

Sunday July 12, 2020

Service for Swansea & Charlestown Presbyterian Church

Welcome & Prayer (Jon Brown)

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Even though we are scattered around Newcastle in our various locations, God is with us. Jesus promised to never leave us nor forsake us. So wherever you are, hear Jesus speaking, "Peace be with you," and "I am with you always, even to the end of the age." You might be feeling lonely and isolated. You might be feeling overwhelmed and troubled by the spread of COVID-19. As we look at Psalm 4 we see David was in trouble. This Psalm follows Psalm 3 'when he fled from his son Absalom'. David always seemed to be in trouble didn't he. And we too should expect to face trouble. Jesus said to his followers, "you will face trouble in the world, but fear not I have overcome the world." David was able to lie down in peace and sleep because the LORD made him dwell in safety. Although trouble pressed him on every side and death lurked around every corner, he laid down and slept like a baby. We can learn to do the same because we live and die in Christ and nothing can separate us from His love.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father, you have set your love upon us and chose us in your Son before the foundation of the world. You love us simply because you love us and nothing can change that. You demonstrated this love to us because while we were still dead in our sins, Christ died for us. We ask you would forgive us for living for things of the world only. Forgive us for spending all of our time and money on ourselves. Cause your face to shine upon us and fill our hearts with the joy of your salvation. Thank you that being justified by faith we have peace with you through our Lord Jesus. In Jesus name we pray, amen.

How Great Thou Art



Bible Reading - Psalm 4 (NIV)

For the director of music. With stringed instruments. A psalm of David.

1

Answer me when I call to you,
my righteous God.

Give me relief from my distress;
have mercy on me and hear my prayer.

2

How long will you people turn my glory into shame?
How long will you love delusions and seek false gods[b]?[c]

3

Know that the Lord has set apart his faithful servant for himself;
the Lord hears when I call to him.

4

Tremble and do not sin;
when you are on your beds,
search your hearts and be silent.

5

Offer the sacrifices of the righteous
and trust in the Lord.

6

Many, Lord, are asking, "Who will bring us prosperity?"
Let the light of your face shine on us.

7

Fill my heart with joy
when their grain and new wine abound.

8

In peace I will lie down and sleep,
for you alone, Lord,
make me dwell in safety.

Philippians 4:4-7 (NIV)

4 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! **5** Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. **6** Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. **7** And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Announcements 12 July 2020

- **Stephen is on annual leave this week until Monday (July 13).** Please contact Jon during this time.
- **Church in July.** During July we will be again running services at Swansea (max 23 people), Charlestown AM (max 50 people) and Sunday @ 6 (maximum 50 people.) It is important that if you are planning to go to church that you register your intention to come. An email will be sent around each week for the Charlestown services showing you how to register. At Swansea if you just tell Stephen or Jon you are coming that should be sufficient.
- **Second Morning Service at Charlestown for Term 3.** We are excited to be starting a second morning service at Charlestown in Term 3. This will allow our people to come every two weeks. The current thinking is a service at

9:15-10:05 (followed by cleaning). And then a second service at 10:30-11:25. Everyone is given the choice whether they would prefer to attend one or the other. To make this happen we will need people to help serve. Please contact Stephen or Jon if you are able and willing to help.

- **Zoom Prayer Meeting (Monday July 20 @ 8pm).** We are going through many changes in our church life (as well as life in general!). We need to carve out time to commit our plans as a church to God. We want to unite as a church in prayer on Zoom on Monday July 20 at 8pm. We are encouraging Bible study groups not to meet that week so we can prioritise prayer. Please set aside this time and join us by clicking this link:
- **School Holidays.** With NSW school holidays having begun, our Home Groups and our Prayer Groups will go into recess for two weeks as well SPARKLERS and IMPACT. Kids Church will continue when families are invited to Church.
- **NSW General Assembly 2020 is on next week.** This will be held on Zoom starting Tuesday July 14. Stephen, Ross, and Jon will be attending.
- **Focus for July – Bible Challenge.** Each July we aim to encourage each other to read the bible more with our yearly bible Challenge. This year we are spending July reading more about the name and character of God. The challenge can be found at <https://rachelwojo.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/the-names-of-god-bible-reading-challenge.pdf> The plan is to choose one reading each day. After reading the Scripture we are to meditate on this aspect of God's character and to pray about it. Let's see if we can do one a day for the whole month.
- **Prayer.** No prayer meeting for the two weeks of the school holidays.

