

## Sunday 31st May - The Ark & YPG Theme:

### Go the Extra Mile

Welcome & Announcements (Colin)

Service Welcome (Jamie)

Sketch: Salt & Light (Sarah, Charis, Caitlin)

Song: My Lighthouse (Band)

Reflection: Beyond the Comfort Zone YPG  
(Rachel & Stephen)

Item: Go the Extra Mile Ark (All)

Reading: Luke 5v17-26 YPG (Andrew)

Song: One by One (Ian & Sarah)

Address : Laura

Prayers of Intercession Local  
Covid-19, World- (Aimee, Craig)

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song) Ethan + Samuel Flute

Benediction Colin

**Announcements** Good morning & welcome to our service of worship for Regent St Methodist Church this last Sunday in May. This morning the young people will lead us in worship as it's our annual Ark service.

Firstly can I say thank you to everyone who contributed to this service, to those who drew it all together & to those who help distribute it. It's a team effort and I am very grateful for that team.

Thanks also to all of you who have been supporting our BCM parents & to those of you who have been knitting head bands for our NHS staff. It's wonderful to see so many get involved.

Tomorrow evening is our Church Council meeting & it's great to be able to report on so many good things happening. However we obviously also have much to consider as we look forward. If you have been thinking about something in particular in terms of our Church family, our worship or witness, then do get in touch with me or Caroleen our society steward. We won't be able to discuss everything but we want to everyone to be included as we seek God's way forward in challenging times.

Finally on behalf of you all I want to wish Desi McGimpsey a happy birthday for his 77<sup>th</sup> Last Wednesday. You will be glad to know Desi that I am not going to try & sing myself now, but we do pray that you continue to know God's blessing.

Now Jamie is going to introduce our service.

### **Service Welcome (Jamie)**

Welcome to our Ark & Young People's Group service. Unfortunately we are unable to meet together this year but we are able to join in our online service from our own homes. The theme of the service is 'Go the Extra Mile' and we begin with a sketch on Salt & Light.

### **Sketch - Salt & Light**

S: I am salt and I am very important. I give flavour to our food and I have been used to preserve food and meats down through the centuries. Since as far back as 6000 BC, I have played my part in the history of the world.

L: Huh. I am light. How could there be life without light. The sun rises in the morning and starts the day, and when night time comes I

can shine in the darkness. I am not just useful or merely important, I am essential.

S: Oh listen to you, all full of yourself. Well I am 'essential' to life as well, you cannot live without me. People need salt in their diet. Without salt you can have muscle cramps, dizziness or even worse.

L: And too much salt on those chips isn't going to do much good for your health either. You have a purpose I suppose but not like me. Would plants grow without light? I'm everywhere. In the sun, in the stars, reflecting off the moon. I'm in light bulbs, candles, fires and provide warnings like a lighthouse or traffic lights. I was there from the very beginning, from the first day of creation. God hit the light switch and there I was. I have everything.

P: Except humility, maybe missing a little bit on that front. I listen to you both arguing about your own importance but I'm sorry to break it to you – it's not all about you. You have a role to play but it's not all about you: Matthew 5v13 "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.

L: Hah! Salt without saltiness, you are USELESS, ha ha!

P: Verses 14-16 "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on a stand and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

S: Put a bucket over your head, that will stop your light shining, hee, hee ! L: I'm the most important

S: No I'm the most important

L: I'm the most important

P: STOP... please. If we're in lockdown until Christmas, I hope I'm not with you two. You are both mentioned in the bible and you are both important but when you keep thinking about yourselves, and what you can do, you start to think less of others around you, and what God can do through you.

S: Sorry, I think I get it and it's pretty cool that we get a mention in the bible. God has given us gifts but we need to use them. Maybe God could use us to help people in more ways than just for seasoning people's food and lighting the world around them. Yes, we can share God's love and helping others even in small ways. I can add flavour, richness and joy of life and faith and share it with those around me. And you can bring light and God's love with those who are having a difficult dark times.

L: I can help others who have lost their way, or are in need of encouragement. I can bring hope and faith and could be someone to pray with them and keep God's light

burning so they know they are not alone. And there are so many practical ways we help too, particularly at the moment. We will need to be more inventive with this social distancing. Even though we are physically apart we need to be closer together than ever before and look out for one another.

P: You are quick learners. You have so many gifts but they need to be used and go the extra

mile. The light you shine should not attract attention to yourself. It's like that light you're holding. It doesn't do anybody any good to look at the burning bulb, or on the person who's holding it.

