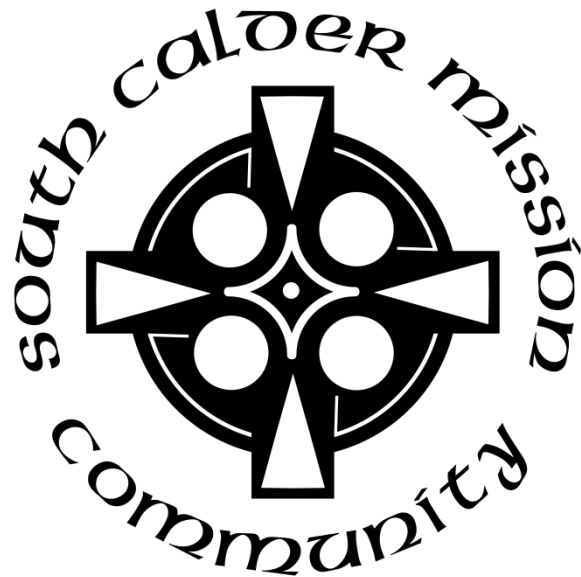


*into his courts
with praise...*



A Service of the Word

Sunday 26 October 2025
Last Sunday after Trinity – Bible Sunday.

A Service of the Word for Sunday morning

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INTRODUCTION

“Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in the prophet’s home town.”

Luke 4:24



THE CONFESSION

The grace of God has dawned upon the world with healing for all.
Though we have grieved him, yet he will heal us if we confess our
sins in penitence and faith.

**Almighty God,
I confess that I have sinned against you
in thought, word and deed;
I have not loved you with all my heart;
I have not loved my neighbours as myself.
Have mercy upon me,
cleanse me from my sins,
and help me to overcome my faults,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Receive God's forgiveness

May the Father forgive us
By the death of His Son
And strengthen us
To live in the power of the Spirit
All our days. **Amen.**

PRAISE

O Lord, open my lips...
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.
Give me the joy of your saving help...
and sustain me with your life-giving Spirit.

THE COLLECT

Merciful God, teach us to be faithful in change and uncertainty,
that trusting in your word and obeying your will we may enter the unfailing
joy of Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

*Suggested hymn to sing or read **Be still, for the presence of the Lord.***

THE WORD OF GOD.

Psalm 119 : 129 - 136.

Your testimonies are wonderful; ♦
therefore my soul keeps them.
The opening of your word gives light; ♦
it gives understanding to the simple.
I open my mouth and draw in my breath, ♦
as I long for your commandments.
Turn to me and be gracious to me, ♦
as is your way with those who love your name.
Order my steps by your word, ♦
and let no wickedness have dominion over me.
Redeem me from earthly oppressors ♦
so that I may keep your commandments.
Show the light of your countenance upon your servant ♦
and teach me your statutes.
My eyes run down with streams of water, ♦
because the wicked do not keep your law.

Isaiah 45:22-end.

Turn to me and be saved,
all the ends of the earth!
For I am God, and there is no other.
By myself I have sworn,
from my mouth has gone forth in righteousness
a word that shall not return:
'To me every knee shall bow,
every tongue shall swear.'

Only in the Lord, it shall be said of me,
are righteousness and strength;
all who were incensed against him
shall come to him and be ashamed.
In the Lord all the offspring of Israel
shall triumph and glory.

Romans 15:1-6.

We who are strong ought to put up with the failings of the weak, and not to
please ourselves. Each of us must please our neighbour for the good
purpose of building up the neighbour.

For Christ did not please himself; but, as it is written, 'The insults of those
who insult you have fallen on me.' For whatever was written in former days
was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the
encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope.

May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in
harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that
together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord
Jesus Christ.

*Suggested hymn to sing or read **Thanks to God whose word was
spoken.***

GOSPEL

Luke 4:16-24.

When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free,
to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour.’