Prayer points – Sunday 12th July 2020

Pray for Stephen and Kaylene. Thank God for Stephen and Kaylene's ministry among us. Thank God for Stephen's servant leadership over the last few months especially. Pray that God would give them a restful week and bring them back to us refreshed.

Pray for the starting of the second morning service. As we make the step to start a new morning service please be praying that God would be directing our steps. Pray for people to be raised up to serve in both services.

Pray for America. The country has been hit hard with the pandemic and racial tensions. Pray for leaders and the people that they would be humbled and return to the Lord. Pray for peace and the outbreak to stop. Pray that the rich would be generous to the poor and justice would be done.

Pray for Victoria and the COVID-19 outbreak. Pray that the virus wouldn't explode. Pray for comfort for those in public housing lockdown. Pray for wisdom for the government.

Pray for Josh Montzka. Thank God for sustaining Josh during this difficult time. And for God's provision in giving him some good interactions with people. Praise God for the 390 people who registered for the Mid Year Conference this month. Pray that God would be guiding those preparing for the conference.

Pray for Newcastle. Pray that the Lord Jesus would be lifted up in this city. The church would be strengthened. The gospel would go out to many people during this time. Pray that God would save many from darkness and bring them into His glorious light. And he might use us at Charlestown in doing this!

Church Prayer (Jo Barlow)

Our righteous God, we thank You that You hear and answer us when we call on You. Thank You that we can come to You with all of our needs, knowing we can trust You. Help us to come to You in every situation we face: in thankfulness with our joys, and in earnestness and supplication with our woes.

Lord, we think of the COVID-19 outbreak in Victoria and ask that it would be contained by the measures that have been taken. Would You give those making decisions wisdom and help them consider the needs of the most vulnerable. Please comfort those in lockdown and enable their needs to be provided for.

We pray too for those in other nations where the pandemic has been most severe, and particularly think of America, affected as well with racial tensions. We ask that peace might prevail there, and that believers there might have a strong and effective voice. We ask that those with means might be generous to those without and we pray for justice.

Lord, we think of our own city of Newcastle. We ask that the Lord Jesus would be lifted up here and the church strengthened. We ask You would use us here at Charlestown to bring many more into Your kingdom – give us boldness and sensitivity in sharing the gospel with others, so they might come out of darkness and into Your glorious light.

We pray for the start of our second morning service. Thank You that it means that every person can attend once a fortnight. Please raise up the needed willing personnel to run the services, and direct our leaders' steps as we plan the ongoing details.

Lord, we thank You for the news that Valmai's cancer has shrunk in response to the radiotherapy she has had, and that she won't need chemo at this time. Please keep her well. We continue to pray for Lorraine, for complete healing from the effects of her radiotherapy. We uphold those recovering from other illnesses to you, including Joan and Beryl and Wayne, and ask You would restore them to full health.

Father, we pray for our brother Josh Montzka. Thank You for sustaining him during this difficult time. Thank you that the preparations for the online mid-year conference have progressed and that 390 people are registered to attend. We ask that You would help Josh with the logistics, and that the technology would work well. Please help the content to encourage and equip the young people in Your service.