L: If we shine the light on the path, and not on ourselves, then we can find our way. And that's the love of God in us.

S: And we share the light of God to help others find their way so they can also feel the warmth and the joy that God gives.

### Song My Lighthouse

In my wrestling and in my doubts In  
my failures You won't walk out Your  
great love will lead me through You are the  
peace in my troubled sea You are the peace in  
my troubled sea

In the silence, You won't let go  
In the questions, Your truth will hold  
Your great love will lead me through You are  
the peace in my troubled sea You are the  
peace in my troubled sea

My lighthouse, my lighthouse  
Shining in the darkness, I will follow You My  
lighthouse, my lighthouse I  
will trust the promise  
You will carry me safe to shore (oh-oh-oh-oh-  
oh) Safe  
to shore (oh-oh-oh-oh-oh) Safe to  
shore (oh-oh-oh-oh-oh) Safe to  
shore

I won't fear what tomorrow brings  
With each morning I'll rise and sing My  
God's love will lead me through You are the  
peace in my troubled sea You are the peace in  
my troubled sea

My lighthouse, my lighthouse  
Shining in the darkness, I will follow You My  
lighthouse, my lighthouse I  
will trust the promise  
You will carry me safe to shore (oh-oh-oh-oh-

oh)  
to shore (oh-oh-oh-oh-oh) Safe  
shore (oh-oh-oh-oh-oh) Safe to  
shore Safe to

Fire before us. You're the brightest  
You will lead us through the storms X4

My lighthouse, my lighthouse  
Shining in the darkness, I will follow You My  
lighthouse, my lighthouse I  
will trust the promise  
You will carry me safe to shore (oh-oh-oh-oh-  
oh) Safe  
to shore (oh-oh-oh-oh-oh) Safe to  
shore (oh-oh-oh-oh-oh) Safe to  
shore

### Reflection - Beyond the Comfort Zone

Reach out to those in need  
Get off those easy chairs  
Roll up your sleeves  
And put actions to your prayers.

Leave your comfort zone  
Put on the Christian smile  
And out of sheer love, do all it takes To go that  
extra mile

For Jesus' love is true  
His love for others can come through you And  
He will add His blessings  
To everything you do

So go beyond the comfort zone Bless others in  
His name  
And their lives and yours lives Will never be  
the same

What blessings God has in store Not just for  
you and me alone But for all who take the  
courage To go beyond their comfort zone

**Go the Extra Mile** Benjamin: Over the last  
few weeks we have seen many people going

the extra mile by doing extraordinary things and going above & beyond what is expected. We've seen 100 year old Captain Tom raising millions of pounds for the NHS. With the rest of my family we stepped up our stairs, the equivalent of Kilimanjaro to raise funds for Tearfund. Just like many people have done over the last few weeks, there are many small steps we can take to serve God by going the extra mile to help others.

Ella: Love a little bit more. Show love, compassion & friendship to everyone you meet, whether it be someone you know or a complete stranger.

You always gain by giving love.

Jamie: Encourage a little bit more. Give people hope and encouragement when they feel like giving up or when they are facing difficult and challenging times. Don't ever be too busy to encourage others.

Sarah: Care a little bit more. Be less selfish & think of others needs rather than your own. Kindness is caring for others, even when they may not care for you.

Samuel: Forgive a little bit more. When we feel that we have been wronged it's hard to forgive – remember we are not perfect ourselves and need forgiveness too.

By forgiving you do not change the past, but you sure do change the future.

Hannah: Pray a little bit more. Sometimes all it takes is one prayer to change everything.

Archie: Give a little bit more. Give our time, talents or money in service to God. No act of kindness, however small, is ever wasted.

Ethan: Have a little more faith. Luke Chapter 5 tells us about the paralysed man. His friends lowered him through a roof just to see Jesus. Their faith allowed them to go the extra mile for their friend.

### **Reading - Luke 5:17-26 (NIV)-**

Jesus Forgives & Heals a Paralysed Man

*One day Jesus was teaching, and Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there. They had come from every village of Galilee and from Judea and Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was with Jesus to heal the sick. Some men came carrying a paralysed man on a mat and tried to take him into the house to lay him before Jesus. When they could not find a way to do this because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on his mat through the tiles into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus.*

*When Jesus saw their faith, he said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven."*

*The Pharisees and the teachers of the law began thinking to themselves, "Who is this fellow who speaks blasphemy? Who can forgive sins but God alone?"*

*Jesus knew what they were thinking and asked, "Why are you thinking these things in your hearts? Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'? But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." So he said to the paralysed man, "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home." Immediately he stood up in front of them, took what he had been lying on and went home praising God. Everyone was amazed and gave praise to*

*God. They were filled with awe and said, "We have seen remarkable things today."*

### **Song - One by one (Ian & Sarah)**

One by one as the followers come, There's excitement all around.

