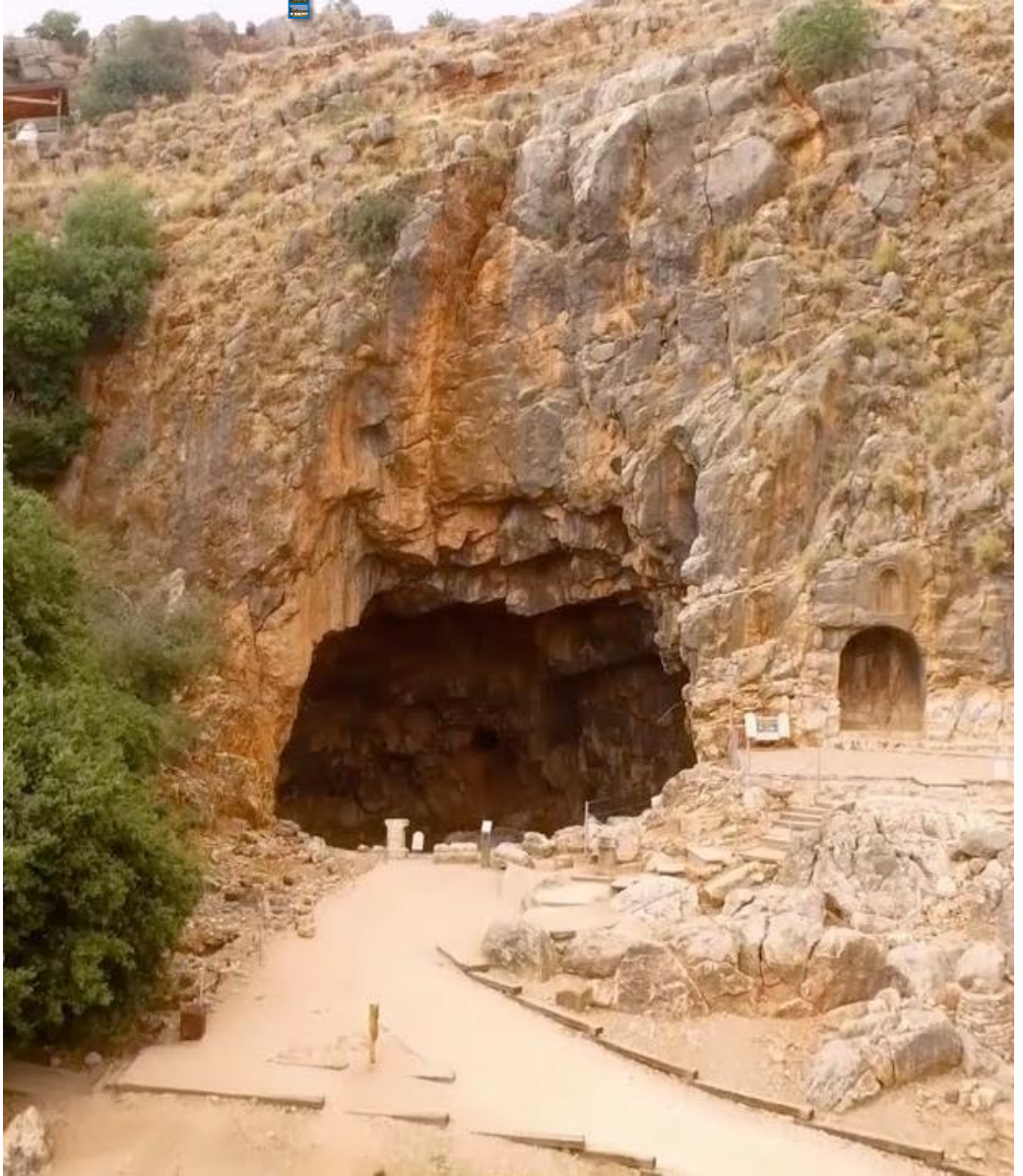




Chet Valley Churches



A Morning Service of Praise and Worship

12th September 2021

Greeting and Welcome

We come together to worship and praise God,
to ask for forgiveness of our sins
and to hear the Good News of Jesus.

