

Sunday Service for 11<sup>th</sup> July 2021

## **Welcome**

### **Call to Worship**

Lord of our lives, we come to listen and hear your word. We open ourselves to you  
Be with us Lord enter our hearts. and minds as we worship with each other and with  
you. we give you Heavenly Father our worship and adoration for all the gifts you give  
us so freely accept our thanks and our praise Amen.

### **MP 50 Be still for the presence of the Lord**

Prayer and Lord's prayer

Lord of all we come before you; to be open to your word, and to give you the glory  
and praise and thanks for you give us. Lord, we admit that sometimes we find it  
difficult to understand t what is happening around us in today's world never mind all  
what happened all those years ago. Forgive us, Lord, for the times we don't  
appreciate how brilliant it is to be chosen by you; and when we question you, about  
the path you have destined for us. when we feel sorry for ourselves but do not turn to  
you. Forgive us, Lord, and help us back on path. Praise be to God, the Father of our  
Lord Jesus Christ. He chose us in love to be holy and blameless. He called us in  
love to hear the good news of salvation. He blessed us in love and included us in his  
most marvellous plan. Heavenly Father, we thank you so much that we have been  
chosen by you. May our lives be worthy of our calling. Praise be to God. **Amen.**

### **Lord's prayer**

**MP 404 Let all the world in every corner sing.**

**Readings Psalm 85; 8 – 13 & Ephesians 1; 3 – 14**

**Sermon:** Ephesians 1: 3-14 Blessed in Christ

How many of you have your mobile phones with you today? Of course that is if you  
own one. If so is it on silent? I only ask this because it is not the first time I have  
forgotten to put mine on silent. Next question have you been out and about and the  
mobile rings and you have dived into your pocket or handbag and the person on the  
other end asks you where are you? Well it really isn't important today in the context  
of the reading but Paul starts his letter to Ephesians by reminding them by saying to  
the saints who are in Ephesus and are faithful in Christ. Paul is really letting them  
know that they do not just live in Ephesus they are also living in Christ because of  
their trust in Christ. When you go on holiday and find the obligatory street map and it  
has the arrow pointing to where you are. It helps when you actually know where you  
are in relation to the arrow. Stating YOU ARE HERE is great if you can then follow  
up with the rest of the picture. I am not that good with actual maps to me they always

feel as if they are upside down. Not a good position to be in. The start of the lesson portrays the bigger picture and what it is to be in Christ. These opening verses of Ephesians give us the big picture, and show us exactly what it means to be in Christ. They take us from the blessings from the Father through to the Blessings from the son and then finally to the blessings through the Holy Spirit. Paul informs the people of Ephesus they lack nothing having been blessed in Christ. Just like them we should count our daily blessings for the God who loves us. We know that God knew us before we were born, even before the world began. We have been selected to be his children through the love of Christ in us. Not because through anything we have done to deserve being chosen, but because he through grace accepted or should I say adopted us to be the one to follow the narrow path and be what he would have us be. The blessing of being adopted into the family of God through the grace of release from our sins, through Jesus Christ, God's only son given to us for the redemption of all our sins.

As we continue I want you to think about all the blessings you have been given through God's grace. I know you have heard me telling you about one of my favourite Sunday School choruses, Count your blessings, Name them one by one then you surely know what God has done. Everything that happened in the early years was predestined to happen. God's plan was put into action. Through his plan we have been **blessed, chosen, loved, adopted, redeemed, forgiven, graced, informed**, and we have the promise of our eternal home in heaven where we will see God face to face. One more blessing was the gift of the Holy Spirit, promised and sent to be with us here on earth to guide us along life's way. We know that in our joys and in our sadness, God walks with us even when we feel that God is far away. Put your trust in Jesus and you will feel his arms around you helping you to carry the load. We can also be Holy and blameless in the eyes of God. All that he expects from us is to be a mirror of Christ Jesus; be a light to the world. Just as Paul says in the passage reflect on the love and grace that has been lavished on you. Give the praise and the glory to God as Paul did at the very beginning shouting out to the Ephesians; Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ...'

I have a wee bit homework for you. Stop during the week and take time in your busy lives to just see how many blessings you had in the last few days and then say thank you to God for all that he has done for you.

Do not let God have to ask you where are you. Just count your blessings and thank God and he will know where you are. Deep down in his heart. Amen.

### **Prayers of intercession**

We pray for children who are adopted or fostered, that they will find the love and security they need. We pray for social workers and organisations for the work they do. May they do this work in love and understanding of the need of the families. Everlasting God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, hear our prayers which we offer in his name and by the power of your Holy Spirit working among us that we

might tell "The word of Truth" and live the Gospel of Salvation as a living example for all mankind. Creator God we pray for the leaders of the world carrying responsibilities for the lives of their people. We pray for all still affected by the Coronavirus and for a new determination to end the pandemic which brings with it so much fear, heartache and suffering.

Gracious God we pray for the people of the hospitality industry especially for those who feel excluded, exploited or ignored and for all who are still unable to resume normal level of employment because of the pandemic's effect on tourism. Help us, your people, to work together to build a community which is as open and generous as your love, shown to us in the gift of your Son Jesus Christ.

Loving God we pray for healing in body, mind and spirit for all who are in need. We pray that in lives darkened by any kind of pain, distress or grief the light of Christ will bring comfort, hope and a sense of your all-encompassing love. Lord, your love reaches out to everyone at the end of our days on earth. Be with us and with those we love and with those whom we loved and have gone before us.

We pray now for those who have recently died and those bereaved by their passing.

Heavenly Father we thank you for the opportunity of being together in prayer. As we look forward to the week to come, we pray for an awareness of your love and support in all we do. Merciful Father: **accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen**

### **MP 41 At the name of Jesus**

#### **Benediction**

Live in union with Christ Jesus as Lord, be rooted in him, be built in him. Grow strong in the faith and let your hearts overflow with thankfulness. And the blessing of God Almighty the father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always. Amen