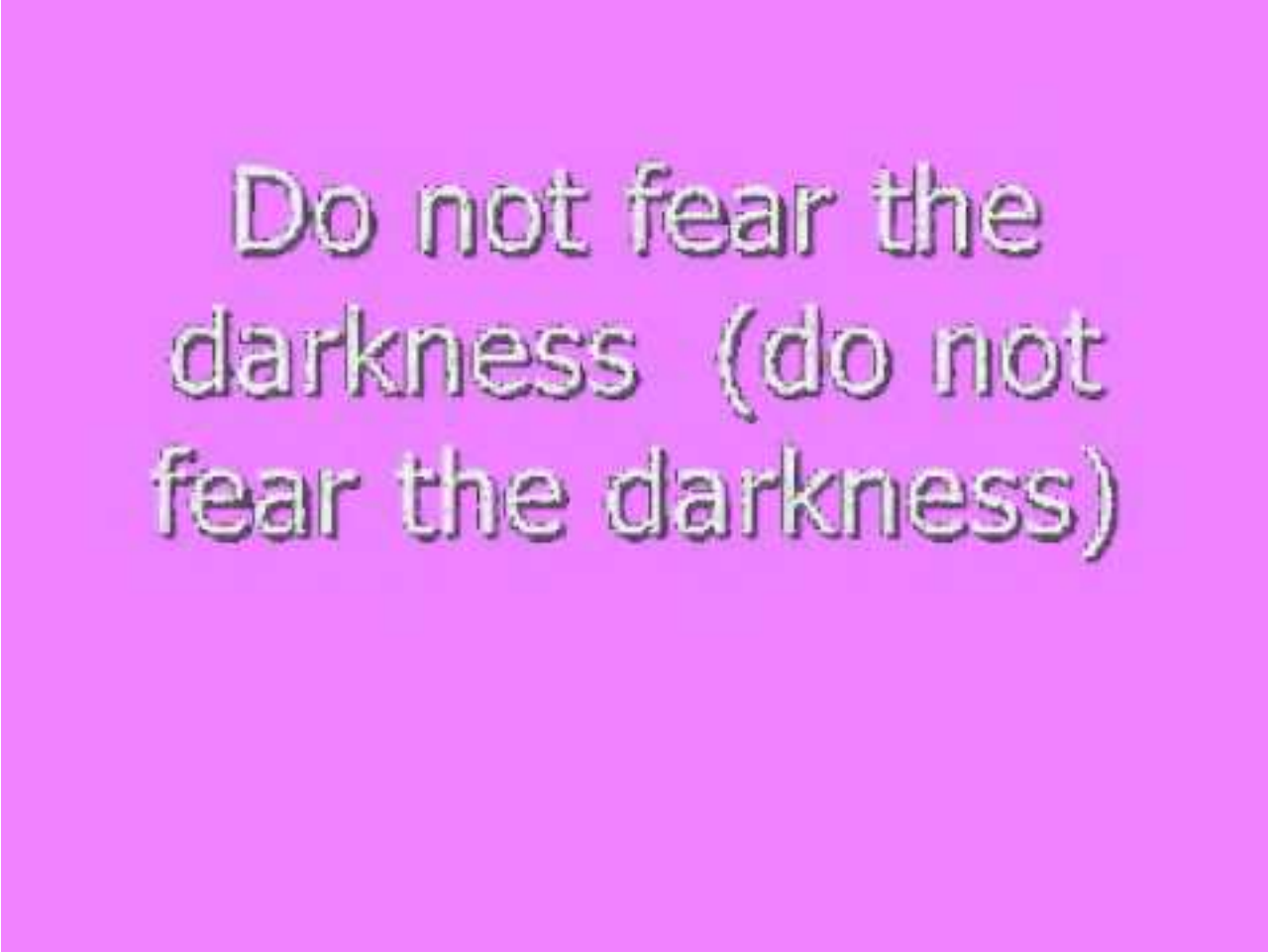
Lord, thank You for Stephen and Kaylene's ministry among us, and especially for Stephen's servant leadership that has been so evident in the last few months. Please help them to have had a restful week so they can return to us refreshed. We pray too for Jon and Ang, and ask that You would continue to help them negotiate all of the changed circumstances. Thank You for Jon's clear and helpful preaching on Psalms, and we ask that Your Holy Spirit would again speak through Him today on Psalm 4.

And Lord, we pray for our church's State Assembly being held online this coming week – we ask that Zoom would work well and that discussions can be effectively managed and decisions made, despite the different format.