And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he began to say to them, ‘Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.’ All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth. They said, ‘Is not this Joseph’s son?’ He said to them, ‘Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, “Doctor, cure yourself!” And you will say, “Do here also in your home town the things that we have heard you did at Capernaum.” ’ And he said, ‘Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in the prophet’s home town.

REFLECTION – God speaks through the scriptures – then and now.

This Sunday we are celebrating the Bible, a book essential to our Christian faith. It’s the living word of God. How can it be a ‘living word’ when it was written a long time ago, and at so many different stages of a nation’s history, and then the spreading of the gospel throughout the world?

There are many different ways of using the bible – using a verse or passage for meditation for instance, or reading through verse by verse slowly, and seeing what stands out to you. Today I thought we’d take our reading and explore it, put it into context, when and why it was written and what might it have meant to the original hearers? Lastly, what might God be saying to us today?

Last week we had a reading from Paul’s 2nd letter to Timothy in which he says:

‘All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching the truth, rebuking error, correcting faults, and giving instructions for right living.’ So we ask God to guide us, and send the Holy Spirit to us to lead us into all truth as he promised.

We start by looking at our passage and seeing where it fits into the gospel of Luke. The gospels tell us the good news of Jesus, that he came from God, is God’s Son, is both human and divine. They tell us of Jesus’ birth, life and death, and of his rising again. They give us hope of eternal life which starts with us now in this life, and continues with Jesus in the life to come, if we believe in him and accept that his death on the cross opens the way for us to come to God and become his children.

This chapter in Jesus’ life comes quite early in the story of his ministry. Earlier in Luke, we hear of his birth, baptism in the river Jordan by John the Baptist, and then the temptations of Jesus as he spent the 40 days in the wilderness. We’re told he was full of the Holy Spirit which came down on him at the baptism. After this preparation, he begins his work in Galilee, teaching in the synagogues, the Jewish places of worship, creating quite a stir, and being praised by everyone. Then he comes to Nazareth where he was brought up and is known as the carpenter’s, Joseph’s son.

At the worship in the Jewish synagogue then, there were usually 2 readings. The second was from the writings of the prophets, in this case Isaiah, and if there was a visiting preacher or teacher, they were often asked to read a verse or two from the scroll and comment on it. Jesus was handed the scroll of the book of Isaiah and read these 2 verses from it.

Now we look back to the Old Testament to look at these verses and see why and when they were written, and see if that adds to our understanding. Isaiah is a long book, 66 chapters, and divides into 3 parts. It may have all been written by one person, but many scholars think each part is written by different people, the second and third being students of the first and inspired by God to add to his message for another generation. This may seem like deception to us, but was actually a not unusual and accepted practice in those times.

Isaiah speaks to us, and the people of Judah before, during and after the exile to Babylon. The first part warns that the nation has strayed from

following God and obeying their covenant with him, and that if they don't return to a life of righteousness and justice there will be disastrous consequences.

The second part speaks to the people in exile in Babylon, They must have wondered if God had abandoned them, if he would ever forgive them.

God, through the prophet, gives them new hope, and a promise that they will return, and that they are still his people.

The third and last part speaks to the people when they are back in Jerusalem. Times are hard as they face rebuilding their homes and lives, the temple and the city walls. God speaks encouragement and reassurance through the prophet, and reminds them about righteousness and justice and the worship he requires from them. It's from this section that Jesus quotes.

Back now to the synagogue in Nazareth at the start of Jesus' ministry. The land is occupied by the Romans, although they have much freedom under them. But there have been no prophets for hundreds of years, there is a feeling of settled order, possibly complacency, with the Pharisees keeping ordinary people in place and complying with Roman authority. Perhaps they are missing God's concern with righteousness, justice and mercy, his concern with the outsider and the outcast.

Jesus stands up and reads these verses:

'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has chosen me to bring good news to the poor.

He has sent me to bring liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind.

