and shame has covered my face.

I have become a stranger to my own kindred, *
an alien to my mother's children.

In your great mercy, answer me O God.

Zeal for your house has eaten me up; *
the scorn of those who scorn you has fallen upon me.

I humbled myself with fasting, *
but that was turned to my reproach.

In your great mercy, answer me O God.

[I put on sack-cloth also, *
and became a byword among them.

Those who sit at the gate murmur against me, *
and the drunkards make songs about me.

But as for me, this is my prayer to you, *
at the time you have set, O Lord:

In your great mercy, answer me O God.

"In your great mercy, O God, *
answer me with your unfailing help.

Save me from the mire; do not let me sink; *
let me be rescued from those who hate me
and out of the deep waters.

Let not the torrent of waters wash over me,
neither let the deep swallow me up; *
do not let the Pit shut its mouth upon me.

In your great mercy, answer me O God.]

Answer me, O Lord, for your love is kind; *
in your great compassion, turn to me.'

"Hide not your face from your servant; *
be swift and answer me, for I am in distress.

Draw near to me and redeem me; *
because of my enemies deliver me.

In your great mercy, answer me O God.

Gospel reading Matthew 10:24-39

Here the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew
Jesus summoned the twelve and sent them out with the following
instruction:

A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the master; it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher, and the slave like the master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household! So have no fear of them; for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. And even the hairs of your head are all counted. So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows. Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven. Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; ³⁶and one's foes will be members of one's own household. Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. **Amen**

Reflection

The most repeated command in the New Testament surprised me. The most repeated command is 'do not be afraid.' In this passage alone Jesus says do not be afraid three times.

The first reference to fear in the bible is Adam and Eve, before they sinned they did not experience fear. But after they disobeyed God we find the first expression of fear. Since that time, fear has been part of our human existence, and never more than at this time.

Fear is coming from all sides today, fear of illness, fear of economic collapse, fear of large scale conflicts overseas, fear of inequality and fear of climate change.

Fear can be debilitating fear can stop us achieving our full potential and fear can paralyze us. Jesus is not forbidding experiencing the emotion of fear but teaching his disciples that they are not to be paralyzed by it, cowered by it, or prevented from accomplishing their mission because of it.

He does not say that following him will be easy, it will not. He says no servant is above his master what happens to him will happen to them, he is persecuted they will be persecuted. They will be misunderstood, there will be family conflict. They will become separated from the Jewish race.

When I first became a Licensed Lay Minister I soon found that some of my old friends and I would never be as close as we once were. If anyone ever tries to tell you that following Jesus is easy- don't believe them. It is the hardest thing you will ever attempt to do. Some will mock and question and belittle.

Jesus says , 'Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.'

If we are going to be followers of Jesus Christ, we can forget about playing it safe. If we like to be comfortable and not think too much about the troubles of our neighbour then Christianity is not for us, if we want to take the easy way and only spend time with those who are 'just like us' instead of sitting with the rough sleeper who has not showered for a while, then Christianity is not for us. Christianity is 'messy business.'

Jesus says, 'anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me'

To be a follower of Jesus Christ means that we will not only endure inconvenience, but rather, like Jesus, we must willingly choose to sacrifice everything, including family and life itself, to be a true follower.

However Jesus is with us every step of the way he is saying 'I'm here.
Don't be afraid' Amen

Prayers and intercessions

Jesus Christ, you travelled through towns and villages curing every disease and illness. At your command, the sick were made well. Come to our aid now, in the midst of the global spread of the coronavirus, that we may experience your healing love.

Heal those who are sick with the virus. May they regain their strength and health through quality medical care.

Heal us from our fear, which prevents nations from working together and neighbours from helping one another.

Heal us from our pride, which can make us claim invulnerability to a disease that knows no borders.

Jesus Christ, healer of all, stay by our side in this time of uncertainty and sorrow.

Be with those who have died from the virus. May they be at rest with you in your eternal peace.

Be with the families of those who are sick or have died. As they worry and grieve, defend them from illness and despair. May they know your peace.

Be with the doctors, nurses, researchers and all medical professionals who seek to heal and help those affected and who put themselves at risk in the process. May they know your protection and peace.

Be with the leaders of all nations. Give them the foresight to act with charity and true concern for the well-being of the people they are meant to serve. Give them the wisdom to invest in long-term solutions that will help prepare for or prevent future outbreaks. May they know your peace, as they work together to achieve it on earth.

Whether we are home or abroad, surrounded by many people suffering from this illness or only a few, Jesus Christ, stay with us as we endure and mourn, persist and prepare. In place of our anxiety, give us your peace.

Jesus Christ, heal us. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Traditional

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

Contemporary

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 for ever. Amen

Silence is kept

Faithful God, may we who have shared in this time of worship,
glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, our salvation and
hope, who reigns as Lord now and forever.

Fill us, Good Lord with your Spirit of love; and as you have fed
us with your presence, so make us one in heart and mind, in
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Let us bless the Lord,

Thanks be to God.

Jesus remember me