

SERVICE SHEET

9th August - Trinity 9

Canticle A Song of God's Greatness

Bless the Lord, O my soul.

O Lord my God, how excellent is your greatness!

You are clothed with majesty and honour,
wrapped in light as in a garment.

The sun knows the time for its setting
You make darkness that it may be night.

O Lord, how manifold are your works!
In wisdom you have made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures.

When you send forth your spirit, they are created,
and you renew the face of the earth.

May the glory of the Lord endure for ever;
may the Lord rejoice in his works;

I will sing to the Lord as long as I live;
I will make music to my God while I have my being.

Psalm 104.1,2,21b,22a,26,32,33,35

**Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

Collect

Almighty God,
who sent your Holy Spirit
to be the life and light of your Church:
open our hearts to the riches of your grace,
that we may bring forth the fruit of the Spirit
in love and joy and peace;
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

New Testament

Romans 10.5-15

⁵ Moses writes concerning the righteousness that comes from the law, that 'the person who does these things will live by them.' ⁶ But the righteousness that comes from faith says, 'Do not say in your heart, "Who will ascend into heaven?"' (that is, to bring Christ down) ⁷ or "Who will descend into the abyss?"' (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). ⁸ But what does it say? 'The word is near you,
on your lips and in your heart'



(that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); ⁹ because if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved. ¹¹ The scripture says, 'No one who believes in him will be put to shame.' ¹² For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. ¹³ For, 'Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.'
¹⁴ But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? ¹⁵ And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!'

Psalm 85.8-13

⁸ Let me hear what God the LORD will speak,
for he will speak peace to his people,
to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts.

**⁹ Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him,
that his glory may dwell in our land.**

¹⁰ Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet;
righteousness and peace will kiss each other.

**¹¹ Faithfulness will spring up from the ground,
and righteousness will look down from the sky.**

¹² The LORD will give what is good,
and our land will yield its increase.

**¹³ Righteousness will go before him,
and will make a path for his steps.**

**Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

Gospel Reading **Matthew 14.22-33**

²² Immediately he made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. ²³ And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, ²⁴ but by this time the boat, battered by the waves, was far from the land, for the wind was against them. ²⁵ And early in the morning he came walking towards them on the lake. ²⁶ But when the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified, saying, 'It is a ghost!' And they cried out in fear. ²⁷ But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, 'Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid.'

²⁸ Peter answered him, 'Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.' ²⁹ He said, 'Come.' So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came towards Jesus. ³⁰ But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, 'Lord, save me!' ³¹ Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, 'You of little faith, why did you doubt?' ³² When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. ³³ And those in the boat worshipped him, saying, 'Truly you are the Son of God.'

SERMON

May the words of my mouth and the thoughts of all our hearts be now and always acceptable in your sight, O Lord our strength and our redeemer.

Over the last few weeks, the New Testament reading has been from Paul's letter to the church at Rome. With the honorable exception of Simon last week, most of us who have preached haven't really spent much time on the epistle and have tended to concentrate on the gospel. This is quite understandable in many ways. In Romans, Paul sets out in some detail his understanding of the whole of the history of Israel and how it was brought to fulfillment in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. In places it is quite complex and relies on a quite detailed understanding of the Old Testament background. It is sometimes difficult to understand short excerpts from it without really considering their context in detail. The gospel readings by contrast tend to be much more self-contained and easier to address in a relatively short sermon. The letter does however contain some passages that can be considered by themselves more easily, and today's is one of these. In the passage Paul addresses one of his major themes, indeed one of the major themes of scripture – the concept of salvation, of being saved. He writes

Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved

The idea of salvation was very common in Paul's world, across a variety of religions. For example Heracles, or Hercules, when worshipped as a God, was often referred to as Heracles Soter, or Saviour. For Jews, salvation was a national concept, the restoration of kingdom of Israel under God's rule through a Messiah – being saved from the oppression and tyranny of surrounding nations. There is something of that in the psalm we have just read together.

Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him, that his glory may dwell in our land.

For followers of Jesus, salvation is something more. Although I hesitate to talk about the Greek text in a context where some of the hearers actually know New Testament Greek, unlike me who just reads about it in a dictionary (I'm only a part time clergyman after all), the word from which salvation comes is "sozo" which carries the meanings of being saved, but also of healing, preserving and being made whole. Indeed many of the healing miracles in the gospels are talked about in terms of salvation. The concept of salvation in Christian terms is thus essentially personal, about becoming the person God wants us to be, becoming whole, but nonetheless it is also about being part of a community. We often talk of Jesus saving us FROM, – perhaps personal circumstances, sin, death. But we can also look at it from another point of view, that we also saved FOR something. In the gospel reading we see both aspects. – the apostles, and in particular Peter, were saved FROM the wind and the waves, and the turmoil and evil they represent, and they were saved FOR the role that he and they would play in the future, as witnesses of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, and as leaders in the early church community. Saved from the things that assail us, and saved for our life together in the church.

Now, many of the activities that we do in church aren't unique to us as a church - such as helping the needy by supporting the food bank for example, or caring for the environment— other groups and individuals do that sort of thing too, with other religions or none. That is not to downplay them – it is part of our Christian duty and mission to be so involved. But salvation is something unique to the church – our USP, our unique selling point for those who don't know the jargon. Again, to use a modern idiom it is the church's Killer App. Salvation is ultimately what we as the church, are about, our unique offering to others

Paul then goes on to muse about how people are saved.

if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved.

Salvation is simply through belief in Jesus and the working out of his Lordship in our lives. He continues

But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent?

I have heard this verse used, quite properly, as a call to mission, a call to full time vocations. But I would suggest there is a wide application too. Salvation isn't a one-off process – we hear the message of Jesus once and respond, and that's it. Salvation, as I said, is about being made whole, becoming more and more the sort of person God wants us to be, a lifetime journey. And we need to hear the message of salvation on that journey, time after time right the way through our lives. I know of no better way of putting it than that of Katherine Hankey from 1866.

Tell me the old, old story, of unseen things above,

Of Jesus and His glory, of Jesus and His love

Tell me the story always, if you would really be,

In any time of trouble, a comforter to me.

And again

Tell me the same old story, when you have cause to fear

That this world's empty glory is costing me too dear;

And when the Lord's bright glory s dawning on my soul,

Tell me the old, old story: "Christ Jesus makes thee whole."

We need to hear the story of salvation frequently throughout our lives – times of peace, in times of turmoil, when the wind and waves threaten to engulf us, at our end. And that is a role for all of us to play for each other – to remind each other of the old, old story of salvation, in acts of compassion, love, care as much as words. For the laity to remind the clergy of their salvation as much as vice versa. Our role should be as Isaiah said, quoted by Paul

"How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"

But there are wider considerations. The wider role of church is to bring the message of salvation, healing and wholeness to those around us and the society we live in. During the pandemic we have learnt a great deal about how to do this and the virtual services organised by a large number of churches of all types have touched very many people. The message of salvation has been preached very widely and we should give thanks for that. No doubt some of these initiatives will continue after the pandemic. But there are also other challenges, and large-scale change in church and ministry are inevitable when the threat of the pandemic is over. Partly this is due to financial reasons, but also because the world around us has changed, and we too need to change. Nationally the Archbishop of York is leading a commission to look at the future shape of ministry. Locally Lichfield diocese is talking of "transitional arrangements", partly because of a current shortfall of several million pounds. Change is coming, and as always can be

threatening, but can also bring great opportunities for reshaping the ministry of the church to better reach out to those around us to bring the message of salvation in new ways. But it seems to me that there is a danger here too, that whilst building on the success of the virtual church, we could undermine the need for a local presence, which is so important. The message of salvation, the old, old story, needs to be heard through conversation, through a smile, through touch, as much as over the internet. We need to pray earnestly for those involved, that they may have much wisdom to know the way forward in this perhaps most turbulent of times. A uniquely difficult task – but in the presence of our Lord who commands the wind and the waves and encourages his disciples to step out of the relative safety of their boat and take enormous risks. We need to pray that the message of Jesus, the message of his salvation may still be proclaimed in many ways; that those who hear may believe, that they might be able to find wholeness and fulfillment in Jesus, not just once, but whenever they need it. We end with the words of another 19th century hymn writer, this time an American, Francis Crosby

This is my story, this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long.

