



St. Mary's Church SAWSTON

Open Door: 11th October

“Your will be done, on earth as in heaven”

Welcome and Notices

Let us still ourselves before God and take some time to bring before him the things in our hearts and on our minds. (*Pause*)

Opening Prayer with Saying Sorry

The Lord's Prayer

We say together

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours.
Now and for ever.
Amen**

Psalm 147 says: “How good it is to sing praises to our God, how pleasant and fitting to praise him!” Let us worship him together now.

Song: Let Everything that has breath, praise the Lord

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0m378TG0DSA>

Reading: Micah 6:6-8 (The Message)

How can I stand up before GOD and show proper respect to the high God? Should I bring an armload of offerings topped off with yearling calves? Would GOD be impressed with thousands of rams, with buckets and barrels of olive oil? Would he be moved if I sacrificed my firstborn child, my precious baby, to cancel my sin? But he's already made it plain how to live, what to do, what GOD is looking for in men and women. It's quite simple: Do what is fair and just to your neighbour, be compassionate and loyal in your love, And don't take yourself too seriously— take God seriously.

Reading: Matthew 22:36-40 (NIV)

“Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest

commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

Reading: Matthew 28:18-20 (NIV)

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Talk: Becca Herrick

What do you want out of life? What are your hopes and dreams? Perhaps you want to be rich or successful or beautiful (or all three!)? Perhaps you want to be happy? Perhaps your hopes are invested in your children – wanting the best for their lives? Perhaps you wish for the day when we can hug one another, return to our normal lives again? As Christians we are called to live life to the full – Jesus says so! But how do we align our hopes and dreams for life with God's hopes and dreams for our lives and for the world around us? We begin with the powerful words in the Lord's prayer

"Your will be done on earth as in heaven"

When we pray those words we are asking for God's will to be done here, right here, where we are today, in our lives and in the lives of those around us. Those are big words to pray.

So what is God's will? The Bible is the place to start and Jesus puts it wonderfully succinctly in his response to the Pharisees' question. "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Jesus replies: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.'"

So love God and love your neighbour. How are we to do that? The Bible is abundant with answers, but here are just two ideas. In the words of Micah: "act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with God". In the words of Jesus' great commission: "go and make disciples of all nations." Serving our neighbours, standing up for justice and mercy, and showing God's awesome, life-transforming love to those we meet, that they might come to know Jesus for themselves. Sounds easy, right? In heaven we know these things are already happening, that there is perfect love for God and neighbour. Revelation 21 tells us what heaven is like: "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.'" So we pray:

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Big words to pray and risky words too. When we pray God's will be done, what if we are the answer?

Let me tell you a story about Bob. He's stuck in his house in a flood. As the flood waters rise, Bob prays for God to rescue him. Along comes a boat, "hop in" says the driver. "No, no", says Bob, "God will save me". The flood waters continue to rise. Bob continues to pray. Along comes a

helicopter. “Grab the rope and we’ll pull you up” cries the pilot. “No, no”, says Bob, “God will save me”. The helicopter flies off. The flood rises. Bob prays. Nothing happens. Bob arrives in heaven and asks “why didn’t you rescue me God?” God says “well I sent a boat and a helicopter, what more did you want?”

A silly story, but the point is that when we pray for God’s will to be done, we and others around us may be the answer to our own prayers. We pray boldly to God, knowing that He can do all things, but uses his people to change the world. After Jesus ascended into heaven, He sent His Spirit on all His people, through which they and we can go out and change the world. God’s spirit living in each one of us, but also at work in the world around us. It is risky for us to pray for God’s will to be done – because we may well be the answer. At times we may need to move out of our own comfort zone, in answer to our own prayers.

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Big words to pray, but earthed in the small things each one of us lives out each day. At times church can seem very disconnected from our daily lives. We meet on a Sunday and then before we know it, it’s Monday and somehow God has slipped from our minds. But actually God is at work all around us all the time.

Let’s stop and think. Love the Lord your God and love your neighbour. Think about your Monday. How do you do those things? Where do you see these things happening around you?

My Monday morning will be getting the kids ready and out the door to school. God is there, as I try to speak to my children in patience and love, I am teaching them something about God’s love for them, as well as trusting in his abundant forgiveness when I get it wrong. As the children run off to school and one of them slips over – a friend or another parent scoops them up. That person is showing love, God’s love to my children, whether they know God themselves or not. God is at work, even in people who don’t yet know him. If God’s will is that we love Him and love our neighbour, then all these acts of love are parts of God’s will being done here on earth. And all that is before 9am in the morning! Some of us may not see anyone at all on a Monday morning. Perhaps you pray? That too is doing God’s will. Everyone’s Monday mornings will look very different, but be assured that God is at work in our world and in your life.

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Big words to pray! It can be easy to think that if God wants justice, mercy and disciples of all nations that the job is just too big, what difference can we make? We can see a desperate need for justice in our world – for an end to wars; for food, water and homes for all those who have nowhere; for equal access to healthcare for everyone; for care for the lost, lonely and isolated. The list is endless. Yet our God is bigger. We may feel powerless against these things. But each of us, by living God’s will in our own lives, can transform the little part of the world that we have been given. Perhaps God has put a passion on your heart for a certain group of people, or a certain cause? We are all made differently, and as we act on that passion, we are playing our little part in making

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a reality. The more we pray those words and take time to actively notice God at work in our lives and in the lives of those around us, the more our own hopes and dreams will align with God's hopes and dreams for the world. We can then begin to join with Jesus' words on the night before he died: "Father, not my will but yours be done".

Song: Your Will Be Done

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8nLXXephYRI>

Discussion in Breakout Rooms

Where in the past week have you seen God's will being done "on earth as in heaven"?

Prayers: Corinne Roughley

Song: God of Justice (We Must Go)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b3NeIRb1LY4>

Blessing

Now may the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, equip us with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. (*Hebrews 13:20-21*)

Breakout Rooms

Time to catch up with each other!