

Welcome to worship from Boghall Parish Church. A reminder that there will be two services next Sunday. At 2pm Tess and Katie will play some music; we will have a few prayers and readings as we remember and reflect on the effect the pandemic has had on us in so many ways.

We continue to meet on Thursday at 2pm in the hall.

Our psalm today is psalm 30. The psalmist recalls God's act of healing. He praises God but cannot keep this to himself. He calls on the congregation to sing praises to God too. With wonderful poetry he recalls his times of torment and how they have passed. He then gives the congregation a warning. His time of prosperity, times when things were going

well, he took them for granted. He was certain that they would never end, God had been good to him. Then God turned away. Life took a nosedive from a great height into the darkest pit. His hope for the future must be remembered alongside his past arrogant certainty. A certainty he shared with his community. This words in all testimony is clothed in the hope that comes from a God of healing.

Psalm 30

Thanksgiving for Recovery from Grave Illness

A Psalm. A Song at the dedication of the temple. Of David.

¹ I will extol you, O LORD, for you have drawn me up,
and did not let my foes rejoice over me.

² O LORD my God, I cried to you for help,
and you have healed me.

³ O LORD, you brought up my soul from Sheol,
restored me to life from among those gone down to the Pit.

⁴ Sing praises to the LORD, O you his faithful ones,
and give thanks to his holy name.

⁵ For his anger is but for a moment;
his favour is for a lifetime.
Weeping may linger for the night,
but joy comes with the morning.

⁶ As for me, I said in my prosperity,
“I shall never be moved.”

⁷ By your favour, O LORD,
you had established me as a strong

mountain;
you hid your face;
I was dismayed.

⁸ To you, O LORD, I cried,
and to the LORD I made supplication:

⁹ “What profit is there in my death,
if I go down to the Pit?
Will the dust praise you?
Will it tell of your faithfulness?

¹⁰ Hear, O LORD, and be gracious to me!
O LORD, be my helper!”

¹¹ You have turned my mourning into dancing;
you have taken off my sackcloth
and clothed me with joy,

¹² so that my soul may praise you and not be silent.

O LORD my God, I will give thanks to you forever.

Hymn 153 Great is thy faithfulness

Prayer

God of healing, touch us this morning.
Touch us when we feel unclean, touch us
when we feel we are bleeding, touch us
when we feel ashamed, touch us when
we feel desperate, touch us in our
arrogance and certainty, touch our
hearts, O God of healing.

God of listening, listen to us this morning.
Listen to us warts and all, listen to what
we hide, listen to what we dare not share,
listen to our whole truth, listen to our
praise, listen to our song, O God of
listening.

God of hope, fill us with hope for
tomorrow, fill us with hope when we see
none, fill us with hope when we fear and
tremble, fill us with hope when we
despair, O God of hope.

And hear us as we say the prayer that
Jesus taught us:

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed
be your name. Your kingdom come. Your
will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread, and
forgive us our debts, as we forgive our
debtors,

and lead us not into temptation, but
deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, the power, and
the glory, for ever.

Amen

We jump forward in the intertwined
stories of Samuel, David and Saul. As
David's standing and stature rose, as he

proved himself a warrior and a leader, Saul's life begins to disintegrate. Saul got paranoid, obsessed that David would threaten him. Saul makes repeated plans to kill David and David hides in the desert. While Saul hated David and David feared Saul, David and Jonathan became close friends. Then David is told that Saul and Jonathan have been killed in battle.

David was in a position to trash Saul's memory. To publically do a hatchet job on his legacy. He doesn't. He remembers him, with rose tinted glasses, he remembers the best, ignores what does not need to be remembered. Perhaps we all remember in ways that allow us to hold onto the best of our memories and erase the painful bits.

What does David hope to achieve through his selective memory? He remembers the public figure, Saul the soldier king. But for Jonathan, he must remember with his heart.

2 Samuel 1: 1, 17-27

1 After the death of Saul, when David had returned from defeating the Amalekites, David remained two days in Ziklag.

¹⁷ David intoned this lamentation over Saul and his son Jonathan. ¹⁸ (He ordered that The Song of the Bow be taught to the people of Judah; it is written in the Book of Jashar.) He said:

¹⁹ Your glory, O Israel, lies slain upon your high places!