We still need to hear the old, old story, our story, of Jesus our Saviour, and it is a story that the church must continue to tell in the future, to each other, to those around us, to our city and our country.

Revd. Chris Baker

FOR YOUR PRAYERS

ST MICHAEL

Those newly in need of prayer

Nick Rutter, John and Sonia Doidge, Jeyan Anketell.

Those in continuing special need of prayer:

Anthony Staples aged 6, Audrey Egleston, Colin Eastwood, Yvonne Harper, Ian and Judith Watson, Alison Cox-Toplis, Julian & Wendy, Jamie, Gary and Denise, Sam Bassett, Mark Berry, Dorothy Clayton, Jo Cobb, Dottie Collins, Robert Harris, Bill Hill, James Knight, Marielouise Oliver, Arthur Palin, John Tipper, Sheila Vaughan, Renee Wellings, Felicity Woodfield

Those who have died

Reg Kirk

ST JOHN

Those who are ill and their carers:

Pat Crowe, Jo Hearn, Ann Kinson, Allan Law

Post Communion Prayer

Holy Father,

who gathered us here around the table of your Son

to share this meal with the whole household of God:

in that new world where you reveal the fullness of your peace,

gather people of every race and language

to share in the eternal banquet of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

CHURCH NOTICES

9th August



A VERY WARM WELCOME BACK to everyone here today.

AIDS TO WORSHIP

~Large print orders of service & hymn books

~Hearing Loops at St Michael - Please set your hearing aid to 'T' to listen.

~Gluten-free wafers are available.

WORSHIP NEWS

SUNDAY WORSHIP IN CHURCH – PLEASE REMEMBER TO...

- Sanitise your hands on the way in – sanitisers are available
- Keep a proper distance at all times
- Sit only in seats as indicated
- Leave the church as instructed by the clergy and do not stay in church for conversation
- Conversation may continue in the open space of the churchyard
- Take with you the Sunday service sheet when you go
- You may wear a mask if you wish, but it is not required
- Be aware of others at all times
- Children are welcome but there will be no toys or activities provided

CHURCHES OPEN FOR PRIVATE PRAYER **St Michael's Lichfield** is open between 2.00pm and 4.00pm on Tuesday and Thursday afternoon's only.

St John's at Wall is open on Wednesdays and Sundays from 10.00am to 4.00pm. In both churches there is provision for hand sanitization, cleaning and social distancing.

WORSHIP BY ZOOM will be on the first and third Sundays of each month. The next service is on.

Sunday 16th August 6.00pm

You can join the service from 5.45pm. The service will last about 40mins.

If you have not had a link by Friday at 11am please contact the office
office@stmichaelmaryjohn.org.uk

CHURCH CHARITY DONATIONS

We have missed collecting for 3 of our charities, due to the church being closed for the last few months. The charities are Embrace the Middle East, Pathway and USPG. If you would like to donate to all or any of these charities, can I ask you to do so directly to them. You can find details of the charities online and their instructions regarding donations. If anyone has any problems with this please contact me on 01543 251863 or email me at brendaliptrot@outlook.com (I will be away from 11th to 27th August) We are intending to collect for WaterAid as usual at the Harvest Festival Service, using the white envelopes. Many thanks, *Brenda Liptrot*

FLOWERS AT ST MICHAEL'S Now that we're back in church, if you would like to do the flowers, please sign the rota at the back of church. Flowers will be provided. ***Diana***

ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH ROOF APPEAL. We urgently need money to repair the roof on the southside of the church. If you can donate please use the blue envelopes, fill in the front if you can gift aid and make all cheques payable to the 'PCC of St Michael and St Mary, Lichfield'. Please mark the envelope 'Church Roof'. This will really help the count team

Many thanks

Brenda Liptrot

MAGAZINE

MAGAZINE EDITOR Would you consider becoming the new editor from January 2021? The role of editor is not an onerous task. **No IT skills required** as Angie puts together the magazine and formats it.

The tasks are

- encouraging people to write articles,
- coming up with ideas for new features,
- gently reminding the Ministry Team members when it is their turn to write the Reflection,
- finding a suitable quotation for the And finally.... feature;
- reading through the magazine before it is printed.

Please do consider whether this is something you could take on – maybe with a friend? I look forward to hearing from you, on 01543 252123 or at dkbull053@hotmail.co.uk

David Bull

LECTURE SERIES **17th – 21st August**

The Church of England: Where have we come from and where are we going? Each session will begin at **2.30pm**. Papers will last approximately 30-40 minutes, followed by discussion. To register for one or all of the sessions, please email Rev Dr Melanie Clark at revdr.melclark@gmail.com, stating which sessions you would like to attend. We hope to see you there. Please see our website for further details:

<https://www.stmichaelmaryjohn.org.uk/study-week.html>

OTHER NOTICES

LICHFIELD FOOD BANK. Thank you for your continuing support for Lichfield Foodbank. The latest needs are

- Tinned tuna
- Tinned vegetables
- Biscuits
- Tinned fruit

BIBLE STUDY THE BOOK OF DANIEL- Everyone is welcome to join the Zoom meeting on **Wednesday 12th August at 10.30am** and listen to the members of the ministry team as they explain the history behind and meaning of the stories in this book. If you would like a link so that you can join in, please contact Angie in the office.

CONGRATULATIONS to Josh Sneddon on being appointed as School Captain at King Edward's for the coming year. He follows Will Stevens and Charlotte Bull, who also held the post. The School Captain is assisted by two girls and two boys in the student leadership team and David Baker and Andrew Dyson have both filled those roles in recent years. David Baker has been awarded his PhD in the past year and Bethan John is close to completing hers. Bethan is also singing in the Chester Cathedral Nave Choir. There are many other success stories and they demonstrate the very high calibre of young people that we have at St Michael's, all helped by our very supportive congregation. *Ted Green*

ENGLAND'S SAINTLY LANDSCAPE

Trevor James has recently published his book "England's Saintry Landscape" and has made 20 copies available to St Michael's for sale, at £10, proceeds go into Church funds. To buy a copy of Trevor's excellent book please 'phone Lyn Shiel (01543/320437) for details.

PARISH DIARY

Sunday 9th August

8:00am	Holy Communion	St Michael's
10:00am	Holy Communion	St Michael's
10:00am	Holy Communion	St John
11:00am	Paviers Trust Meeting	St John's
11:30am	Private Prayer	St John

Monday 10th August

8:15am	Morning Prayer	Zoom
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Tuesday 11th August

8:15am	Morning Prayer	Zoom
2:00pm	Private Prayer	St Michael's

Wednesday 12th August

All day	Private Prayer	St John
8:15am	Morning Prayer	Zoom
10.30am	Bible Study	Zoom

Thursday 13th August

OFFICE CLOSED

8:15am	Morning Prayer	Zoom
2:00pm	Private Prayer	St Michael's

Friday 14th August

8:15am	Morning Prayer	Zoom
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Saturday 15th August

Sunday 16th August

8:00am	Holy Communion	St Michael's
10:00am	Holy Communion	St Michael's
10:00am	Holy Communion	St John
11:30am	Private Prayer	St John
6:00pm	Evening Worship	Zoom