**Lord direct our thoughts,
teach us to pray,
lift up our hearts to worship you
in Spirit and in truth,
through Jesus Christ. Amen.**

♪ Hymn: *Praise to the Holiest in the Height*

**Praise to the holiest in the height,
And in the depth be praise:
In all his words most wonderful,
Most sure in all his ways.**

**O loving wisdom of our God!
When all was sin and shame,
A second Adam to the fight
And to the rescue came.**

**O wisest love! That flesh and blood,
Which did in Adam fail,
Should strive afresh against the foe,
Should strive and should prevail;**

**And that a higher gift than grace
Should flesh and blood refine,
God's presence and his very self,
And essence all-divine.**

**O generous love! That he, who smote
In man for man the foe,
The double agony in man
For man should undergo;**

**And in the garden secretly,
And on the cross on high,
Should teach his brethren, and inspire
To suffer and to die.**



**Praise to the holiest in the height,
And in the depth be praise:
In all his words most wonderful,
Most sure in all his ways.**

Prayer of Adoration

Lord, we lift up our hearts to you in love and adoration
and praise you for your greatness.

You are the great and mighty king and all glory belongs to you.
Words cannot describe how awesome you are.

There is no other god which can be compared with you
and there is none above you.

You are the creator of heaven and earth and everything belongs to you.

We praise you for your creative word by which
the heavens and earth were made.

We praise you for making us in your image,
able to hear and to answer your call.

We praise you for the word made flesh
in the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
We adore you, O God and praise your name.

To you, loving God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
be glory, honour and praise, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Confession and declaration of forgiveness

Every day we do things that are not pleasing to God, so let us now
acknowledge and confess our sins to God.

Loving God,
**we have sinned against you
in what we have thought,
said and done.
We have not loved you
with our whole heart;
we have not loved
our neighbours as ourselves.**



**We are truly sorry
and turn away from what is wrong.
Forgive us for the sake of your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

May Almighty God, who sent His Son into the world to save sinners, bring us pardon and peace, now and for ever. Amen.

God offers us the strength and power to live for Him through his Holy Spirit. So let us hold on firmly to the hope we profess, because we can trust God to keep his promise.

Psalm 116:1-8

I love the Lord, for he has heard the voice of my supplication;
because he inclined his ear to me on the day I called to him.

The snares of death encompassed me; the pains of hell took hold of me;
by grief and sorrow was I held.

Then I called upon the name of the Lord:
'O Lord, I beg you, deliver my soul.'

Gracious is the Lord and righteous;
our God is full of compassion.

The Lord watches over the simple;
I was brought very low and he saved me.

Turn again to your rest, O my soul,
for the Lord has been gracious to you.

For you have delivered my soul from death,
my eyes from tears and my feet from falling.

I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living.

First Reading: Isaiah 50:4-9a

The Lord God has given me the tongue of a teacher, that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word. Morning by morning he wakens—wakens my ear to listen as those who are taught. The Lord God has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, I did not turn backwards. I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I did not hide my face from insult and spitting.

The Lord God helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame; he who vindicates me is near. Who will contend with me? Let us stand up together. Who are my adversaries? Let them confront me. It is the Lord God who helps me; who will declare me guilty? All of them will wear out like a garment.

This is the word of the Lord,
Thanks be to God.

♪ Hymn: *Take Up Thy Cross*

**Take up thy cross, the Saviour said,
If thou wouldst my disciple be;
Deny thyself, the world forsake,
And humbly follow after me.**

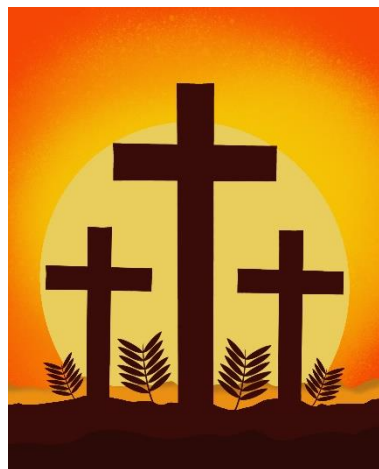
**Take up thy cross; let not its weight
Fill thy weak spirit with alarm;
His strength shall bear thy spirit up,
And brace thy heart, and nerve thine arm.**

