



Chet Valley Churches
Last Sunday Praise
25 September 2022



Welcome

Welcome to Last Sunday Praise. In this file you will find links to the songs we have chosen for our worship. Unfortunately, due to a number of us being on holiday, we are having to hold this Last Sunday Praise online, but we will be back singing together in October.

Introduction

The theme for our service is 'God's kindness and goodness.' I'll explain later on how I arrived at that theme, but with all that's going on in our country and around the world at present, we need to be people reflecting the love, goodness and kindness of the God we serve.

🎵 All the songs link to YouTube. Just click with your mouse on the link, which will take you to a song with on-screen words. You may have to skip a few YouTube adverts..

Psalm 126 tells us:-

¹ When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion,
we were like those who dreamed.

² Our mouths were filled with laughter,
our tongues with songs of joy.

Then it was said among the nations,
'The Lord has done great things for them.'

³ The Lord has done great things for us,
and we are filled with joy.

🎵 To God be the glory

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3vbGFupxwu0>

♪♪ **Amazing Grace – my chains are gone**

https://youtu.be/gD3E5_Pgfwx

Pause for thought, and prayer...

Lord, thank you that we can come and worship you today, the risen Lord Jesus Christ. Thank you that you have indeed done great things for us especially in sending your only Son down to this earth for us. Thank you that in your goodness and kindness we have been set free from our sins. Help us to worship you now we pray. Amen.

The Collect is a special prayer written for each day. Perhaps you might read the prayer aloud, line by line, stopping to think about each line as you do so.

The Collect—A Special Prayer for the Day.

Lord God,
defend your Church from all false teaching
and give to your people knowledge of your truth,
that we may enjoy eternal life
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

From the Gospel of John:

John 8 v12

Jesus said 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.'

♪♪ **Light of the World**

<https://youtu.be/vYsR49ReAj4>

♪♪ **I stand amazed in the presence**

<https://youtu.be/g3K28WUSTKc>

A reminder from a psalmist...

Psalm 25 v 8-11

- ⁸ Good and upright is the Lord;
therefore he instructs sinners in his ways.
- ⁹ He guides the humble in what is right
and teaches them his way.
- ¹⁰ All the ways of the Lord are loving and faithful
toward those who keep the demands of his covenant.
- ¹¹ For the sake of your name, Lord,
forgive my iniquity, though it is great.

♪♪ **Faithful One**

<https://youtu.be/JqK-UnsRTFl>

♪♪ **Everyone needs compassion**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uY46Bea7w74>

Talk

Paul Mizen has written this reflection.

As mentioned at the beginning of this service, the theme for today is God's kindness and goodness.

I came to this theme in part from recently reading a book entitled 'Seriously Funny', jointly written by Adrian Plass and Jeff Lucas. It was a book which at times had me laughing out loud, often to the consternation of my wife, and at other times was seriously challenging.

Some of you will remember Adrian coming to St John's Church a few years back with his wife, Bridget, and sharing some amusing stories as well as some very thoughtful ones.

Jeff came to the church I used to be involved in at Norwich, a few years before then for a special week-end. I remember his theme was 'the kindness of God.' That's a theme that also came out in this book.

The other side of the theme took me back many years to a conversation after a church service. In Acts 10 v 38 we read words of Peter, when he went to speak to the Roman centurion, Cornelius. Speaking about Jesus, he says amongst other things that 'He went around doing good.' The person I was speaking to was saying that when we consider all that Jesus Christ did for us, describing Him as someone who 'went around doing good' seemed the biggest understatement imaginable.

For myself, I guess that in both cases I was left asking, do we underestimate the value of being kind and doing good? After all, are these not ways of showing what the God we serve is like?

Surely this should be the outward expression of our inward faith. What does the bible actually say on this?

In 2 Peter 1 vv 5-9 we read:-

⁵ Make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; ⁶ and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; ⁷ and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. ⁸ For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ But whoever does not have them is short-sighted and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their past sins.

Whilst I'm sure we all know people who are good and kind without them having any real claim of Christian faith, in so many situations these qualities are sadly lacking. It's true that from time to time we may see a generous response to a need, e.g. during the pandemic and also helping Ukrainian refugees, but so often our news is only full of bad things; wars, strikes, hardship etc. Of course, it doesn't help that many in the media work to the saying 'Good news is no news!'

Those verses in 2 Peter remind us that kindness and goodness and other virtues keep us as Christians from being ineffective and unproductive. They go so far as to challenge that if we don't have these then the very roots of our personal Christian faith are called into question.

Kindness and goodness are such essential qualities, because this is what God is like. In Luke 6 v35 we read 'Love your enemies, do good to them and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great and you will be sons of the Most High, because He is kind to the ungrateful and

wicked. Also Psalm 34 v8 says 'Taste and see that the Lord is good.'

This is what the God we serve is like and He calls us to follow His example in how we live. In Micah 6 v8 we read 'He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.'

The world so needs to see kindness, goodness and Christian love in the times in which we live. They are not just acts in themselves, but acts that point to the great God we serve; the God who gave His only Son to die on a cross for our sins; the God who alone can change the lives of people today, to give them hope.

1 Peter 2 v12 tells us 'Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.'

May that be our aim, that as we consider the kindness and goodness of God, we want to live by those standards and point others to the God who loves them and gave His only Son for them.

The next song we have may be unfamiliar to you, but it's one that speaks so clearly about God being good to us. I hope you enjoy it.

 **The goodness of God**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-f4MUUMWMV4>

Time for prayer...

Let's take time to pray for:

- The world we live in, its leaders and decision makers
- Our royal family as they adjust to a new order
- People who are victims of the unkindness of others, either on a political level or a domestic one
- Those who are over-burdened, stressed or tired
- People who share the joy of a journey with Jesus, and those who are seeking to know him
- People who are ill, or who feel isolated or afraid
- Those who are fearful of change and of the journey ahead
- Ourselves, that we might be willing to listen as well as to talk to God, and then allow him to lead us into action

You might want to pray aloud the prayer that Jesus taught his first disciples. Use whatever version or language you wish!

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come, your will be done,
on earth as it is 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.

♪♪ **Hear the call of the Kingdom**

https://youtu.be/890lp_P0Ffs

♪♪ **Bless the Lord O my soul**

<https://youtu.be/rDQn9cWC4Yc>

A blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face shine upon you
and be gracious to you;
the Lord turn his face toward you
and give you peace.

Amen