

## **17 October 2021 Proper 24B Not to be served but to serve**

Readings are at the end of this document:

Job 38:1-7, 34-41 and Psalm 104:1-9, 24, 35c    Isaiah 53:4-12 and Psalm 91:9-16    Hebrews 5:1-10    **Mark 10:35-45**

### **CALL TO WORSHIP**

In a world of division, **YOU CALL US TO UNITY.**

In a world of getting, **YOU CALL US TO GIVING.**

In a world pain, **YOU CALL US TO HEALING.**

Call us today, God. **CALL US IN THIS MOMENT.**

### **Prayer to start our service**

God of all knowing, you know us each so well. You know our secret fears. You know our hidden hurts.

You alone know the damage we inflict on ourselves. Remind us today, here - in this place, that you are the great doctor of souls, the one who binds up wounds.

May our knowing of your loving give us courage to live and worship you today. Amen.

Michael chose the first 4 verses of this psalm and part of the Mark reading to base his activity.

### **Psalm 104:1-9**

*Contemporary English Version*

**I praise you, LORD God, with all my heart.**

**You are glorious and majestic, dressed in royal robes and surrounded by light.**

**You spread out the sky like a tent, and you built your home over the mighty ocean.**

**The clouds are your chariot with the wind as its wings.**

**The winds are your messengers, and flames of fire are your servants.**

You built foundations for the earth, and it will never be shaken.

You covered the earth with the ocean that rose above the mountains.

Then your voice thundered!

And the water flowed down the mountains and through the valleys to the place you prepared.

Now you have set boundaries, so that the water will never flood the earth again.

### **And Mark 10: 44 and 45**

<sup>44</sup> and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. <sup>45</sup> For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Michael has added a talk to the church webpage at ["Content from Sundays including sermons"](#)

How could we not think "***Our God is an Awesome God***" after reading this psalm? Let's listen or sing along at home to this song. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SkUODzA3A60>

### **Prayer of Confession**

God, we read the gospels, we know that Jesus was no respecter of rank or privilege. We know that he lived in the true knowledge that every person he met was the very image of you before him.

We know he welcomed all as you welcomed him.

We know this and yet...

We find it so hard to abandon false hierarchies amongst us. We find it impossible to live without ranking ourselves against others.

And, so very often, we do not see the glory of God shining from the face of another. Forgive us, God.

Forgive us our little systems of control, our prejudices, our pettiness, our smallness in your infinite world of goodness. This is our humble prayer. Amen.

### **WORDS OF ASSURANCE**

Listen up, community of faith! Forgiveness is yours! It comes free, unconstrained and abundant, on this day and on all days. Thanks be to God!

### **PRAYER OF ADORATION AND THANKSGIVING**

God of all hopefulness, God of all care, we give thanks that your infinite patience waits for us, your infinite compassion comforts us, and your infinite love envelopes us.

We see the life you long for us to lead, but so dimly, so often, but you never give up on us.

We build certainties out of our wishes and they collapse again and again, and you care for us.

We think we know your love and then, it comes to us again and again in new ways we could never have imagined.

For all your love and faithfulness, we seek to live in thankfulness. Amen.

### **DISCIPLESHIP THOUGHT**

From our viewpoint, knowing the way the gospel story of Mark will play out, how, in the end, the disciples will abandon Jesus, in, as chapter 16 says, 'terror and bewilderment,' the way the disciples talk here is heartbreaking. We can see ourselves in them. We so often operate from an unwarranted certainty; that we know how things are and how they should be. We do not see the whole picture, nor the full complexity, nor, often, another's point of view, but we often act as if we do. To see the disciple's foolish certainties, brings into stark relief our own. How can we use this story of tragic, smallness of vision and shortsightedness to help us be observant, patient, expectant and humble in our decision making as individual and as faith communities?

**Read Job 38:1-7, 34-41 and Mark 10:35-45 (readings are below)**

[Pam's talk- Not to be served but to serve.](#)

Pam mentions talking too much. Here is an article from *Spiritual Living for Busy People* (*this would have to be an optional extra for really busy people -Editor-*) [18 signs that you talk too much.](#)

Listen to [The Servant King](#) (From Heaven You Came). Jesus directly discusses servanthood in the Mark 10 reading.

## **OFFERTORY SENTENCE**

The way of the servant is the way of God. Giving is serving. Let us give in love.

(Giving options are listed in the [About Us](#) section of the church website)

## **OFFERTORY PRAYER**

God who gives life to all, who gives the world its life, who is the life of the whole universe, we bring our giving to you. May the giving of ourselves in service to you and your world be a true giving in joy and humility. Amen.