**Take up thy cross, nor heed the shame,
Nor let thy foolish pride rebel;
The Lord for thee the Cross endured,
To save thy soul from death and hell.**

**Take up thy cross then in his strength,
And calmly every danger brave;
'Twill guide thee to a better home,
And lead to victory o'er the grave.**

**Take up thy cross, and follow Christ,
Nor think 'til death to lay it down;
For only he who bears the cross
May hope to wear the glorious crown.**

**To thee, great Lord, the One in Three,
All praise for evermore ascend;
O grant us in our home to see
The heavenly life that knows no end.**



Gospel Reading: Mark 8:27-38

Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way he asked his disciples, 'Who do people say that I am?' And they answered him, 'John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets.' He asked them, 'But who do you say that I am?' Peter answered him, 'You are the Messiah.' And he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him.

Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, 'Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.'

He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, 'If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.'

This is the word of God.

Thanks be to God.

Talk [Rev Ros]

For many years Caesarea Philippi had been a sacred site to different gods. It had been a place of worship to the Baal. Then to the god Pan and it was called Panias; it still is. Then the Romans arrived and a temple to the emperor was erected by King Philip, hence Caesarea Philippi. Today visitors are shown the entrance to a cave where there was a statue to Pan. It's a strange place because a river, some claim it to be the source of the Jordan flows over the rocks and on either side grow trees and lush vegetation but beyond that it is dry and rocky. It's about 40 miles north of Capernaum so why did Jesus take his disciples on foot, all that way?

Location is important to us. We remember where we were when major events happen in our lives. People remembered where they were when President Kennedy was shot. They remember where they were when the news of Princess Diana's fatal accident broke or when Prince Philip's death was announced. They remember where they were when a family member was born or where a proposal of marriage was made. And usually they remember who was there with them.

Jesus had a very important question to ask his disciples. It was to do with his identity so he took them to a place steeped in the worship of false gods to see if they had grasped who he was. It was a place they certainly wouldn't forget. This is crunch time. Jesus knows his time is short. He needs to know if the disciples have understood his true nature. So he leads them into the big question by asking them, "Who do people say that I am?" What have they picked up from conversations and discussion with others? What have they heard in the marketplace?

Their answers are significant. Some say John the Baptist. He'd been killed but it seems that some thought he had come back. Some say Jesus is Elijah, that great prophet who it was believed would return before the Messiah. Some say Jesus is one of the prophets, who foretold the coming of God's anointed one. The answers are getting close but not quite there yet. This is what others are thinking.

Then Jesus asks the big question, "Who do you say that I am?" Now whether the others knew we don't know but Peter did and came straight out with it: "You are the Messiah." Yes, they had got it. So all the time Jesus had spent with them, all his teaching and healing hadn't been in vain. Or had it?

After telling them not to tell anyone about this, he tells them what's in store in a very little while. He will be betrayed, arrested and nailed to a cross. This is too much for Peter. He takes him to one side and tries to persuade Jesus that this cannot be. Not only is Peter horrified that this should happen to his friend, it can't happen to the Messiah. Jesus has just accepted that this is what he is and now he's talking about crucifixion. It doesn't make sense.

They knew Jesus was the Messiah but their expectations of what that meant were wrong. Israel had been a conquered country for ages. One neighbouring country after another had beaten it and ruled over it. The northern tribes had been lost to history. The others had been in captivity

in Babylon. Even after their return one foreign power after another had lauded it over them. At the moment it was the Romans and various vassal kings. The Messiah was going to change all that. He was going to restore the fortunes of Israel and kick the foreign rulers out. To hear talk of crucifixion was unthinkable. And so Peter receives the rebuke, “Get behind me Satan.” Your way is not God’s.

Knowing Jesus is the Messiah is easy. Aligning our expectations to his is hard. Jesus asks each of us who do you say I am? How we answer tells us something of who we are. Many acknowledge him as an historical figure who was a good man. Others recognise him as a kind and loving man, who was a teacher of morals. They accept that he died and was buried but for them that’s the end of the story. If we accept Jesus as the Messiah then we are saying that we accept the way of the cross for ourselves. We accept that we live our lives for others. We accept that we may be asked to make sacrifices. For most it won’t mean laying down our lives but for some it does mean that. Even today in some countries being a Christian is a matter of life and death.