The crowd floods in making such a din,  
Anticipation in their eyes.

No room to move all tightly packed, No one more can enter in.

There must be a way for the sick and lame, It's the only hope they have.

We're never goin' find a way to get inside Oh Lord we pray, hear our prayer oh Lord.

Blind may see, lame walk with glee, this teacher, healer set us free, amazing, who is He?

Lame man comes with his faith and hope, But no one lets him passed.

His friends help out, take him to the roof With a plan they have in mind.

They make a hole to pass him through, Then they lowered him down inside.

The crowd looked up as they watched the drop, Right at Jesus did he land.

We're never goin' find a way to get inside Oh Lord we pray, hear our prayer oh Lord.

Blind may see, lame walk with glee, this teacher, healer set us free, amazing, who is He?

A quiet murmur from this gentle healer Says "your sin's forgiven now walk"

His sins forgiven, lifts his eyes to heaven, Stands up tall while all in shock.

We're never goin' find a way to get inside Oh Lord we pray, hear our prayer oh Lord.

Blind may see, lame walk with glee, this teacher, healer set us free, amazing, who is He?

### **Talk – Laura**

Firstly a big thank you to our children, young people and their teachers for leading our service so well this morning. You rose to the challenge when we all can't be in the one place and we are so thankful for your willingness to participate.

'Go the extra mile' has been an excellent theme for your service. It is very apt and challenging for the time that we are living in. During lockdown we have seen time and time again people going the extra mile for other people and this has been encouraging. Jesus himself advocated this when he taught us to 'put others before ourselves'.

The reading that Andrew read for us from Luke 5, was a familiar one about a man who was lame. That means he couldn't walk. He couldn't even stand up! He could only lie on his mat and wait for his kind friends to help him. The sick man wanted to be well - to sit up, to stand and to walk by himself!

Now I think you have been sitting for too long so its time for us to add a few actions to this story! There are only four so hopefully you should remember them!

The first word is **Four** and the action that I want you to do is count to four on your fingers.

The second word is **See** and the action that I want you to do is cup your hands around your eyes as if you are peering through some binoculars!

The third word is **Climbed** and the action that I want you to do is pretend you are holding on to a ladder and climbing up it!

And the final word is **Loved** and the action that I want you to do is wrap your arms around yourself and give yourself a big hug!!

Everyone remember those words and actions, listen out carefully for when I use them in our story. Make sure that you do them, even though I can't see you this morning doesn't mean you get out of doing them!

Are we sitting comfortably? Then I'll begin.

One day this man's **four** friends heard that Jesus was in their town. 'If only he could go to see Jesus,' the friends must have said to each other. 'Surely Jesus could make our friend well!'

So the **four** friends picked up the man on his mat. They carried them as they walked down the road to see Jesus. But when they got to the house where Jesus was talking, it was packed full of people. Many people wanted to **see** Jesus. There was hardly any room inside! People were standing in the doorway, trying to get into the house. Other people stood outside, looking in the windows.

Then the friends remembered the flat roof on top of the house. The friends **climbed** the stairs outside the house to the roof. They carried their friend with them. The **four** friends began to pull away pieces off the roof. Finally the hole was big enough!

Carefully the friends lowered the man down and down into the house. Soon he was right in front of Jesus.

Jesus **loved** the man. 'Stand up, take your mat and walk,' Jesus told him. And the man did just that! How happy he was that Jesus had made him well. How thankful he was for his kind friends. All the people in the house were so surprised. All the people thanked God.

Whatever hardships life had dealt the lame man, it's clear that he was blessed with faithful friends. When those friends heard that Jesus was in town, they immediately brought the paralysed man to see Him. Even crowds of people couldn't keep them from laying their friend at Jesus' feet. Their belief in Jesus the Healer was so strong that they knew he could make their friend well again. The men tore away part of the roof so they could lower their friend down to Jesus. They were willing to make a scene, a mess and take the consequences for dismantling someone's roof! Jesus was startled but full of admiration (for the friends), love (for the man) and compassion (for his inability to walk). The friends had gone the extra mile! Jesus forgave the man's sins and healed him completely.

What an amazing picture of friendship, devotion and love we see here!

