



Newcastle City Temple Connected

Reimagining Church Together

Dear Friends

Hope you are all well.

With things looking increasingly positive in terms of Covid here in the UK, last Monday I met with members of the Pastoral Care Council to consider when we thought it might be possible to resume some form of gathered worship. At this stage I need to stress that any proposed return to Brunswick is still subject to confirmation (based on a number of factors), and we will of course need to ensure that when we do return we are able to do so safely and that we are able to fully comply with whatever restrictions may remain at that time.

Whilst we await advice on what this may mean in terms of Social Distancing, Mask Wearing, Hand Washing, Ventilation, Congregational and Sectional Singing and the playing of Brass Instruments etc. - I am pleased to announce that we hope to return to some form of gathered worship at 10am on Sunday 20th June. It is likely that initially we will need to meet in the Church (rather than the lower hall), and that we will only be able to meet every other week rather than weekly. On each alternate week we shall continue with Worship via Zoom and I shall continue to produce the Weekly NCT Connected Worship Bulletin.

Whilst it would be lovely to welcome everyone to worship, it may be that numbers will need to be restricted, and some form of booking system put in place - but further advice on this will be given in due course. No one should feel under any pressure to return, it is important that we respect each others thoughts on this - but the decision to return has to some extent been influenced by the fact that most, if not all, of us should by then have had the first Covid vaccination, many will have had both - and we each have the option to self-test, using the free rapid lateral flow home testing kits.

As details become clearer regarding this proposal I will update you all accordingly, but if anyone has any immediate thoughts, comments, questions or concerns then please feel free to contact me.

ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR THE WEEK AHEAD

Monday 3rd May - BANK HOLIDAY MONDAY

Tuesday 4th May 11am - Coffee Morning via Zoom

Tuesday 4th May 7pm - Major Liz's House Group (Spirit LYFE Session 2)

Thursday 6th May 11am - Funeral Service for Lily Budding at the West Road Crematorium

Due to limits of numbers due to Covid - attendance is strictly for invited guests only. It will however be possible to watch a 'live web-cast' of the service via the following web link: <https://www.obitus.com/>

USER NAME: tugj6809

PASSWORD: 964434

The live web-cast will start approximately 5 mins before the start of the service, The recording will also be available for viewing for a period of 28 days after the funeral service - but please note that it can take up to 3 working days for the 'Watch Again' recording to become available on the website.

Thursday 6th May 7pm - Heather Stubbs' House Group (Spirit LYFE Session 2)

Sunday 9th May 10am - Sunday Worship via Zoom.

Have a good week!

Every Blessing
Major Liz Hancock

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SUNDAY 2nd May 2021

Theme: May Day! May Day! May Day!

Bible Text: Mark 4:35-41, Mark 10:46-52 & John 4:46-53

Suggested Songs: In Christ Alone <https://youtu.be/yARm-IP54qU>

Be still for the presence of the Lord <https://youtu.be/bBsRjGbfVrw>

O what a wonderful, wonderful day https://youtu.be/fSEhufs_Ljc

Praise my soul the King of heaven <https://youtu.be/ujhi80abYbg>

Suggested Songster Piece: When God comes near <https://youtu.be/xmtjemHJmP4>

Suggested Band Piece: Mid all the traffic <https://youtu.be/vPucKRyno5w>

MAY DAY! MAY DAY! MAY DAY!

Tomorrow is May Day. A public holiday celebrated on the first Monday in May. The word Mayday has other connotations too of course.

In May 2020, the pilot of Pakistan International Airlines Flight PK 8303 reported technical problems and uttered the dreaded "mayday" alert. "We have lost two engines. Mayday, Mayday, Mayday," were the pilot's last words, and ninety-seven people perished.

"Mayday!" is an international distress call used by airplane pilots, boat captains and some emergency response personnel. The signal arose just after World War 1, as air traffic between Britain and mainland Europe increased dramatically. All nearby nations needed an internationally understood signal that would alert authorities to urgent aircraft problems. Frederick Stanley Mockford, a senior radio officer in London, was put in charge of finding an appropriate code word. He reasoned that because so much of the air traffic flew between Croydon and Le Bourget Airport in Paris, it might make sense to use a derivative of a French word, and so Mockford came up with "mayday," the French pronunciation of "m'aider" ("help me"), which itself is a distilled version of "venez m'aider," or "come help me."

In Hebrews 4:16 we find these words;

**'Let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace,
so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need'.**

There are many instances in Scripture, both the Old and the New, where people call upon the Lord in their distress – and we're going to briefly look at three specific examples supported by other scripture references – and the first is **Mark 4:35-41**

After a day spent ministering to the people, Jesus and His Disciples got into a boat and sailed out on the lake. Jesus must have felt pretty exhausted because Mark tells us that He had gone to sleep at the back of the boat, and while He was sleeping a furious storm came upon them.

Now it must have been some storm because it really unnerved the disciples. Desperate and fearing for their lives, they cried out to Jesus. 'Mayday! Mayday! Mayday! Lord, Do Something, - or as Mark puts it "**Teacher don't you care if we drown!"** (v38)

It sounds a bit melodramatic doesn't it? But let's not forget that some of the disciples were of course fisherman by trade and so you would have thought that they would have been accustomed to dealing with various weather fronts. I imagine that the winds must have been raging, the waves crashing. To have rushed to wake Jesus, the disciples must have felt helpless, powerless... This storm was too big for them. But it wasn't too big for Jesus. All it took was a word from Him. Just as how with a word He created heaven and earth. Quiet! Be still! Just a word and there was calm. There was peace.