How the mighty have fallen!
²⁰ Tell it not in Gath,
 proclaim it not in the streets of
Ashkelon;
or the daughters of the Philistines will
rejoice,
 the daughters of the uncircumcised will
exult.
²¹ You mountains of Gilboa,
 let there be no dew or rain upon you,
 nor bounteous fields!
For there the shield of the mighty was
defiled,
 the shield of Saul, anointed with oil no
more.
²² From the blood of the slain,
 from the fat of the mighty,
the bow of Jonathan did not turn back,
 nor the sword of Saul return empty.
²³ Saul and Jonathan, beloved and lovely!
 In life and in death they were not

divided;
they were swifter than eagles,
 they were stronger than lions.
²⁴ O daughters of Israel, weep over Saul,
 who clothed you with crimson, in
luxury,
 who put ornaments of gold on your
apparel.
²⁵ How the mighty have fallen
 in the midst of the battle!
Jonathan lies slain upon your high
places.
²⁶ I am distressed for you, my brother
Jonathan;
greatly beloved were you to me;
 your love to me was wonderful,
 passing the love of women.
²⁷ How the mighty have fallen,
 and the weapons of war perished!
Amen

What does David hope to achieve through his selective memory of Saul? Is he performing for the people, putting on a military ceremony? This is not a true memory. Is he thinking about how he would like to be remembered? What was he hoping for?

David will rise to great heights. Then he will get arrogant, forget about God. He will have blind spots when it comes to his own flawed character. He will develop an idealised image of himself. It will take another prophet to expose his own failings. The mighty will fall again, the mighty always fall, but God remains forever.

It is only when David speaks of Jonathan that his real feelings are exposed.

Only when his heart speaks that he speaks without self-protection. Only when his heart speaks that David speaks the truth.

There is something about psalm 30 that resonates because the psalmist speaks warts and all. The psalmist is willing to speak of his previous arrogance, how he had taken his success for granted. His downfall became a teaching moment, a time for reflection, for his past defence mechanisms to be revealed to himself. God doesn't want or need us to project our idealised image of ourselves to God. God wants our whole truth. God doesn't want selective memories, but full memories. God wants it all because that is the start of healing, and that is the start of growth.

Hymn 462 The King of love my shepherd is

Our gospel reading links two healing stories. Healing stories are difficult for those who pray for healing and healing does not come. Jesus' healing stories are not just about the miraculous cure but healing in a holistic sense, a whole, or holy sense. Here we have two stories, the daughter of a leader of the synagogue and a bleeding woman. We are invited to notice the similarities and differences in their stories. 12 years old and 12 years ill. 12, the number of tribes of the family of Israel. We have a privileged daughter of that family and a poverty racked outcast daughter. Both matter to Jesus. We have the father and the women falling to their knees before

Jesus. We have desperation. We have a public approach to Jesus that Jesus turned private and a private one Jesus made public. Some things need to be made public and some should be worked out in private. And we have the unclean touched.

Mark 5: 21-43

²¹ When Jesus had crossed again in the boat to the other side, a great crowd gathered around him; and he was by the sea. ²² Then one of the leaders of the synagogue named Jairus came and, when he saw him, fell at his feet ²³ and begged him repeatedly, "My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she

may be made well, and live.”²⁴ So he went with him.

And a large crowd followed him and pressed in on him.²⁵ Now there was a woman who had been suffering from haemorrhages for twelve years.²⁶ She had endured much under many physicians and had spent all that she had; and she was no better, but rather grew worse.²⁷ She had heard about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak,²⁸ for she said, “If I but touch his clothes, I will be made well.”²⁹ Immediately her haemorrhage stopped; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease.³⁰ Immediately aware that power had gone forth from him, Jesus turned about in the crowd and said, “Who touched my clothes?”³¹ And his disciples said to him, “You see the crowd pressing

in on you; how can you say, ‘Who touched me?’”³² He looked all around to see who had done it.³³ But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling, fell down before him, and told him the whole truth.³⁴ He said to her, “Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace and be healed of your disease.”