God calls us to do the same for our friends in need. You and I have friends who need to come to Jesus. It may not be easy but if each of us are willing to play our part, together we can succeed. It might only take you asking them, 'Can I pray for you?' or show them love and kindness by doing something. I read recently that Tearfund who usually send out prayer requests so that people can pray for their projects decided to turn the tables and ask their followers for any prayer requests that they had. They were so overwhelmed by the response that they are still praying through them! It might be hard to start that conversation but with text messages and emails we can give this a go and you might be surprised with the response!

We will meet obstacles but we must never give up. Just like the friends in the story, we must hold on tight to the corner of the mat and keep on going until they come to Jesus. When we introduce them to Jesus, he does the rest. We see that time and time again, when people met Jesus, they suddenly changed. They realised that what they needed in their lives was a friendship with him and a relationship with God our Father.

So I'm going to set you a challenge for this week ahead, I want to encourage you to go the extra mile by doing something for someone. You might bring in your neighbours' bin for them or make your mum some lunch or make tray bakes for your family. Whatever you decided to do, the important thing, is that we do it to show kindness and go the extra mile!

Like all good challenges I have a certificate like this that I will present to you once you have completed your task. It is available to download from the website and I would love you to take a picture of yourself with it and let me know how you got on.

**Prayers of Intercession** - Let us pray

Dear Lord and heavenly father , I pray now for these times

I pray for all of us fighting through the loneliness at home and I pray that we should know that we aren't alone and that you are with us.

I thank you for the amazing NHS staff that are working extremely hard to help the people that have the virus and I pray that you are protecting them as they save your people.

I pray that your healing hand is upon all those that are sick and be it your will that they get better.

I thank you for the people of this church and how they have not stopped shining for you and spreading your love.

I thank you that we build each other up and have the technology to put together a service and worship you even when we can't be together. In your name I pray Amen

Dear Lord, I pray for the current global issues - I pray for the governments of the countries around the world who are trying their hardest to keep us all safe and healthy during these covid times.

I ask that you will give them the guidance and help they need.

I pray Lord for the families who have lost loved ones at recent times and I pray that you will stay near to them throughout these strange times.

I pray Lord for the people in other countries where persecution of Christians is an ongoing issue and I just ask you lord that you will be there with them.

I ask lord that you will also help the people who lost their homes due to natural disasters within the last few months & the people who have lost their jobs due to Covid in the last few weeks, that you will just be there with everyone. Amen

### **Prayer book**

Let us bring to God now those who have sought our prayers

We continue to pray for 2 young boys facing cancer. For Timothy Harte who has journeyed so far with this disease already, we ask for complete healing. We remember also Daniel Kidson, as he receives regular treatment and we also remember their families in these difficult times.

We also pray for others who are seriously ill, for baby Rosie, for Colette, for Christine, for Mark Armstrong & Hannah Smyth.

We also continue to ask God for His loving comfort & peace for Elsbeth & Marion her daughter caring for her.

We give thanks that Tina Donaldson has been able to return home from hospital & we ask for full recovery at home.

And as we hear the words of Deuteronomy 33:27 that '*The eternal God is our refuge, & his everlasting arms are under you.*' We bring to God all those who have lost loved ones in the past days....

In particular we remember Sammy who died yesterday & we pray for his wife Muriel, daughters Alison & Julie and the whole family.

So lets us finish by saying the **Lord's Prayer** together.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ & the love of God & the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all, forevermore. Amen

**Song Fighting Back the Fears** (Ian, Ethan & Samuel)

Fighting back the fears that me may hold, Our Lord is on our side to make us bold.

Never feel alone for You are near,                      The  
beating in my soul is loud and clear.

For I will stand for You, Emboldened and renewed, You are my guiding light.

The road ahead is hard and steep and long,  
A vessel for Your work, please make me strong.

Father I am flawed in every way, Unworthy,  
make me whole O Lord I pray.

For I will stand for You, Emboldened and renewed, You are my guiding light.

Distracted by the busy lives we lead, Refocus,  
share God's love its all we need.  
Go the extra mile, I hear you say,  
Our calling from our Lord, hold strong I pray.

For I will stand for You, Emboldened and renewed, You are my guiding light.

*Bridge*

Bursting floods of endless love,  
That none can hold within,  
Humbled by such gifts received  
Shared good news - let life begin!

**Closing Blessing**

The bible tells us that, *We love ... because God first loved us....*1 Jhn 4:19

As we seek to go the extra mile ...

May we each know God's love deeply that we may share His love completely.

We share in the words of the Grace together.