Hold those thoughts and turn to the next reading. **Mark 10:46-52**

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Continued...

Mark tells the story of Bartimaeus.

Jesus and His disciples were leaving Jericho, followed by a large crowd. They were on their way to Jerusalem, to celebrate the Passover - when all of a sudden Jesus heard a voice crying out to Him. "Mayday! Mayday! Mayday!" - or as Mark puts it, "**Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!**".

The cry came from a blind man who was sitting by the roadside begging. People had tried to shut him up, but that had only compelled him to cry out all the more. Jesus stopped - instructed His disciples to call him. The beggar jumped to his feet, stumbled towards Jesus and Jesus spoke those beautiful words "What do you want me to do for you?" (v51).

Jesus had heard his desperate cry, Bartimaeus asked Jesus to restore his sight, and Jesus responded by saying "Go - Your faith has made you well".

Again I ask you to hold those thoughts in your mind and turn to **John 4:46-53**

John tells the story of the healing of the nobleman's son.

Jesus was back in Cana - which John reminds us was the setting for the first recorded miracle of Jesus. It was the place where Jesus had famously turned Water into Wine - a significant miracle showing Jesus' supernatural control over physical elements - a miracle which marked the start of his public ministry. On that occasion it was his mother who had left him with no option but to intervene when she heard the Mayday! cry - 'Help! We've run out of wine!' - and before he could object too strongly, pointing to Jesus, Mary had instructed the servants "Do whatever He tells you."

Jesus is back in Cana, and having heard of His arrival—a man of noble birth came to him and cried 'Mayday! Mayday! Mayday! Or as Mark put it... 'he went to him and begged him to come and heal his son, who was close to death' (v47) ... , **'Sir, come down before my child dies.'** (v49).

Well Jesus didn't hitch up his thobe and run—instead he simply said "Go, your son will live."

The nobleman took Jesus at his word and departed back to Capernaum which was about a 25-30 mile walk uphill, and as he was walking his servants met him mid-way with the news that his son was well and Mark tells us that "*the father realised that this was the exact time at which Jesus had said to him, 'Your son will live.' So, he and his whole household believed*".

So there we have three stories of how Jesus responded to the despairing; Mayday! Mayday! Mayday! "Come help me!" - cries.

Psalm 107:28-30 says;

*Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble,
And He brought them out of their distresses.
He caused the storm to be still,
So that the waves of the sea were hushed.
Then they were glad because they were quiet,
So, He guided them to their desired haven.*

Cries for help, cries for mercy, cries for healing... It doesn't matter what the situation is - nor how big a problem it may seem, for there is no situation that God cannot handle, no problem too big or too difficult for Him!

1 John 5:14-15

'This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him'.

Whilst the disciples appeared crippled with fear, such that I imagine their 'Mayday!' cry being gestured with an accusatory wagging of the finger, what I love about Bartimaeus was his persistence which to me

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speaks volumes about the confidence he had in Jesus' ability to act.

Clearly Jesus' reputation had gone ahead of him. Perhaps as Bartimaeus had sat begging at the roadside, he'd heard those who passed by speaking of the wonders and miracles that Jesus had performed, and if there was even the slightest possibility that Jesus could help him, then he wasn't going to allow the opportunity to pass him by. Though the crowd tried to silence him, Bartimaeus shouted louder still, until Jesus called to him "Come".

Paul in **Philippians 4:6-7** says this;

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

It was enough for the man of noble birth to hear Jesus speak the words "*Go, your son will live*" for him to bid Jesus farewell and make the long upward trek home. He didn't beg Jesus to go with him - he simply took Jesus at His word and went.

I was introduced to a wonderful song called 'There's never been a mountain' when I was part of the Songsters at Cradley Heath. The lyrics to the first verse asked the question;

Got any rivers you think are uncrossable?
Got any mountains you can't tunnel through?
God specializes in things thought impossible
He does the things others cannot do.

And then the chorus responded with words;

There's never been a mountain that the Lord could not move it.
There's never been a single thing that God could not do it.
Just when you think you've fin'ly reached the end,
There's gonna be a vict'ry like there's never been.

For those able to access YouTube, you can listen to song by following this link:

<https://youtu.be/UzxUcjg50yk>

The Disciples, The Blind Beggar, The Man of Nobel Birth - they were all able to testify to the truth that God not only hears but answers the Mayday! cries of His people.

I can testify to the times when God has heard and responded to the Mayday cries of my heart ... as I'm sure that many of you can too! We simply need to trust in Him. We need to be persistent, Jesus invites us to **Ask, Seek, Knock...**

These three words mean so much to the Christian faith and believers around the world. Small, one syllable words that carry the weight of mountains.

**"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find;
knock and the door will be opened to you.**

*For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds;
and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. (Matthew 7:7-8)*

THEREFORE In your "**MAYDAY! MAYDAY! MAYDAY!** ...

'Cast all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you' (1 Peter 5:7)

AMEN