

## Traditional Home service Sunday 17th Oct

### OPENING PRAYER

God, the giver of life, whose Holy Spirit wells up within your Church:  
by the Spirit's gifts equip us to live the gospel of Christ and make us eager to do your will, that we may share with the whole creation the joys of eternal life; through 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

### PRAYER OF PENITENCE

Let us admit to God the sin which always confronts us.

**Almighty God, our heavenly Father, we have sinned against you, through our own fault, in thought, and word, and deed, and in what we have left undone. We are heartily sorry, and repent of all our sins. For your Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, forgive us all that is past; and grant that we may serve you in newness of life to the glory of your name. Amen.**

### PRAISE

Let everything be said and done in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God through Jesus Christ. Sing psalms, hymns and sacred songs:

Let us sing to God with thankful hearts.  
Open our lips, Lord:  
**and we shall praise your name.**

HYMN 1 (*O Lord my God*)

READINGS - Nehemiah 1

TALK

### CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

### PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

*Spend some time praying for our nation, our community and our families.*

### 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 for ever. Amen.

HYMN 2 (*Blessed assurance*)

### CONCLUSION

May God give to you and to all those you love his comfort and his peace, his light and his joy, in this world and the next; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.  
Amen.

## HYMNS TO USE

O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder  
Consider all the worlds thy hands have made,  
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder,  
Thy power throughout the universe displayed:

### *Refrain*

*Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to thee:*

*How great thou art! How great thou art!*

*Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to thee:*

*How great thou art! How great thou art!*

When through the woods and forest glades I wander  
And hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees,  
When I look down from lofty mountain grandeur,  
And hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze:

### *Refrain*

And when I think that God, his Son not sparing,  
Sent him to die, I scarce can take it in,  
That on the cross, my burden gladly bearing,  
He bled and died to take away my sin.

### *Refrain*

When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation  
And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart!  
Then I shall bow in humble adoration,  
And there proclaim, "My God, how great thou art!"

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!  
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!  
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,  
Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood

### *Chorus:*

*This is my story, this is my song,*

*Praising my Saviour all the day long;*

*This is my story, this is my song,*

*Praising my Saviour all the day long.*

Perfect submission, perfect delight,  
Visions of rapture now burst on my sight;  
Angels, descending, bring from above  
Echoes of mercy, whispers of love.

Perfect submission, all is at rest,  
I in my Savior am happy and blest,  
Watching and waiting, looking above,  
Filled with His goodness, lost in His love.

Sermon - Louise Morton

Nehemiah 1 'What's on your heart to do?'

Today we're taking a look at the book of Nehemiah, it's a story I have been telling and continue to tell in assemblies at the moment.

It's a great book!

I first want to set the scene and get us thinking, nearly 2500 years ago! Nehemiah was cup bearer to the king Artaxerxes at Susa.

He was in exile along with thousands of others far from Israel, his home city Jerusalem was nearly 900 miles away. Travellers come from Jerusalem including his brother, they tell him Jerusalem is in a terrible state, broken, derelict walls, burnt gates...

He is devastated, he weeps, he prays, he fasts ....

One of his prayers is recorded, it's around the themes:

Who God is, declarations,

Sorry for our mess, repentance.

Pressing in to the promises of God.

Great way to pray!

He decides he needs to do something..

'What my God put in my heart to do for Jerusalem'

Think about....

What has God put on my heart to do for .....

Could be Bozeat, Wollaston, could be your family, wife, son...? ... friend, neighbour, yourself?

Nehemiah has waited all winter...it's now spring.

Timing!

He's prayed and fasted, so he's prepared himself spiritually.

He risks going before the King looking sad, praying for favour with the King.

And he's chosen well who he asks !

Need to think about other books from this era, Esther and Ezra it builds a picture....

King Artaxerxes ruled a vast area of ancient world, and there is recent history of him helping the Jewish people.

As Nehemiah serves the king it's written 'with the Queen sitting alongside him' few

years back remember reading this and thinking could it be Esther, is that why she's mentioned?

Don't know for sure.... But some will say it's likely! And I love this thought... all the years after her own recorded story, still at work for her people while a Queen in a foreign land!

We know from book of Ezra ten years previously Artaxerxes had blessed and helped the priest Ezra to enable him to get worship going in Jerusalem, generously giving him resources for the temple.

So here is a king who accepts the existence of the God of Israel, and has personal, and family history of coming to the aid of the Jewish people!

Nehemiah has increased chance of success!

He is asking into the right context!

Nehemiah looks sad, the king asks him what's wrong.

Nehemiah is ready, he explains he's sad about Jerusalem, and he asks for permission, materials, favour, and safe passage..

And gets it all !

Nehemiah:' I said If it please the king, and if the king thinks well of me, send me to Judah, to the city where my family is buried, so that I can rebuild it'

It's a long journey! All that way on a donkey, like going from the top of Scotland right down to Cornwall.

They arrive in Jerusalem,

Immediately there is opposition, Sanballet and Tobiah interestingly! Are upset and angry that anyone would come to look after the interests of the people of Israel.

After three days Nehemiah goes out at night to look at the condition of the city, he hasn't yet told people why he is there.

It's so bad, so derelict, his donkey can't manage.

God had put it on his heart to do something for Jerusalem but he couldn't do it alone!

He rouses the people.

Nehemiah: 'Look how bad things are, Come let's build the wall, let's get rid of our disgrace!

The king and God are on my side! ‘

The people said yes!

They got building each in their own area....

Sanballet and Tobiah immediately started mocking!

What do you think you're doing? It'll never work.

Your building is rubbish!

The people started to complain about how hard the work was! About having opposition.

Nehemiah spoke to the people: ‘ Remember who God is! Remember why you're doing this!

It's for your families!

Put your minds on the Master, great and awesome! ‘

And the people went back to building, they had to keep watch, all the while dressed and armed but they kept going!

Sum up

So many lessons from Nehemiah, so ancient yet so relevant!

What's on your heart?

Has God put it there?

Might not be something we can do alone may need to rouse others too?!

Nehemiah prepared himself well before he asked the king, he'd prayed, fasted, waited..timing

He asked someone who had a history of helping!

Expect opposition, last week Adrian mentioned in passing as well as the blessings of serving God, persecution thrown in too, don't go looking for it, but don't be surprised! And don't be put off!

Nehemiah says Put your minds on the master great and awesome! Any time we're impressed with the size of the problem, it's because we've lost sight of the size of our God! ( Bill John son)

Prayer along the lines of:

Let's put our minds on the master great and awesome!

Let's ask ourselves, and the Lord, what might he of put on our hearts to do...

May it be something that involves rousing others to similar thinking.....

Are we prepared for opposition, by keeping our focus on the one who is bigger!

And knowing it's what He has put on our hearts to do...

Amen