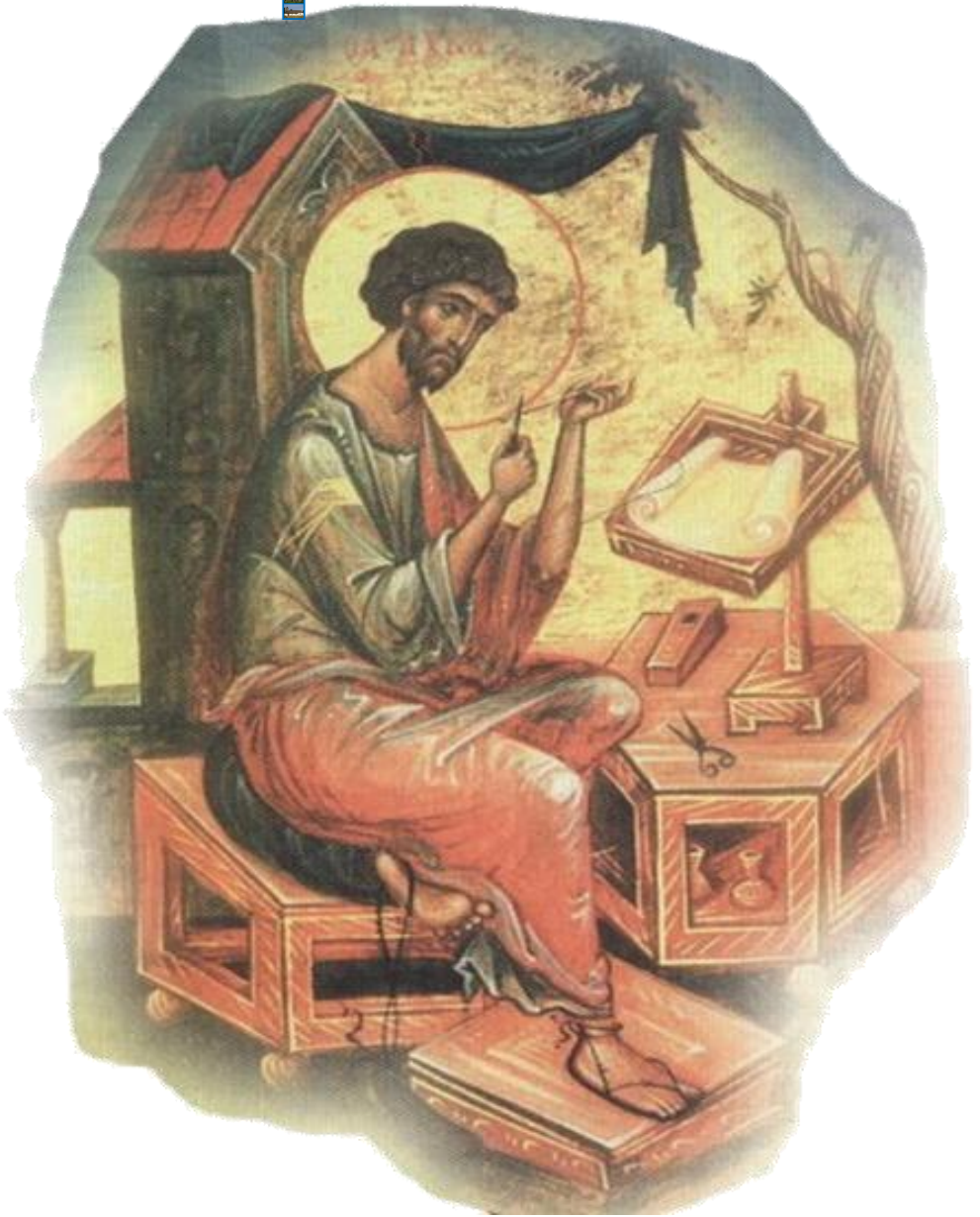




Chet Valley Churches



All Together Worship: St Luke

17th October 2021

Introduction

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you

♪ Hymn *Come, Now is the Time to Worship*

Come, now is the time to worship.

Come, now is the time to give your heart.

Come, just as you are to worship.

Come, just as you are before your God. Come!

One day every tongue will confess you are God.

One day every knee will bow.

Still the greatest treasure remains for those

Who gladly choose you now.



Today we are also thinking about St Luke. St Luke lived around the time of Jesus and although he never met Jesus himself, he talked to lots of people who knew about him. That way, he was able to write a gospel—a good news story—about Jesus for other people who wanted to find out about him. It's in our Bible in the New Testament so we can read it today.