## **PRAYER OF INTERCESSION**

God, of all that is known and all that is unknown, we pray today for all those living in fear of the unknown. We pray for those who do not know from where their next meal will come, for those who do not know if or when their government will breakdown their door, for those who do not know how they will endure another long, lonely night. We do not know what the future holds, but we do trust that we know who holds the future.

Give peace, give comfort, we pray. We pray also today for those who do know, those who are certain of their capacities to know and control the world around them, for those who know with certainty what is good for others and what must be done. Give uncertainty, give pause, give humility we pray. Amen.

Concluding with a wonderful anthem about thanksgiving [10,000 Reasons](#)

## **COMMISSIONING AND BENEDICTION**

God calls us to courage. God calls us to step into the unknown with only the trust and hope of God's presence, with only the role of the servant to guide us. So, let us go in courage. Let us go in hope. Let us go in trust. Let us go in God. Amen.

## **Isaiah 53:4-12**

### *Contemporary English Version*

He suffered and endured great pain for us, but we thought his suffering was punishment from God.

He was wounded and crushed because of our sins; by taking our punishment, he made us completely well.

All of us were like sheep that had wandered off.

We had each gone our own way, but the LORD gave him the punishment we deserved.

He was painfully abused, but he did not complain.

He was silent like a lamb being led to the butcher, as quiet as a sheep having its wool cut off.

He was condemned to death without a fair trial.

Who could have imagined what would happen to him?

His life was taken away because of the sinful things my people had done.

He wasn't dishonest or violent, but he was buried in a tomb of cruel and rich people.

The LORD decided his servant would suffer as a sacrifice to take away the sin and guilt of others.

Now the servant will live to see his own descendants.

He did everything the LORD had planned.

By suffering, the servant will learn the true meaning of obeying the LORD.

Although he is innocent, he will take the punishment for the sins of others, so that many of them will no longer be guilty.

The LORD will reward him with honour and power for sacrificing his life.

Others thought he was a sinner, but he suffered for our sins and asked God to forgive us.

## **Psalms 91:9-16**

### *Contemporary English Version*

The LORD Most High is your fortress.

Run to him for safety, and no terrible disasters will strike you or your home.

God will command his angels to protect you wherever you go.

They will carry you in their arms, and you won't hurt your feet on the stones.

You will overpower the strongest lions and the most deadly snakes.

The Lord says, "If you love me and truly know who I am, I will rescue you and keep you safe.

When you are in trouble, call out to me.

I will answer and be there to protect and honour you.

You will live a long life and see my saving power."

## **Hebrews 5:1-10**

### *Contemporary English Version*

Every high priest is appointed to help others by offering gifts and sacrifices to God because of their sins. A high priest has weaknesses of his own, and he feels sorry for foolish and sinful people. That is why he must offer sacrifices for his own sins and for the sins of others. But no one can have the honour of being a high priest simply by wanting to be one. Only God can choose a priest, and God is the one who chose Aaron.

That is how it was with Christ. He became a high priest, but not just because he wanted the honour of being one. It was God who told him, "You are my Son, because today I have become your Father!"

In another place, God says, "You are a priest forever just like Melchizedek."

God had the power to save Jesus from death. And while Jesus was on earth, he begged God with loud crying and tears to save him. He truly worshiped God, and God listened to his prayers. Jesus is God's own Son, but still he had to suffer before he could learn what it really means to obey God. Suffering made Jesus perfect, and now he can save forever all who obey him. This is because God chose him to be a high priest like Melchizedek.

### **Mark 10:35-45**

James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came up to Jesus and asked, "Teacher, will you do us a favour?"

Jesus asked them what they wanted, and they answered, "When you come into your glory, please let one of us sit at your right side and the other at your left."

Jesus told them, "You don't really know what you're asking! Are you able to drink from the cup that I must soon drink from or be baptised as I must be baptised?"

"Yes, we are!" James and John answered.

Then Jesus replied, "You certainly will drink from the cup from which I must drink. And you will be baptised just as I must! But it isn't for me to say who will sit at my right side and at my left. That is for God to decide."

When the ten other disciples heard this, they were angry with James and John. But Jesus called the disciples together and said:

You know that those foreigners who call themselves kings like to order their people around. And their great leaders have full power over the people they rule. But don't act like them. If you want to be great, you must be the servant of all the others. And if you want to be first, you must be everyone's slave. The Son of Man did not come to be a slave master, but a slave who will give his life to rescue many people.