

Sunday Morning Resources

Sunday 6 July 2025 - The Third Sunday after Trinity

Lectionary Readings (depending on the kind of service you are leading, you may use one or more of the following readings – however, you **must** use the gospel reading, as this is what the homily is based on)

Isaiah 66.10-14; Psalm 66.1-8; Galatians 6.[1-6] 7-16; **Luke 10.1-11, 16-20**

Homily

Today's homily has been written by the Revd Rachel Rosborough, Vice Principal, Westcott House

I wonder, if you were asked to sum up the Christian faith, what you would say. Perhaps you would come up with something complex and comprehensive – the words of the Nicene creed perhaps? It would be appropriate given it has been an agreed declaration of faith for 1700 years! You may know it, or some of the other creeds off by heart. But maybe you would opt to capture the essence of the Christian faith in a more simple catchphrase such as 'God loves you?' Or 'Jesus said 'follow me''. The words of a creed, or the fact that God loves us capture truth and are statements of belief.

But 'follow me' is a call to action, it needs a response. It is the call we hear from Jesus to his first disciples, and to each of us today. It is the Christian's response to the statement of belief found in the ancient creeds and the good news that God loves us. As a result of what we believe we are called to become followers of Jesus. This is exciting and means embarking on a journey of discovery.

What might that journey look like?

It is all too easy, with a mixture of 2000 years of Christianity and the church, combined with the human tendency to be, on occasions, slightly selfish and inward looking, to hear the words follow me, and end up just hearing, gather round me and be my people. As if the call to follow Jesus is a call to join a holy club. And the danger is that we then can become a closed shop, a church of people meeting with each other and waiting together to follow Christ to the glories of heaven.

Today's gospel reading is a stark warning and a reminder that this is not what it means to follow Christ. I love the church and am a firm believer in the church being the place where Christians should gather to encourage one another, to pray, to praise, to confess, to have fellowship, to share in bread and wine, and at all times, to welcome in those seeking God. But today's gospel reminds us that that is not the whole story. It must not stop there.

When Jesus says come and follow me, it is in his next breath that he says now go out and share, go out and be, go out and bring, bring the good news and the peace of God to all. We follow Jesus, not straight into heaven, but in the footsteps that took him, God himself, into the world to bring the good news of the kingdom of God, the good news of peace and the good news of healing. We follow Jesus out into the world.

Here we are in chapter 10 of Luke's gospel. Chapter 8 has seen Jesus going about the place ministering, chapter 9 saw him sending out the 12 disciples to minister in his name, chapter 10 sees him sending out the 72, thought to be the number of nations in the known world at that time, to minister in his name and so it goes on in Luke and the other gospels. As Jesus faces his own death, he ensures that his followers are equipped to continue his work, his ministry. To take the good news and peace and healing of the kingdom of God to the world.

This is a reading about following Jesus. It is a reading about following him into the world that desperately needed and needs him. It's about following him into a world that aches to hear the message of the good news of the kingdom of God, aches to hear the good news of healing and peace.

It's a reading about following him into a world that may not always feel safe – like lambs before wolves the reading tells us, but we follow as he did, trusting in God our father who will never leave us or forsake us and who can redeem all things.

It's a reading about following him into situations where we need to be God's representative, where we need to defend the weak and oppressed, fight inequality and injustice, welcome the lonely, the sinful, the unworthy.

It's a reading about following Jesus into the world and entrusting ourselves in vulnerability to the world. When Jesus first came to earth, he did not do so in safety and in strength like some kind of divine superhero, rather as a baby accepting the hospitality of a stranger by making his first home in a stable. And so too we are called to accept the hospitality and welcome of those who first greet us. Not being called to be self-sufficient but relying on God and perhaps seeing a glimpse of him in the hospitality of a stranger.

It is a reading about following Jesus not alone as an individual but with the support and encouragement and companionship of our fellow disciples, brothers and sisters in Christ.

This sending out is not for the missionaries and vicars of the world, not for the special chosen few but for all Christians who have responded to the simple call 'follow me'. Because come and follow me also means go and share me.

We are called not to follow Jesus into church, not even to follow Jesus straight to heaven, not yet anyway, but we are called into an adventure by Jesus, not to be self-sufficient and independent, but rather to rely on God, on the hospitality of others and on our fellow Christians. We go out together, we build up genuine relationships with those we meet so that we then share the good news of the kingdom of God, of healing and of peace. That is what it is to be church – the body of Christ, in the world for the sake of the world. Amen

Ways to Engage all Generations

When different generations are gathered together in worship there is an opportunity to build relationships and to encounter God in our conversations as we build relationships and learn from each other no matter what our ages, stage of life or faith and for all present to feel included. Adding some wondering questions to the service at an appropriate moment can help to do this.

Wondering Questions: Some wondering questions that may help to engage all generations to ponder and explore during the talk, service or during the week may include (three or so) of the following style of questions:

- I wonder what your favourite part of the story/passage is? I wonder why that is?
- I wonder who your favourite character is? I wonder why that is?
- I wonder how _____ felt or I wonder how _____ felt when _____ happened?
- I wonder how you feel about _____?
- I wonder where you are in this story?
- I wonder what part of the story is about you?
- I wonder what the [tree, pearl, coin] could really be?
- I wonder why _____ said _____?
- I wonder what we can learn about God in this story?

Suggested intercessions

Jesus said, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore, ask the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest. Go on your way. See, I am sending you out...'

Loving God, we pray for the church. We thank you for the places in the world where the church is growing rapidly, where it is flourishing and we bring before you those places where it is more difficult, where there is the threat of division and the places where people are forced to meet in secret. We pray for all who minister in these places and ask that they would be strengthened, re-energised and encouraged. We pray for those wondering about ministry in any form, would you send your spirit to guide them, give them courage to step forward and to inspire them.

Jesus said, 'first say, "Peace to this house!"'

Loving God, we pray for the world. We thank you for places where people live in peace and we pray for those places where peace feels like a distant dream. We remember especially places of war and violence. Would you strengthen the hand of peace makers and peace keepers and turn the hearts of those set of violence to the ways of peace.

Jesus said, 'say to them, "The kingdom of God has come near to you."'

Loving God, we pray for those for whom faith is difficult, those who long to feel your presence and those who desperately need good news. We especially remember before you those who are sick, those who are lonely, those who need to take a new path and those who feel helpless or hopeless. May they discover good news, hope, healing and courage.

Jesus said, 'rejoice that your names are written in heaven.'

Loving God, we remember before you all those who have gone before us in faith, entrusting them once again to your love; and in communion with all the saints, we commit ourselves, one another, and our whole life to you. Amen

Suggested hymns/songs

Will you Come and Follow Me?

O Jesus I have Promised

I the Lord of Sea and Sky

Jesus Calls Us Here to Meet Him

Go Forth and Tell

All for Jesus

Beauty for Brokenness

Brother Sister Let Me Serve You

Christ is the One Who Calls

Lord of the Church, We Pray for Our Renewing

Activities to accompany the service

If you are looking for resources to accompany the service for engaging younger children, then there are lots of online resources. The following free to access/download resources may be useful starting points:

- <https://flamecreativekids.blogspot.com/>
- <https://www.pinterest.co.uk/MessyChurchBRF/>
- <https://www.faithinkids.org/>
- [reflectionary.org](https://www.reflectionary.org/) – lectionary-based resources
- [engageworship](https://www.engageworship.org/) – in particular 'Area 52' for lectionary-based material
- <https://www.bdeducation.org.uk/product-category/primary-age-5-11/>
(weekly@lectionary resource)