

Bulletin for Sunday 17 July 2022

Good morning friends.

Let's pause as we prepare to worship... and then praise God as we sing:

Hymn: New every morning is the love (R&S 536)

Prayers: We thank you, Creator God,
for this day, this hour, this moment of time...
May we know you, may you be real to us,
and may we listen for your voice.
You have given us this day -
may we seize it, as a God-given opportunity
to draw close to you, to hear your Word,
and to seek to understand and to follow.
We ask your blessing on everything we do,
and on everything we give in your service,
today and every day. Amen

followed by The Lord's Prayer

Readings: Psalm 15 and Luke 10: 38-42

Reflection: There is a time for everything... It's a well-known saying, a song (if you turn the words round) and may have originated thousands of years ago with the writer of the book of Ecclesiastes in the Bible (for everything there is a season etc.). Interestingly Google gives its meaning negatively, suggesting that the saying is used when the speaker feels that someone is behaving inappropriately for a particular situation. But I don't think that need always be the case. For example, I don't think Jesus' remarks in this reading were intended to make anyone feel put down.

Jesus and his disciples were continuing their journey to Jerusalem. They were offered - and accepted - hospitality in the home of Mary and Martha: sisters who were apparently independent householders without a male relative resident with them. A slightly unusual situation for that time and place, but we see a number of independent women in the New Testament, attracted to Jesus' message. By accepting their hospitality, Jesus shows himself happy to cross social boundaries. Martha has a traditional idea of her

responsibilities as host - she disappears into the kitchen, thinking about getting everyone fed. Mary offers a different kind of hospitality. She stays with their guests and sits at Jesus' feet in the traditional position of a disciple, listening carefully to what he has to say. In doing so, she honours him by making it clear that his words are worthy of her full attention - perhaps especially, given the context of this passage, what Jesus was teaching about loving God and our neighbour.

These different types of hospitality can compete for our time and attention. Indeed, many things in life constantly compete for our time and attention - that much certainly doesn't change! I don't think Jesus is saying that feeding guests is unimportant - but that finding time to listen - to our guests and, crucially, to what God is saying to us - is even more important. There is a time for everything... Amen

Hymn: O Jesus, I have promised (R&S 509)

Prayers: God of compassion, we bring our concerns for others:
We pray for parts of the world where there is war and
unrest, remembering those living in fear.
And we pray for those working for peace.
We hold before you families worried about
the rising cost of living, and the school holidays...
We pray for our Churches, that in times of change
we will be places of support in our communities,
and able to point people to the love of Christ.
and we pray for our friends and for all those we love...
In Jesus' name we ask all our prayers,
including the unspoken prayers of our hearts. Amen

Hymn: Living God, your joyful Spirit (R&S 530)

Blessing: May we be always alert to God's voice;
and may the blessing of God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
be with us and with all those we love,
this week, and always. Amen

There will be a Sunday at Six service on Zoom at 6pm as usual - all welcome.

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