



AT HOME SERVICE

Sunday 4th May 2025

compiled by Vicki Penfound - Lay Assistant

Opening words: *Psalm 30 v 1, 11-12*

I will exalt you, LORD,
for you lifted me out of the depths
and did not let my enemies gloat over me.
You turned my wailing into dancing;
you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy,
that my heart may sing your praises and not be silent.
LORD my God, I will praise you forever.

Hymn: 319 Singing the Faith

1] Christ triumphant, ever reigning,
Saviour, Master, King!
Lord of heaven, our lives sustaining,
hear us as we sing:
*Yours the glory and the crown,
the high renown, the eternal name.*

2] Word incarnate, truth revealing,
Son of Man on earth!
power and majesty concealing
by your humble birth:
Yours the glory...

3] Suffering servant, scorned, ill - treated,
victim crucified!
death is through the cross defeated,
sinners justified:
Yours the glory...

4] Priestly king, enthroned for ever
high in heaven above!
sin and death and hell shall never
stifle hymns of love:
Yours the glory...

5] So, our hearts and voices raising
through the ages long,
ceaselessly upon you gazing,
this shall be our song:
Yours the glory...

Michael Saward (b.1932)

Prayer:

Glorious Saviour, we worship you.
Bathed in the light of Easter joy,
We celebrate your Risen Life,
Through which we all have victory
Over the power of sin and death.
Clothed in your righteousness,
Enveloped in your grace,
We thank you for your everlasting love
Which gives us life.
Alleluia! What a Saviour!

The Lord's Prayer

Hymn: 363 Singing the Faith

My Jesus, My Saviour
Lord there is none like you
All of my days, I want to praise
The wonders of Your mighty love
My comfort, my shelter
Tower of refuge and strength
Let every breath, all that I am
Never cease to worship You

*Shout to the Lord, all the earth let us sing
Power and majesty, praise to the King!
Mountains bow down and the seas will roar
At the sound of your name!
I sing for joy at the work of your hands
Forever I'll love you, forever I'll stand
Nothing compares to the promise I have in You*

Darlene Zschech (b.1965)

Reading: John 21 v 1-19

Afterwards Jesus appeared again to his disciples, by the Sea of Galilee. It happened this way: Simon Peter, Thomas (also known as Didymus), Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples were together. 'I'm going out to fish,' Simon Peter told them, and they said, 'We'll go with you.' So they went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not realise that it was Jesus. He called out to them, 'Friends, haven't you any fish?' 'No,' they answered.

He said, 'Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some.' When they did, they were unable to haul the net in because of the large number of fish.

Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, 'It is the Lord!' As soon as Simon Peter heard him say, 'It is the Lord,' he wrapped his outer garment round him (for he had taken it off) and jumped into the water. The other disciples followed in the boat, towing the net full of fish, for they were not far from shore, about a hundred metres. When they landed, they saw a fire of burning coals there with fish on it, and some bread. Jesus said to them, 'Bring some of the fish you have just caught.' So Simon Peter climbed back into the boat and dragged the net ashore. It was full of large fish, 153, but even with so many the net was not torn. Jesus said to them, 'Come and have breakfast.' None of the disciples dared ask him, 'Who are you?' They knew it was the Lord. Jesus came, took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. This was now the third time Jesus appeared to his disciples after he was raised from the dead. When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?' 'Yes, Lord,' he said, 'you know that I love you.'

Jesus said, 'Feed my lambs.' Again Jesus said, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' He answered, 'Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.'

Jesus said, 'Take care of my sheep.'

The third time he said to him, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?'

Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, 'Do you love me?' He said, 'Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you.'

Jesus said, 'Feed my sheep. Very truly I tell you, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go.' Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, 'Follow me!'

Reflection:

This reading focusses on Peter. He's the impulsive gobby one we love because he represents so many of us. We know more about him than the other disciples, he is very fallible, but also very sincere. A 'heart on sleeve' kind of chap.

Here we find him at a loss of what to do. He has seen Jesus twice in the upper room, but only temporarily. Jesus went away again, and they had no way of trying to find him. So, Peter does what a lot of us would do. Go back to what he knows, find some familiarity and hopefully some income.

Jesus meets with the disciples in the familiar, he shares the memory of Peter's calling which is found in Luke chapter five and the scene plays out in a similar way. Peter must have felt that he had déjà vu all over again as he obeyed instructions once more to let out the nets. Three years before, the haul of fish and the invitation to become a fisher of people had changed his life. Now he was confused, things had not worked out as he had thought and here he was, wondering what on earth he should be doing. Jesus was alive again, but Peter had let him down. He had denied him three times, terrified of the consequences of association with his Lord and friend. But here, back to where his journey began, Jesus had found him and was repeating the scene of his calling.

After the al fresco breakfast it was time for a personal chat. Peter, full of joy and apprehension was recommissioned as a disciple and leader. The three questions and affirmations cancelling out the three denials that Peter had made by a Jerusalem fireside a few weeks earlier.

Peter represents us as we stumble along on our walk of faith. There are times when we feel that we have failed in some way. We may go backwards to old familiar ways thinking that we find security there. But just like Peter, we find that Our Lord has already thought of that and meets with us there. Gently reminding us of the calling on our own lives, prompting memories of his life changing presence. Years may have passed since we felt full and vibrant in our spiritual journey. The Risen Christ meets with us, he enables us to confront our weaknesses, with love not judgement. And with Peter, we are all given the command, "Feed my sheep." And like Peter, we are not alone in this task of love, for the Helper, the Holy Spirit is with us.

A prayer written by John Bradbury (URC Prayer Handbook 2022)

Alert to your call

O God of challenge and transformation,

You call us to follow in Christ's way.

By your Spirit, make us alert to the call

That comes through rushing wind

Or still small voice.

When we have lost the path

And need to be stopped in our tracks,

Shock us back into the way of Christ.

When we need feeding like lost sheep,
May we know the good shepherd who comes to us.

You are the God of all creation,
The one worthy to receive power and wealth,
Wisdom and might.

Yet you call even us to service –
Humble, frail and broken as we are.

May we hear your call to us
To be proclaimers of good news for all,
In word and deed.

We pray that all may hear of Christ
Who offers newness of life,
New beginnings and transformation
Of our old ways,
That ultimately all may come to worship you
In your Kingdom.

Hymn: 666 Singing the Faith

1] Master, speak! Thy servant heareth,
Waiting for Thy gracious word,
Longing for Thy voice that cheereth
Master, let it now be heard.
I am list'ning, Lord, for Thee;
What hast Thou to say to me?

2] Speak to me by name, O Master,
Let me know it is to me;
Speak, that I may follow faster,
With a step more firm and free,
Where the Shepherd leads the flock
In the shadow of the Rock!

3] Master, speak! though least and lowest,
Let me not unheard depart;
Master, speak! for oh, Thou knowest
All the yearning of my heart.
Knowest all its truest need;
Speak! and make me blest indeed.

4] Master, speak! and make me ready,
When Thy voice is truly heard,
With obedience glad and steady,
Still to follow every word
I am listening, Lord, for Thee:
Master, speak, oh, speak to me!

Frances Ridley Havergal (1836-1879)

Blessing:

May the Light of the Risen Christ
Be our constant guide.
May we journey on in faith and joy
Empowered by his eternal love. Amen