As well as writing about Jesus, in his gospel Luke tells us lots about prayer, about the Holy Spirit and about women and other people who were not thought to be important in those days. He knew that the good news was for everybody.

He was a good friend of St Paul and went on a lot of journeys with him. It is St Paul who tells us that Luke was a physician, a sort of doctor. Paul was often not very well, so perhaps Luke made him feel better. Doctors then knew about the sorts of plants that made people well, and they knew about making wounds clean to heal properly. As well as his gospel, Luke wrote another book in the Bible called Acts which tells about the adventures he and Paul had, and about the church in those days when people had started following Jesus after the first Easter. Even though Luke lived 2000 years ago, he is still passing on the good news of God today. We are going to hear some of Luke's gospel a bit later on in the service.

I've a bag here today with all sorts of things that doctors might need or use to help us in the service. So, what's coming out of the bag first?

A stethoscope: a doctor might use this to listen to someone's lungs or to listen to see how someone's heart is doing. Of course, God doesn't need a stethoscope to know what our hearts are like and so we pray our prayer of preparation:

The Collect for Purity—A Prayer of Preparation

**Almighty God to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden,
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit
that we may perfectly love you
and worthily magnify your holy name
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**



The Collect—A Special Prayer for the Day

Almighty God, you called Luke the physician, whose praise is in the gospel, to be an evangelist and a physician of the soul: by the grace of the Spirit and through the wholesome medicine of the gospel, give your church the same love and power to heal; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

What's next out of the bag...?

A dissection kit: there are all sorts of things in here that a doctor might use in an operation: sharp blades and scissors to cut bits out of our bodies that are diseased.

In our Christian lives, we talk about sin—the wrong things that we do: a sickness that is a self-generated, destructive illness. We need to get rid of it. Perhaps it's a bit like having an operation. God wants to remove sin from us, to heal us. So we come to a time of saying sorry to God.

Confession: We Say Sorry to God

**Father God, we ask you to forgive us
for the things we have thought
and the things we have said and the things we have done
that do not please you. We are sorry.**



**Help us to be more like Jesus: ready to pray, ready to help others,
Ready to do your will in all things, every day. Amen.**

Absolution—The Minister Proclaims God's Forgiveness

May the God of love and power forgive us and free us from our sins,
heal and strengthen us by his Spirit,
and raise us to new life in Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

♪♪ Hymn God Forgave My Sin in Jesus' Name

**God forgave my sin in Jesus' name,
I've been born again in Jesus' name;
And in Jesus' name I come to you
To share his love as he told me to.**

**He said, "Freely, freely, you have received,
Freely, freely give; go in my name,
And because you believe others will know that I live."**

**All power is given in Jesus' name,
In earth and heaven in Jesus' name;
And in Jesus' name I come to you
To share his power as he told me to.**

He said, "Freely, freely..."

📖 Bible Reading: Luke 10:1-9

After this the Lord appointed seventy others and sent them on ahead of him in pairs to every town and place where he himself intended to go. He said to them, '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 like lambs into the midst of wolves. Carry no purse, no bag, no sandals; and greet no one on the road. Whatever house you enter, first say, "Peace to this house!" And if anyone is there who shares in peace, your peace will rest on that person; but if not, it will return to you. Remain in the same house, eating and drinking whatever they provide, for the labourer deserves to be paid. Do not move about from house to house. Whenever you enter a town and its people welcome you, eat what is set before you; cure the sick who are there, and say to them, "The kingdom of God has come near to you."

After the Bible reading the reader says

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



Talk [Rev Alison]

Don't you find it quite frustrating when a reading begins, *After this...*? I know I do. So, to fill you in... Jesus has healed a child of an evil spirit and then told his followers, for the second time, that he is going to Jerusalem to be killed. He has told them that whoever welcomes little children welcomes him and whoever welcomes him, welcomes God. And now Jesus and his followers are on their way, for his last time, to Jerusalem.

I can't help thinking that Jesus must have felt that there were so many things still to be done before he got there... so many people who needed healing, and so many people who needed to hear the Good News of God. So he decides to send some of those people who have been following him out into the highways and byways. I wonder if you can remember what they were to take with them?

Nothing! No purse, no bag, no sandals. Going like lambs amongst wolves. That made me think it was a bit like being a little child in the world. They had to rely on the people that they met to be generous and to give them food, and they had to trust in God. I wonder if you can remember what Jesus said they had to do?

They had to wish people '*Peace be with you*'. If people were happy to share their peace then it would stay on them. Then, if those followers were welcomed, they were told to heal the sick—to make people better—and to tell them that the Kingdom of God had come near. I wonder how his followers felt?

