St Andrew’s with Castle Gate URC
15th November 2020
Led by Revd David Featonby

Call to Worship
O God from whom every good gift derives, we gather to worship you this day.
You are an awesome God, greater than our comprehension or our imagination.
You are beyond words we could ever use to describe you.
Yet, through Christ, we know the intimacy of your vast Love.

We come to you in thanksgiving and praise, to know that you are God and to place our lives anew before you.

God of truth, justice and peace, enlarge our vision with your Word.
Instil in us, again, your hope in place of despair, your peace where hatred threatens, your joy amidst depression, and your love to overwhelm hatred and division.

May Your Holy Spirit surround and indwell us now, and forevermore.

In Jesus we pray. Amen.

Hymn R&S 74
Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of Creation

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!
O my soul, praise Him, for He is thy health and salvation:
come ye who hear,

brothers and sisters draw near;
praise him in glad adoration!

Praise to the Lord, who o’er all things so wondrously reigneth,
Bears thee on eagle’s wings, and through all troubles sustaineth.
hast thou not seen
all that is needful hath been granted in what He ordaineth?
Praise to the Lord, who doth prosper thy work and defend thee!
Surely his goodness and mercy here daily attend thee:
ponder anew
all the Almighty can do,
Who with His love doth befriend thee.
Praise to the Lord! O, let all that is in me adore Him!
All that hath life and breath come now with praises before Him!
Let the Amen sound from His people again:
gladly for aye we adore Him.

Joachim Neander (1650-80)
Based on Psalm 103:1-5, Psalm 150 etc.

Prayers of Thanksgiving

God of all blessings, source of all life, giver of all grace:

We thank you for the gift of life:
for the breath that sustains life,
for the food of this earth that nurtures life,
for the love of family and friends without which there would be no life.
We thank you for the mystery of creation:
for the beauty that the eye can see,
for the joy that the ear may hear,
for the unknown filling the universe with wonder,
for the expanse of space that draws us beyond ourselves.

We thank you for setting us in communities:
for families who nurture our lives,
for friends who love us by choice,
for companions at work, who share our burdens and daily tasks,
for strangers who welcome us into their midst,
for people from other lands who call us to grow in understanding,
for children who lighten our moments with delight.

We thank you for this day:
one more day to love,
and one more day to work for justice and peace,
and one more experience of your presence,
for your promise to be with us,
to be our God, and to give salvation.

For these, and all blessings,
we give you thanks, eternal, loving God,
through Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

Prayer of Confession

God of healing,
God of wholeness,
we bring our brokenness,
or sinful nature,
or fears and despair,
and lay them at your feet.

God of healing,
God of wholeness,
We your children, in your likeness, share inventive powers with you.
Great Creator, still creating, Show us what we yet may do.

Proudly rise our modern cities, stately buildings, row on row; yet their windows, blank unfeeling, stare on canyoned streets below, where the lonely drift unnoticed in the city’s ebb and flow, lost to purpose and to meaning, scarcely caring where they go.

We have ventured worlds undreamed of since the childhood of our race; known the ecstasy of winging through untravelled realms of space; probed the secrets of the atom, yielding unimagined power, facing us with life’s destruction or our most triumphant hour.

As each far horizon beckons, may it challenge us anew: children of creative purpose, serving others, honouring you.
May our dreams prove rich with promise, each endeavour, well begun; Great Creator, give us guidance till our goals and yours are one.

Thank you that we can always trust in you.
You are an abundant God and out of your great mercy you have given us so much.

We give you this offering today.
With it we worship you and give our whole selves to you.
Please now take it and use it for your kingdom and your glory.
Extend and multiply its reach and influence we pray.
May it be a great blessing to many.

We ask all this in the powerful name of Jesus.
Amen.

Reading  –  Matthew 25:14-30

Hymn 635  Put peace into each other’s hands
Put peace into each other's hands and like a treasure hold it, protect it like a candle-flame, with tenderness enfold it.
Put peace into each other's hands with loving expectation; be gentle in your words and ways, in touch with God's creation.
Put peace into each other's hands, like bread we break for sharing; look people warmly in the eye: our life is meant for caring.
As at communion, shape your hands into a waiting cradle; the gift of Christ receive, revere, united round the table.
Put Christ into each other's hands,
he is love's deepest measure;
in love make peace, give peace a chance
and share it like a treasure.  

Fred Kaan (1929-2009)

Sermon

Prayers of Intercession

Dear God, who is like a mother and a father to us;
It saddens our hearts to see the great suffering of your
creation in the world.
We are especially sad for those, who at this time, are
hurting.
We bring to mind all those in our locality who find
themselves in a hard place.
We especially pray for those who suffer physically with
illness or mentally with depression or anxiety.
Lord, come breathe on these people by your Holy Spirit
and bring great love, hope and joy through us your
church.

Help us to minister to others in the strength of
your Spirit and to work in unity together.
May we shine your glorious light into the
darkness and remain steadfast and true to you.

Lord, it disturbs us when we see world leaders
embracing division instead of unity; pursuing wealth
instead of justice and concealing lies, instead of
speaking out the truth.
We lift all those in significant leadership to you, thinking
especially at this time of the presidency of the United
States. Many people there are praying for one side or
the other, often with malice for the opposition. Lord God
of reconciliation and peace bring your hand upon those
who would divide and turn them to finding peaceful
ways to unite the country. Come guide their thoughts,
cover their actions and renew their minds.

Protect all in power from the influence of the
realms of darkness and sweep away any
corruption. We pray that you would lay out new
paths of righteousness in troubled nations and
lands.
Father, it is disturbing to see the difference between
rich and poor widening. We lift all those in poverty to
you. Come bring miracles of provision, healing and
restoration.

Speak into our lives so that we might play our
part in changing the world.
We remember the vulnerable and the ignored;
the outcast, the refugee and the oppressed.
We continue to pray for all those who are affected by
the Covid virus, for those who care for them and for
the scientists seeking new ways of dealing with the
pandemic.
We remember with love those who have died and
those who grieve their loss.

Help us generous God not to despair or to give
up, but to remember your constant loving and
forgiveness.

These prayers we ask in the name of Jesus Christ our
Lord and Saviour.

Amen

Hymn R&S 640 Saviour, again to thy dear
name we raise

Saviour, again to thy dear name we raise
with one accord our parting hymn of praise;
guard thou the lips from sin, the hearts from shame,
that in this house have called upon thy name.

Grant us Thy peace, Lord, through the coming night;
turn thou for us its darkness into light;
from harm and danger keep thy servants free,  
for dark and light are both alike to thee.  
Grant us thy peace throughout our earthly life,  
peace to thy Church from error and from strife;  
peace to the world, the fruit of truth and love,  
peace in each heart, they spirit from above.  
Thy peace in sorrow, balm of every pain,  
thy peace in death, the hope to rise again;  
then, when thy voice shall bid our conflict cease,  
call us, O Lord, to thine eternal peace.

John Ellerton (1826-93)

Blessing

CCL114191