

St John the Evangelist, Kingston

Sunday 18th June 2017

Sacred Space



Father's Day

Welcome to anyone who is new to St John's.

Hymn: For the beauty of the earth

**For the beauty of the earth,
For the beauty of the skies,
For the love which from our birth
Over and around us lies,**

***Lord of all, to thee we raise
This our hymn of grateful praise.***

**For the beauty of each hour
Of the day and of the night,
Hill and vale, and tree and flow'r,
Sun and moon, and stars of light,**

***Lord of all, to thee we raise
This our hymn of grateful praise.***

**For the joy of human love,
Brother, sister, parent, child,
Friends on earth, and friends above,
For all gentle thoughts and mild,**

***Lord of all, to thee we raise
This our hymn of grateful praise.***

Text: Folliott S. Pierpoint, 1835-1917

Music: Conrad Kocher, 1786-1872

Call to worship

In your image we are made, creator God:

**Male and female, young and old,
We are your creation.**

You took on our life, Jesus Christ,

**We find you there
In truth and grace within ourselves.**

You lead us, Holy Spirit,

**in golden threads of life
in pain and joy.
Thanks be to God!**

Dorothy McRae-McMahon

Children are invited to go for activities. They gather at the front and the minister says a prayer before they leave.

Opening prayer

Loving God, some people find it helpful to call you father, some don't.

Fathers can be good or bad by degrees; they are rarely neutral.

On a day dedicated to fatherhood,

Let there be joy and happiness,

Let there also be an acknowledgment of pain and sadness.

God, of moments and of memories,

Warm us and heal us with love.

Ruth Burgess

Confession:

O God, family life is often hard.

Silent reflection

So often it is the small things that defeat us:
The lid off the toothpaste, the bathmat in a heap,
Dirty dishes in the sink, the last whinge from somebody,
Another gift taken for granted.
These small things build upon each other, Lord,
And when our energy is low, and our hurts are high,
They take our life.
It is often hard to live as families.
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

Assurance of pardon

Hear the word of grace in Jesus Christ:
The love of God for us never fails.
Nothing can separate us from that love.
Forgiveness and a fresh start is always ours.
Rise up and live in freedom and faith.
Amen.

Dorothy McRae-McMahon

Bible Reading: Hosea 11:1-4

When Israel was a child, I loved him,
and out of Egypt I called my son.

The more I called them,
the more they went from me;
they kept sacrificing to the Baals,
and offering incense to idols.

Yet it was I who taught Ephraim to walk,
I took them up in my arms;
but they did not know that I healed them.
I led them with cords of human kindness,
with bands of love.
I was to them like those
who lift infants to their cheeks.
I bent down to them and fed them.

Thanks be to God

Prayer: The Embrace of God's Love

Lord, as I have seen a father lift a crying child,
lift me
into the embrace of your love.

Lord, as I have seen a father lift a hurting child,
lift me
into the embrace of your healing.

Lord, as I have seen a father lift an angry child,
lift me
into the embrace of your calming.

Lord, as I have seen a father lift a frustrated child,
lift me
into the embrace of your liberation.

Lord, as I have seen a father lift a tired child,
lift me
into the embrace of your renewal.

Lord, as I have seen a father lift a helpless child,
lift me
into the embrace of your empowering.

Lord, as I have seen a father lift a happy child,
lift me
into the warm embrace of your love.

Pat Bennett

Hymn: Lord of all Hopefulness

Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy,
Whose trust, ever child-like, no cares could destroy,
Be there at our waking, and give us, we pray,
Your bliss in our hearts, Lord, at the break of the day.

Lord of all eagerness, Lord of all faith,
Whose strong hands were skilled at the plane and the lathe,
Be there at our labours, and give us, we pray,
Your strength in our hearts, Lord, at the noon of the day.

Lord of all kindness, Lord of all grace,
Your hands swift to welcome, your arms to embrace,
Be there at our homing, and give us, we pray,
Your love in our hearts, Lord, at the eve of the day.

Lord of all gentleness, Lord of all calm,
Whose voice is contentment, whose presence is balm,
Be there at our sleeping, and give us, we pray,
Your peace in our hearts, Lord, at the end of the day.

Bible Reading: Luke 15:11-42

Then Jesus said, 'There was a man who had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, "Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me." So he divided his property between them. A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and travelled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself he said, "How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.'" So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. Then the son said to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son." But the father said to his slaves, "Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!" And they began to celebrate.

Thanks be to God

Talk

Reflection/discussion questions:

What are the qualities you look for in a great parent?

Can you remember a time when you felt deeply loved? What did it feel like?

When you hear God described as being a Father, what kind of images come to mind? Is there anything about this image that you find difficult?

Hymn: Loving Spirit

**Loving Spirit, loving Spirit,
You have chosen me to be -
You have drawn me to your wonder,
You have set your sign on me.**

**Like a mother, you enfold me,
Hold my life within your own,
Feed me with your very body,
Form me of your flesh and bone.**

**Like a father, you protect me,
teach me the discerning eye,
hoist me up upon your shoulder,
let me see the world from high.**

**Friend and lover, in your closeness
I am known and held and blest:
In your promise is my comfort,
In your presence I may rest.**

**Loving Spirit, loving Spirit,
You have chosen me to be –
You have drawn me to your wonder,
You have set your sign on me.**

Shirley Erena Murray (b1931)

Prayers of Intercession

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.**

Brief notices about our community life

and the children return from children's church

Prayer of thanksgiving for Fathers

Heavenly Father,
you entrusted your Son Jesus,
the child of Mary,
to the care of Joseph, an earthly father.
Bless all fathers
as they care for their families.
Give them strength and wisdom,
tenderness and patience;
support them in the work they have to do,
protecting those who look to them,
as we look to you for love and salvation,
through Jesus Christ our rock and defender.
Amen.

Chocolates are distributed.

Hymn: All Our Blessings

*Chorus: All our blessings, all our joys
With thankful hearts we sing,
True, compassionate, loving God
Accept the praise we bring.*

**For parents and for children,
For husbands, wives, and friends,
For those whose care enfolds us
With love that never ends.**

Chorus

**For fellowship and friendship
We both receive and give,
For those who've shared our journey
And taught us how to live.**

Chorus

**For all who've shared our sorrow,
Walked with us in our pain,
Who've held our hand through darkness
And showed us light again.**

Chorus

Words: Ally Barrett

Blessing and Dismissal

Let us say this blessing to one another, to send each other out to serve God today.

You are invited to place your right hand on the shoulder of the person next to you for the Blessing.

The Lord bless you and keep you.

**The Lord make his face shine upon you
and be gracious to you.**

**The Lord look upon you with favour,
and give you his peace.**

Amen.

Everyone is invited to stay for refreshments after the service.