

Earlswood Valley - 6.30 pm . 20th Sept. '81

Order of Worship

Introit: Down in the valley ...

Invocation -

Be still before the Lord and wait patiently
for him. Take delight in the Lord, and he
will give you the desires of your heart.

Let us pray -

Out of the continuing round of each
succeeding day, with its duties, its attractions
its difficulties, we meet in this holy place,
^{God,} to seek that inner serenity which comes from
faith in Thee, ~~God~~; to clarify our spiritual
vision that eternal realities may be more
manifest to us; and to obtain that wisdom
which will enable us to live as true members
of thy kingdom: through Jesus Christ our Lord
who taught us to pray, saying -
Our Father ---

Hymn 428. I'll praise my maker while I've breath.

Word of welcome ... and any notices.

Response -

This is a very moving experience - for all of us. We are standing in history: we are gazing almost instinctively back down the corridors of time. And as we do so, a strange thing is happening to us. We scarcely notice dates, but events and persons. Time is not measured by days and years, they are simply the pegs driven into the walls of time to hold the tapestry of history. And then as we pause in contemplation of that tapestry, again we find ourselves becoming aware of an invisible something or someone who somehow directs the hands that ply the shuttles and in a truly gracious manner, works with and through our contribution however crude and clumsy it may be and weaves it ^{lovingly} into the tapestry.

And at this moment it is understandable that our attention is especially focussed upon Ann Rosser. And if she were to give us a message for our gathering here this evening could I presume to suggest it would be a sentence lifted out of a letter written to a people - scattered across the land we know as Turkey. ^{a people almost to be tested very desecratingly} The author is unknown but there is one lovely suggestion that it was by Aquilla's ~~the~~ wife of Roscilla who were ministering in Ephesus where Paul had installed them as he made his way back to Antioch after his second missionary journey.

The sentence comes at the end of chapter 11 - the chapter containing the thumb nail sketches of the heroes of faith - - Heb 11:39 -

The completion of Ann Rosser's work is in our hands -

And now I shall read the opening paragraphs (Verses 1-10) of a letter sent by Paul to the church at Colossae, a church up the Lycus Valley about 80 miles from Ephesus.

Hymn 745 All praise to our redeeming Lord.

Offering and dedication.

Acts 3: 1-16

An account of the first recorded act of healing in the early church - (See pages 5-7)

Prayer -

Almighty God, Creator and Sustainer of life; we acknowledge Thy creative power so evident in the world about us, a creative power made all the more marvellous to us as the men of Science unfold before us something of the vastness and orderliness of the universe. Thou art indeed a great God.

We acknowledge, further, Thy creative power as it is manifest in human life, human life made in Thine own likeness, made as persons with a capacity for fellowship with one another and with Thee. And we thank Thee, that in the person of Jesus, Thy Son, Thou didst enter into Thy creation, and thus enabled man to experience, through his physical senses, the richness of fellowship with Thee.

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We acknowledge yet again Thy creative power and purpose in the establishment of the church within which Thou dost continue to dwell with Thy people, and through which Thy creative work finds its highest expression in the building of Thy kingdom.

Now and here, O God, we humbly recognise that Thou hast called us and appointed us to a work within the church. ~~and~~ We thank Thee for the satisfaction that we have felt as we have fulfilled our respective ministries.

We admit and confess our failures and our inadequacies, but realise the sufficiency of Thy grace and we pray that Thy spirit - the spirit of Truth and Grace will saturate our personalities and find expression in our daily living.

This prayer we offer in all sincerity and humility in the name of and for the sake of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen

Hymn 727 Jesus with Thy church abide
Singers:

Hymn 604 Tell Thou my life, O Lord, my God.
Benediction

Acts 3:1-16

This is our business

First recorded act of healing in the early church following soon after the birth of the church - the day of Pentecost -

- It is significant for three things related to the work of God which have relevance in every age
- The act of healing in itself is not important - Indeed there has been a tendency - and it has shown up strongly to-day in some quarters - to regard healing as of supreme importance - In the ministry of Jesus, ~~where~~ healing and other special acts were rather prominent in the early part, but towards the end the focus was upon teaching and the gospel. This trend, too, was evident in the record of the early church, and was particularly noticeable in the ministry of Paul -
- But to return to the three elements in this act of healing - These are -
 1. The work of God is not limited to ~~people with special gifts~~ a select few.
 2. The work of God is achieved through the chance encounters we ^{all} have in daily life
 3. The work of God is accomplished as we give what we have -

1. Not limited to the select few

This is the genius of the church as Jesus conceived it - The ministry of Jesus was exercised mainly in and around Capernaum. He was getting across to people his concept of the K of G. - a way of life - He lived it and encouraged others to do so - Favourable atmosphere

It worked, so he then began to plan ahead to the time when he would withdraw. He selected 12. - Here we come upon the basis for success - Who were they? And note in this cross section the extremes represented by Matthew & Judas.

This is what we discover from this story. Peter & John - ordinary people - but... So Paul & Barnabas. On 1st journey. Lystra. ~~Asses~~ Bill Jeffers

2. Chance personal encounters (not big mtgs)

- Gospel record - a very few large gatherings - or little record of gains. But a goodly percentage is record of chance encounters. E.g. Nicodemus, Woman of Samaria...

- So with Peter & John - aware of need. If Jesus were here - he is not... yet - well he made a promise - In the name of Jesus...

Personal - Jeffers & his friend ~~Jeffers~~?
 B. ~~Jeffers~~
 And you?

3. Give what we have :

Axiomatic surely - yet how often does it happen that people try to give away what is not theirs - story of Pat & Mick. of social issues - + Note grumbles about woman & the spikenard.

So Peter & John - Oh yes, they would have had money - even if it were in the benevolent fund - but that was not the means of meeting this man's need. He needed wholeness - IXDP - & this could not be met up any other way.

To-day - those who are identified with the church - have ~~some~~ what the needy require.

: Paul to Corinthians 1 Cor 12 13 14 Love impt.

Gather up - 3 elements -

This is our work HSC?

~~One need more~~ - my watch.
The angel Gabriel talks with Jesus