So when we answer the question, “Who do you say that I am,” how we answer it says a lot about who we are; it makes us look at ourselves; to come face to face with who we really are.

Affirmation of Faith

**We believe in God the Father,
from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son,
who lives in our hearts through faith, and fills us with His love.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit
who strengthens us with power from on high.**

**We believe in God;
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

♪ Hymn: *Father, Hear the Prayer We Offer*

**Father, hear the prayer we offer:
Not for ease that prayer shall be,
But for strength that we may ever
Live our lives courageously.**

**Not for ever in green pastures
Do we ask our way to be;
But the steep and rugged pathway
May we tread rejoicingly.**

**Not for ever by still waters
Would we idly rest and stay;
But would smite the living fountains
From the rocks along our way.**

**Be our strength in hours of weakness,
In our wanderings be our guide;
Through endeavour, failure, danger,
Father, be thou at our side.**

Prayers

Father we thank you for all you have given us.
We thank you for the changing beauty of the world,
the beauties of cloud and sunshine, night and day.

We thank you for the many gifts you have given to people,
and for all the good use to which these have been put.

We thank you for showing your love to all,
for teaching us to love one another,
and for all the love we receive each day.

Most of all we thank you for Jesus:
for his life of love, for his teaching and example,
for his death on the cross,
for the new life he has brought to us,
and for all that we enjoy because of his perfect love for us.

Father Son and Holy Spirit,
three persons in one eternity of love,
we thank you, and will thank you forever.

Lord, you have taught us
that the world is yours and those who dwell on it.

Hear us as we pray for the life of the world:
that every nation may seek the way that leads to peace;
that human rights and freedoms may everywhere be respected,



and that the earth's resources may be ungrudgingly shared by all.
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Lord we ask that you will bless our local communities
and the homes we live in.

Bless all who work in our schools, shops, surgeries
and those who provide our services.

We pray for those who hold office in the life of our communities
and ask that you will give them guidance in all their decision making,
that all may be done for the common good
and the glory of your name, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

Lord Jesus Christ, in the days of your earthly life
the sick were brought to you for healing:
hear us now as we bring to you those who are ill, in body or in mind,
and those who care for them.
May your presence be with them
to relieve suffering and distress
and to restore them to fullness of life,
for your great love's sake. **Amen.**

We thank you, our Father,
that our loved ones who are gone from our sight
are in your keeping.
Help us to leave them there in perfect trust,
because you love them and us with infinite love.
Grant that we may learn to know you better,
so that we may meet them again in your presence,
through faith in him who loved us and gave himself for us,
Jesus Christ our Saviour.

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**

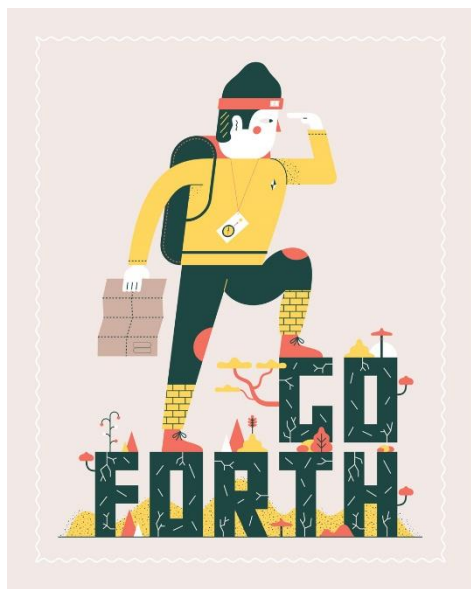
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and for ever. **Amen.**

♪ Hymn: *Go Forth and Tell*

**Go forth and tell!
O church of God, awake!
God's saving news
To all the nations take;
Proclaim Christ Jesus,
Saviour, Lord, and king,
That all the world
His worthy praise may sing.**

**Go forth and tell!
God's love embraces all;
He will in grace
Respond to all who call:
How shall they call
If they have never heard
The gracious invitation
Of his word?**

**Go forth and tell!
O church of God, arise!
Go in the strength
Which Christ your Lord supplies;
Go 'til all nations
His great name adore
And serve him,
Lord and King for evermore.**



Ending

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with us all now and always. **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ. Amen.