To set free the oppressed and announce that the time has come when the Lord will save his people.'

He rolls up the scroll and gives it back to the attendant and sits down. All eyes are on him – what will he say?

'This passage of scripture has come true today, as you heard it being read.'

What does he mean? He claims to have God's Spirit, and some of these things are supposed to be the work of the future Messiah, the Christ, the Saviour – can he be claiming to be him? Is he going to be a leader to defeat the Romans? Will he upset the delicate balance of the agreement between the Romans and the Jews? **Who is Jesus?**

For us today this passage can also raise many challenges, and a promise.

As a Church, as a 'Christian' nation are we bringing good news to the poor?

Both those living in poverty with not enough food or shelter, and those who are poor spiritually, who need the 'good news' about Jesus? Do our neighbours, family and friends know what our faith means to us? Are we too settled in our ways and forgetting to seek what God wants? Plenty of scope at the moment with unsettled times everywhere, including the Church.

What holds us back, do we need to be liberated from anything? Have we got problems that we haven't asked Jesus to help us with? Do we trust him, rely on him? Jesus came as God's Son to save us – we'll be reminded of that as the Christmas story unfolds again soon.

Turn to God, and keep turning to him and trusting in him. He came to save then, and he still comes to save now. Come and be part of his Kingdom and his work. He keeps calling us, and we have the constant choice – will we follow him? I pray that for you and me, and more and more others the answer is and will be **YES!**

Sheila Falkner

<i>Suggested hymn to sing or read There is a Redeemer.</i>

THE CREED

All	I believe in God the Father, whose loving care is the pattern for family life. I believe in Jesus, the Son of God, who lives in my heart through faith, and fills me with his love. I believe in God the Holy Spirit, who strengthens me with power from on high. I believe in one God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.
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A time of quiet prayer for

- *The universal Church - Bishops, synods and all leaders church*
- *The leaders of the nations*
- *The natural world and the resources of the earth*

Loving God I see the news and I am afraid. Violence is spiralling out of control. I don't know what to think or feel. The temptation to fall into hatred, or despair feels very close at hand.

**Help me to remember that nothing in all creation can separate me from your love that I know in Jesus. May your perfect love for me cast out my fear and free me to discern what is mine to do amidst the chaos of this suffering world.
Amen.**

Finishing with the South Calder Mission Community prayer...

**Heavenly Father we thank you for the life of your Church in this place, and in all the villages of the South Calder Mission Community;
for all who have served and worshipped you in years gone by, for all who make up your family in our churches today, for the faith we have in common, and for the people and traditions which make each church unique.
By your Spirit, guide and equip us, that together we might find new ways to reach out to our local community, to show your love to our neighbours, and to encourage them to follow the Lord Jesus in their lives. Father, we offer ourselves to your service. In the unity of the Holy Spirit, And in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

and the Lord's prayer...

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come;
thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

THE CONCLUSION

<i>Suggested hymn to sing or read</i> <i>We have a Gospel to proclaim.</i>

The following prayer is said

**Be with me, Lord, as I finish my prayer today.
May my lips always speak the truth;
may my eyes which have read your word
see only what is good;
and may my life as well as my worship
be always pleasing in your sight,
for the glory of your name. Amen.**

And now may the Lord who brought us to birth by his Spirit, strengthen us for the Christian life.
May the Lord who provides for all our needs sustain us day by day.
May the Lord whose steadfast love is constant as a mother's care, send us out to live and work for others.
And the blessing of God Almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be with us and remain with us always.
Amen.
So now may I go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ. Amen.

Links for the hymns

Be still, for the presence of the Lord.

<https://youtu.be/XOCfPjLOvC4>

Thanks to God whose word was spoken.

https://youtu.be/UAydBw_Qxd4

There is a Redeemer.

<https://youtu.be/5SG3a7PTSFE>

We have a Gospel to proclaim.

<https://youtu.be/l5wWRYq57EM>