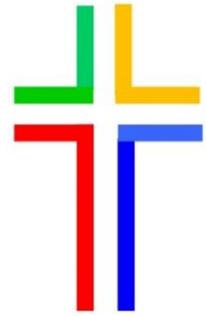


Week St Mary Methodist Church – Sunday 10 January



Camelford & Week St Mary Circuit has decided to close all its chapel buildings for worship due to the pandemic. So there will be no services at our chapel until further notice. We are of course continuing these weekly worship sheets that we will also be making available from the chapel notice board. We will also be developing the fortnightly videos to involve more people, especially young people from Bright Sparks.

Both the BBC and the ITV have talent shows with ‘voice’ in the title, The Voice on ITV and The Voice UK on BBC. Russell Watson, the singer is nicknamed ‘the voice’ due to his wonderful singing voice. Voices are so important in communications, our days are filled with voices of one kind and another, as long as our hearing permits. Our worship today is about the voice of God, the most important voice of all, which can be heard in all manner of ways.

PRAYER

Lord, Your voice is heard in creation.
You spoke and all of creation began.
Your word brought light into the darkness.
Your voice is powerful and strong.
We catch a hint of it in the mighty roar of a great storm. Lord, Your voice is heard in Jesus.
You called Him Your Beloved Son
when He was Baptised in the Jordan river.

When He spoke, He did so with Your authority, telling people about You, showing them how to live, healing in Your name. Lord, You are Father, Son and Holy Spirit. You still speak to Your people today. Fill us with Your Holy Spirit, that we may offer You all the praise and all the honour that You deserve.
The Lord will rule as king forever. **Amen.**

READINGS FOR TODAY Psalm 29:3-9

The voice of the Lord is heard on the seas;
the glorious God thunders, and his voice echoes over the ocean.
The voice of the Lord is heard in all its might and majesty.
The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars, even the cedars of Lebanon.
He makes the mountains of Lebanon jump like calves and makes Mount Hermon leap like a young bull.
The voice of the Lord makes the lightning flash.
His voice makes the desert shake; he shakes the desert of Kadesh.

The Lord's voice shakes the oaks and strips the leaves from the trees while everyone in his Temple shouts, “Glory to God!”

Mark 1:9-11

At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptised by John in the Jordan. Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: ‘You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.’

REFLECTION

God’s voice is powerful

In Psalm 29 above we see power being attributed to God’s voice. Here it is likened to thunder and lightning, is majestic, breaks and twists trees, shakes deserts. His voice can be really powerful, but also we are told it can be very quiet and still, but even then behind it is the power of God.

Sometimes when we hear God's voice calling us we forget the power that lies behind it. We can be called to do something, but shy away because we do not feel that we can do it. God does call us to do things that stretch us, but then He has the power, if we accept it, to enable us to do what he calls us to do. So, do not dismiss God's voice to you, because you do not feel that you can do what you are asked to do.

God's voice is affirming

In Mark 1:4-11 we are given a glimpse of John the Baptist and his preaching. Jesus comes to John, as many others did, to be baptised and as he comes out of the water he hears the voice of God, "You are my beloved son, I am well pleased with you" That must have been an amazing affirmation for Jesus, particularly as he was about to go into the wilderness. I am sure that affirmation would have helped him through. It is the same for us; we have a God who loves us and wants to build us up rather than knock us down. This is important. If we hear something that does us or someone else down, then we can be pretty sure that it is not from God.

So God does speak to us in all sorts of ways and it is not always easy to discern what He is saying. However there are some guidelines given to us by this passage. His voice is creative, calling us to move on; His voice is backed up by His spirit enabling us to do more than we could imagine and His voice is always encouraging and affirming.

PRAYER FOR OTHERS

Lord, we live in such a noisy world.
Where so many voices clamour to be heard,
help us listen to Your voice.
We pray for Your church everywhere,
Struggling to keep pace with new
developments, but also seeking to be true
to the good news of Jesus.
We pray for those who are going through
difficult times; for those whose ears are filled
with the noise of war and violence; for those
who used to listen to You, but who have
closed their ears to Your word; for those who
have never had the chance to hear Your word
of love and forgiveness.
Be with them, speak to them in ways that they
can understand; and show us if You want us to
be the ones to speak Your word to them.
Now we pray for ourselves. We find it so much
easier to speak than to listen.
Let us keep silence for a short time, and invite
God to speak to us. **Amen.**

HYMN H&P 109, StF 208

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
"Come unto Me and rest;
Lay down, thou weary one, lay down
Thy head upon My breast."
I came to Jesus as I was,
Weary and worn and sad;

I found in Him a resting place,
And He has made me glad.

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
"Behold, I freely give
The living water; thirsty one,
Stoop down, and drink, and live."
I came to Jesus, and I drank
Of that life-giving stream;
My thirst was quenched, my soul revived,
And now I live in Him.

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
"I am this dark world's Light;
Look unto Me, thy morn shall rise,
And all thy day be bright."
I looked to Jesus, and I found
In Him my Star, my Sun;
And in that light of life I'll walk,
Till travelling days are done.

Horatius Bonar 1808-89

BLESSING

You have been with us by Your Spirit today.
Now, as we finish our worship, go with us,
and keep calling to us, so that we may learn
more of You day by day. And may the
Blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit
be upon you and remain with you always.

Amen