

Western Fells Methodist Circuit

14<sup>th</sup> February 2021

## **A Reflective Service with Prayers for Healing**

by Rev Joyce Ellis

## Introduction

I suspect that there are few of us who have not felt affected in some way – body, mind or spirit - over the last year. This reflective service offers us time to pray for healing for ourselves and others. You may like to have 1 or 2 candles ready to use later in the service.

## Opening Prayer

We come in this service to God.

In our need and bringing the needs of the world.

We come to God who has come to us in Jesus.

And who walks with us the road of our world's suffering.

We come with our faith and with our doubts;

We come with our hopes and our fears.

We come as we are, because it is God who invites us to come,

And God has promised never to turn us away.

## Hymn

*Aled Jones*

Dear Lord and father of mankind, forgive our foolish ways;  
Re-clothe us in our rightful mind;  
In purer lives Thy service find,  
In deeper reverence, praise.

In simple trust like theirs who heard, beside the Syrian sea,  
The gracious calling of the Lord,  
Let us, like them, without a word  
Rise up and follow Thee.

Drop Thy still dews of quietness, till all our strivings cease;  
Take from our souls the strain and stress,  
And let our ordered lives confess  
The beauty of Thy peace.

Breathe through the heats of our desire thy coolness and Thy balm;  
Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;  
Speak through the earthquake, wind, and fire,  
O still small voice of calm!

*John Greenleaf Whittier*

## Prayer

Dear God, thank you for all that is good,  
for our creation and our humanity,  
for the stewardship you have given us of this planet earth,  
for the gifts of life and of one another,  
for your love which is unbounded and eternal.

But we confess merciful God, we have not loved you with  
our whole heart, nor our neighbours as ourselves.  
Forgive what we have been, accept us as we are,  
and guide what we shall be. Amen.

O God of mercy, we thank you that you forgive our past sin,  
you strengthen us in your gift of eternal life,  
you shape us for your glory.

Eternal Spirit, flow through our being and open our lips  
that our mouths may proclaim your praise. Amen.

## Reading

Mark 1 : 40 – 45 GNB

<sup>40</sup> A man suffering from a dreaded skin disease came to Jesus, knelt down, and begged him for help. "If you want to," he said, "you can make me clean."

<sup>41</sup> Jesus was filled with pity, and reached out and touched him. "I do want to," he answered. "Be clean!" <sup>42</sup> At once the disease left the man, and he was clean.

<sup>43</sup> Then Jesus spoke sternly to him and sent him away at once, <sup>44</sup> after saying to him, "Listen, don't tell anyone about this. But go straight to the priest and let him examine you; then in order to prove to everyone that you are cured, offer the sacrifice that Moses ordered."

<sup>45</sup> But the man went away and began to spread the news everywhere. Indeed, he talked so much that Jesus could not go into a town publicly. Instead, he stayed out in lonely places, and people came to him from everywhere.

We cannot measure how you heal  
 Or answer every sufferer's prayer  
 Yet we believe your grace responds  
 Where faith and doubt unite to care.  
 Your hands, though bloodied on the cross,  
 Survive to hold and heal and warn,  
 To carry all through death to life  
 And cradle children yet unborn.

The pain that will not go away,  
 The guilt that clings from things long past,  
 The fear of what the future holds,  
 Are present as if meant to last.  
 But present too is love which tends  
 The hurt we never hoped to find  
 The private agonies inside  
 The memories that haunt the mind.

So some have come who need your help  
 And some have come to make amends,  
 As hands which shaped and saved the world  
 Are present in the touch of friends  
 Lord, let your Spirit meet us here  
 To mend the body, mind and soul,  
 To disentangle peace from pain  
 And make your broken people whole.

*John Bell & Graham Maule*

**Address**      ***Helplessness, Hurt and Hope***

**Text**

Mark 1 : 40-41

“Sir, if you want to, you can make me clean” “I do want to - be clean!”

There is something about his story that captures us - and I think it is because this story sounds so real. So what is it that we hear in those words of the man suffering from that dreaded skin disease? We hear perhaps 3 things: i) helplessness and hurt ii) humility and iii) hope, as he puts himself into the hands of Jesus.

## **Helplessness and Hurt**

The cry is first of all a cry of helplessness. This person has been inflicted with a disease over which he has no control, '*dreaded skin disease*' tells it all. It is a disease that has taken over his whole life being ostracised, isolated, and alone . A disease furthermore that meant that he was labelled 'ritually unclean'. It was a physical disease that reduced him to a state of helplessness, not only physically but emotionally, mentally, spiritually and socially. He cries out from his helplessness and hurt.