Father, we thank You that we are able to sleep in peace, knowing You are on the throne of the universe and on the throne of our lives. Help us to always cast every care on You knowing that You care for us more deeply and completely than the best human father.

We pray all of these things in and through the mighty Name of our Saviour Jesus, Amen.

Kids Song - Be strong and courageous by Colin Buchanan



Do not fear the
darkness (do not
fear the darkness)

Quizworx!

Come and join Paul on an incredible journey! Not to the beach. Not camping. Not even in a car! Beginning and ending in Antioch of Syria, Paul, with the power of the Holy Spirit, takes the message of the Risen King Jesus wherever he goes. This weeks' Kids' Talk video shows us that it was not always easy and many people rejected the message. But many repented and accepted Jesus as their King. Jesus' mission was spreading!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-MD5RoJNPYY&feature=youtu.be>

Take Heart

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1weMwBpLRjLOC6TThLIAPzHTeA8_8TtZA/view

Sermon - Sleeping in Peace (Psalm 4) by Jon Brown

Sermon Link: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC7jzfHbqKGk-TjLNfTE6DzQ>

It's hard to beat a peaceful night's sleep isn't it.

But during troubled times it can become a rare thing. One of the side effects of the pandemic has been sleeplessness. Lying awake all night worrying. Tossing and turning. Fretting about all the upheaval we've faced over the last few months. And the uncertainty about the future.

In Psalm 3 the heading said David penned it 'when he fled from his son Absalom.' Some commentators say that Psalms 4-7 were all written during this troublesome time. I think that's right. You can read about it in 2 Samuel 11-19. David's world was crumbling around him. He had a big moral lapse. Adultery and murder. And his son Absalom was born during this time. Absalom turned out to be big trouble. He led a rebellion against his father to steal the throne. David fled from Jerusalem. And was hiding for his life.

Psalm 3 is called a morning Psalm because in verse 5 David says he laid down and slept and woke up because the Lord sustained him. Psalm 4 is called an Evening Psalm because of verse 8, "I will both lay me down in peace and sleep: for you Lord only make me dwell in safety."

How did David get a peaceful night's sleep? When he was surrounded by enemies? When he had lost everything?

Let's look at Psalm 4 now and learn how the King slept in peace.

1. A heart tuned by grace (v. 1)

As King David begins his prayer we hear a heart tuned by grace. Notice in verse 1, "Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness. You got me out of a tight spot. Have mercy on me and hear my prayer."

Hear me when I call. That sounds a bit presumptuous doesn't it? Demanding that God hears him exactly at the time he speaks. Given David's moral lapse. And his kingdom being torn off him. You think David would be sheepishly wondering whether God will even hear him. Back in Psalm 3 that's what many were saying about him. "God has forsaken him." But here David is boldly saying to God. At the time I call out - hear me. How can David be so bold to God? The God he has sinned against?

Notice David says, "Hear me when I call - GOD OF MY RIGHTEOUSNESS."

He doesn't say, "Hear me when I call because of my righteousness."

The secret to David's confident prayer is this: David's relationship with God isn't based on David's goodness, but God's goodness. Back in Psalm 1 David told us the blessed man doesn't sin against God. But David did. He broke God's covenant. He didn't stick to his end of the deal. But here he's still talking to God like he has his favour. How? Because of God's covenant promise. 2 Samuel 7 - Psalm 2. This is David's grounds. I haven't kept my end of the covenant. But you are righteous God and will keep yours no matter what! That's what David is saying here. "God of my righteousness."

If David looked at his own righteousness he would sink into despair. But he turns to God - His covenant God. The God who promised to be his God no matter what.

This is the grounds of David's confident prayer: God's grace. Free unmerited favour. This changes everything!

Think about it. If your relationship with God is based on what you do, how can you know you've done enough to earn God favour? How can you be sure God hears you? You can't. You'll be perpetually restless. You'll always be wondering whether you've done enough for God to accept you.