³⁵ While he was still speaking, some people came from the leader’s house to say, “Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the teacher any further?”³⁶ But overhearing what they said, Jesus said to the leader of the synagogue, “Do not fear, only believe.”³⁷ He allowed no one to follow him except Peter, James, and John, the brother of James.³⁸ When they came to the house of the leader of the synagogue, he saw a commotion, people

weeping and wailing loudly. ³⁹ When he had entered, he said to them, “Why do you make a commotion and weep? The child is not dead but sleeping.” ⁴⁰ And they laughed at him. Then he put them all outside, and took the child’s father and mother and those who were with him, and went in where the child was. ⁴¹ He took her by the hand and said to her, “Talitha cum,” which means, “Little girl, get up!” ⁴² And immediately the girl got up and began to walk about (she was twelve years of age). At this they were overcome with amazement. ⁴³ He strictly ordered them that no one should know this, and told them to give her something to eat.

Amen

Jairus, a leader of the synagogue, pushes through the crowd, falls at Jesus’ feet and begs him to lay his hands on his ill daughter. Jesus immediately goes with him. How did Jairus feel when Jesus stopped on the way to his daughter to ask this silly question: Who touched my clothes? Even the disciples thought it a silly question. Did he get angry, frustrated, more desperate; every second counts and he stops to ask this silly question to the crowd.

We know how the woman felt as she came forward, owned up that it was her. She came in fear and trembling. She had good reason to feel that way. She should not have been there, unclean, excluded from the synagogue, the centre of community life. She should not have

been there. She fell down on her knees and told Jesus the whole truth.

Was Jairus getting even more enraged, stopping to ask a silly question, stopping to listen to this silly woman. He was desperate and was being kept waiting, the crowd eavesdropping on her pathetic story. This unclean woman who had stolen a touch, stolen Jesus' power, taken what does not belong to her. And Jesus calls her daughter. Praises her faith, blesses her with peace, pronounces her healed.

And then the dreaded news comes to Jairus. Jesus tells him not to fear, only believe. In desperation Jairus did just that. He could do nothing else. The others jeered and mocked. What else could he do but rely on the hope that

Jesus offered when he had none of his own. Jesus took his daughter by the hand and raised her up. Jesus raised up the woman too. From on her knees in fear and trembling to standing tall, telling her whole truth, that was part of her healing. To find her voice, to be listened to, to stand tall, to be raised up.

In our times of desperation, we, just like Jairus, have nothing left to fall back on but faith in the resurrection, faith in the resurrected one, faith in the healing power of the one who will raise us up from our knees, who will bring us from fear and trembling to the peace of Christ.

I wonder what truth Jairus learned that day. As a leader of the synagogue, he oversaw the rules that excluded this woman, this woman who had delayed his

daughter's healings, this woman who stole a touch from the healer before he touched his ill daughter. This woman who made him wait. He excluded this woman who Jesus called daughter.

Did Jairus learn a new truth about God from Jesus' healing of the bleeding woman? Were his blind spots, his arrogance, his certainty exposed in his anxious wait as the woman told her whole truth, a truth that maybe hurt? When he embraced his daughter did the daughter Jesus addressed come into his mind as well?

What is our whole truth? Will we have the courage to tell it? Do not fear, only believe, Jesus tells Jairus and us. God will raise us off our knees, to stand tall and to tell our truth. God has all the time

in the world to hear us out; there will be no interruptions. And in doing so and in the power of the resurrection, God will turn our mourning into dancing, will swap our sack clothes for clothes of joy.

Do not fear, only believe.

Prayer

Living God,
Move among us
And invite us to reach out to your
presence revealed in Jesus.
When we are fearful,
Calm our fears and bring us safe into
your presence.
Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

Living God,
Move among us
And invite us to reach out to the One who

inspires faith.
When we sense our faith ebbs low,
Renew our faith and reassure that your
faithfulness abides forever.
Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

Living God,
Move among us
And invite us to the place of healing.
When we are broken,
Lift us up and remake us in your image.
Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

Living God,
Move among us
And invite us to the place of peace.
Where peace seems absent,
Fill the place of absence with your
abiding presence.

Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

Living God,
Move among us
And invite us to step out of the crowd.
Where we are hesitant to do so,
Reassure us that you see us and know
us and accept us as we are.
Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

Hymn 458 At the name of Jesus

Blessing