## **Humility**

Perhaps it is because of this very helplessness and hurt that we hear another cry in these words "*Sir, if you want to, you can make me clean*" It is the voice of humility. We can only guess what it cost this person to humble himself and come and beg at Jesus feet, "*when he saw Jesus he threw himself down and begged him*". The man has the humility to come and place himself totally in Jesus hands. What a risk to take. Perhaps he was only able to take it because he had seen the light of love in Jesus eyes. Love and understanding reaching out to him.

## **Hope**

Certainly there is a third cry we hear in the man's words. For we hear a voice of hope. For the man sees the possibility of change because of Jesus. Perhaps he doesn't know how or why or when, but his contact with Jesus has brought him what he never had before. In Jesus he saw hope. And so he comes and lays his burden down before Jesus in helplessness and hurt, humility but also in hope.

## **Jesus Reply**

The man had asked '*Sir, if you want to.....*'. Jesus reply is completely unequivocal '*I DO WANT TO.....*'. What music to the man's ears. What music to our ears as we live with the confusion and doubt that the corona virus brings, as well as physical and mental illness. Jesus says "*I do want to...*"

The man has come, placed himself in Jesus hands and Jesus makes him clean. Those words imply a healing not only of physical disease but the emotional, mental, spiritual, and social disease that affected his whole being. It was a healing that brought outward and inner peace.

And so we too are invited, in humility, to bring our helplessness and hurt and find hope and healing in Jesus as we lay our burdens down.

## Hymn

We will lay our burden down (x3)  
In the hands of the Lord.

We will light the flame of love ...  
As the hands of the Lord.

We will show both hurt and hope ...  
Like the hands of the Lord.

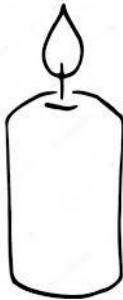
We will walk the path of peace ...  
Hand in hand with the Lord.

*Iona Community*

## ***Prayers for Healing***

O Brother Jesus, you walk with the wounded along the road of our world's suffering. We seek your grace of healing for the broken people and places of our world. Amen.

*You are invited to light a candle and name aloud those for whom you would pray .....*



*Now you are invited to light the second candle for those affected by the current pandemic, for the victims of war, for those who are oppressed, and for the healing of the nations.*

We light this candle

- for those affected by the corona virus and those caring for them
- for those suffering from poverty and malnutrition
- for the healing of those who are suffering oppression at the hands of others
- for those suffering because of their beliefs and who are prisoners of conscience
- for those suffering from natural and other disasters
- for children and adults who have been the victims of abuse and of people trafficking
- for the victims of war and terrorism



We pray for the healing of nations and especially do we pray for lasting peace and justice in the Middle East

Lord, grant your healing grace to all who are sick, injured or disabled, that they may be made whole. Hear us, O Lord of life

Grant to all who seek your guidance, and to all who are lonely, anxious, or despondent, a knowledge of your will and an awareness of your presence. Hear us, O Lord of life

Mend broken relationships, and restore those in emotional distress to soundness of mind and serenity of spirit. Hear us, O Lord of life

Bless doctors, nurses and all who minister to the suffering, granting them wisdom, skill, sympathy and patience. Hear us, O Lord of life

Grant to the dying peace and a holy death and uphold by the grace and consolation of your Holy Spirit those who are bereaved. Hear us,  
O Lord of life

Restore to wholeness whatever is broken by sin, in our lives, in our nation, and in our world. Hear us, O Lord of life Amen

## ***A Prayer for our own Healing***

*In the silence let us bring ourselves before God for our own healing,  
be it in body, mind or spirit.*

**Spirit of the living God,  
present with us now,  
Enter me, body, mind and spirit,  
and heal me of all that harms me,  
in Jesus' name. Amen.**

## **Lord's Prayer**

### **A Celtic Blessing**

*Margaret Rizza*

The guarding of the Lord of Life be on you,  
the guarding of loving Christ be on you  
the guarding of the Holy Spirit be on you  
to aid and uphold you each day and night of your life.

The guarding of God, the guarding of Christ,  
the guarding of the Spirit, be upon you.

### **Blessing**

Jesus said: 'Peace is my parting gift to you, peace such as the world cannot give, give I to you'

And so may the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all now and always.

So, go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
In the name of Christ. Amen

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