Daunted? Worried? Overwhelmed? Excited? We never hear how they got on. But clearly Jesus thought they were up to the task else he wouldn't have bothered sending them. Perhaps he wanted to prove to his followers that they were capable of sharing God's peace, capable of healing people, capable of announcing the good news of God before it was just up to them to do God's work when he was no longer physically with them.

Those followers had been with Jesus for only about two, maybe three, years and yet Jesus confidently sent them out to do Kingdom work. I wonder how many years each of us has been following Jesus for. I expect, for most of us, it is more than just two or three years. And I wonder how each of us would feel if Jesus stood with each of us, next to us, right now. What we would do if Jesus told us, right now, to go out into the highways and byways, of our communities, taking nothing with us, to do God's work.

To wish people peace, to heal the sick and to tell them that the kingdom of God has come near. Would you feel daunted, worried, overwhelmed, excited? Would you set off right away, confident and capable? Or would you feel doubtful that you are up to the task? Do you even believe that it is possible to do those things?

Because that is what Jesus calls us to do! Jesus wants to heal us of all that holds us back from our calling to be children of God. Jesus wants us to know that we are loved by him. Jesus wants us to be at peace with ourselves so that we can be the best that we can be. Jesus wants us to learn to trust God and rely on his generosity and provision. Jesus wants us to share in the peace that passes all understanding. Because if all of this happens, then we can join in with his Kingdom work. So let's start by sharing peace in the words of the next hymn: Shalom—a Hebrew word meaning peace.

♪ Hymn: *Shalom*

**Shalom my friend,
Shalom my friend, Shalom, Shalom.
God's peace be with you,
God's peace be with you, Shalom, Shalom.**



**Shalom my friend, Shalom my friend, Shalom, Shalom.
'Til we meet again, 'til we meet again, Shalom, Shalom.0**

I wonder what else is in the bag: something pretty big and heavy. Ah! It's a great big book! A medical textbook. I think doctors have to read a fair few of these as they are training and continuing through their professional lives. Together with what they learn from patients and their colleagues, they help them in their work.

For us, as Christians, we have a book too: the Bible! Reading that as we continue on our journeys of faith, learning from the people we encounter on our way helps us in our belief. And we are going to say what we believe now.

Creed—*We Say What We Believe*

**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 one God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

We Pray Together

Prayer can sometimes be a bit like first aid, a sort of helping with which everyone can get involved. The good thing is that you don't have to be a doctor, nurse or paramedic to do it; we can all have a go... So let us pray.

We pray for the people who are sick in our families, our communities, our country and across the world. Healing God, **heal them today.**

We pray for those in healing professions, not just doctors, nurses and paramedics but also the many others who bring care to the unwell or help in supporting the work of the health services.

Healing God, **encourage them today.**

We pray for those places in the world where healthcare is not well-developed, where there are few to minister to the sick and none of the paraphernalia that we take for granted. Places where few people have been vaccinated against Covid-19. Healing God, **empower them today.**

We pray for organisations such as *Médecins Sans Frontières* and many others that provide healthcare to the poorest and most in need overseas.

Healing God, **protect them today.**

We pray for those suffering from abuse, either current or in the past, and from the physical scars and emotional torment that it brings.

Healing God, **support them today.**

We pray for those who grieve and are mourning their loss, bringing especially to mind those whom we know.

Healing God, **comfort them today.**

We pray for the sicknesses that damage human societies, our greed, lack of empathy and care, our tendency to see the worst in others, our violence.

Healing God, **reform us today.**

We pray for ourselves and anything that needs to be healed in our own lives. Healing God, **help us today.**

And a moment of silence for any further prayers that we would like to make. We draw all our prayers together in the words that Jesus taught us:

**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.**

♪♪ I the Lord of Sea and Sky

**I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard My people cry.
All who dwell in dark and sin, my hand will save.
I who made the stars of night, I will make their darkness bright.
Who will bear My light to them? Whom shall I send?**

**Here I am Lord, Is it I Lord? I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go Lord, if you lead me. I will hold your people in my heart.**

**I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have born my peoples pain.
I have wept for love of them, they turn away.
I will break their hearts of stone, give them hearts for love alone.
I will speak my word to them, whom shall I send?**

Here I am Lord...

**I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame.
I will set a feast for them, my hand will save.
Finest bread I will provide, 'til their hearts be satisfied.
I will give My life to them,
Whom shall I send?**

Here I am Lord...

♪ Blessing

**May the lightness of God go with you,
May the brightness of God go with you,
May he shine on all you do, may God bless you.**



The Dismissal

Go in the light and peace of Christ. Thanks be to God.

Ministers walk out.