But friends, the gospel says, on your own you're in big trouble. More trouble than David here. That we've all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God: but we are justified freely by his grace. Declared righteous by faith in Jesus. If you accept Jesus - he is the ground of all your acceptance with God. Justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus our Righteousness.

You and I can have that same confidence with God as David did. God got you out of a tight spot like David. When you were cornered by sin and the devil. God got you out by grace.

And notice David makes recalls past deliverance for his present trouble. Lord you've done it before. You'll do it again! You did it when I was tending the flock and the bear and lion came at me. You did it Lord when I faced Goliath. You did it when King Saul wanted to kill me. And so now as Absalom and his army is closing in....you'll do it again."

David can have peace because he's not focusing on his dire circumstances but God's grace to him.

And so should you. The English Puritan, John Flavel has a classic book called 'The Mystery of Providence'. In it he says that its every Christian's duty to recall God's providence in their lives. You could start with the family you were born into. Was it a Christian family? That was God showing you grace. And then your conversion to Christ. All the steps

that led you there. All the interactions. The churches God has placed you in where you can hear the Bible taught every week. That can help get started anyway. And you can learn to say with David, 'You got me out of a tight spot!'

And notice David only really asks for one thing: "have mercy on me and hear my prayer." If there's one prayer that you can guarantee God will answer it's this: "Have mercy on me!" Remember Jesus story about the Pharisee and the Tax Collector? Both go to the temple to pray. The Pharisee prays "Lord I've done this and that." And the tax collector falls on his face and cries, "God be merciful to me a sinner" And who's prayer is answered? The tax collector goes away justified doesn't he. Right with God. Over and over again in the gospel, we see those who cry out for mercy get heard.

When we listen to David talking to God we hear a heart tuned by grace. And then in verse 2, David goes from speaking to God to speaking to what appears to be his enemies. Let's listen to what he's saying: he's talking about having a heart in tune with God's word.

2. A heart in tune with God's word (vv. 2-5)

David turns from prayer to preaching. Notice in verse 2: "Sons of men, how long will you put my glory to shame? How long will you love vanity and seek after lies?" We can see David's heart here. The cry 'How long!' is one of the basic cries of suffering in the Bible. It's usually addressed to God. "How Long O Lord, will you allow suffering and pain." But here David isn't crying to God but the sons of men. His fellow humans. Something is distressing him badly isn't it. What is it?

Notices he says, 'you're putting my glory to shame'. Now in the Psalms, before we join in, we need to work out who's speaking to who. Remember David is God's anointed King. God had set him a part. So when David is shamed, God is shamed. You and I can't really say that, can we. But David's greater Son can, King Jesus. These words belong to Jesus. So really it's him crying out. And this word now comes prophetically to us - as Aussies in 2020. King Jesus is crying out - "HOW LONG! Will you put my glory to shame!" How Long will you reject me? How long... instead of bowing before me as your king, will you reject Me? How long will you call out my name as a swear word instead of calling out to be saved?" And before we join in asking the questions, we need to answer it... How long will you worship the things I made in place of Me? You Creator and Redeemer? "How long will you love vanity and seek lies." In other words, "Why are you chasing stuff that doesn't last?" How do we know if this is what we're doing? What do you really value? How do you spend your time? What do you think about? What are your goals? Is it King Jesus above all? Does your heart say with the apostle Paul, "My one goal in life is to know Jesus more and more."

We live in a society that's obsessed with material wealth. The Aussie dream is to buy your own home and drive a nice car. The Aussie way is to love leisure: Go on long holidays. Laze around on the beach. Watch the footy. That's how we spend our time. Don't get me wrong these things are good. But it's how much we value them compared to Jesus. Before we ask the question to others. We need to answer it for ourselves. Get our hearts in tune... Only then will we say it to others it will sound right, "Why are you living for things that can vanish like a puff of smoke?" You'll never be at peace if you live for the here and now. Why? Because you're going to die. The here and now doesn't last. There is a heaven and hell. There is a kingdom and there is a King.

Notice in verse 3, David says, "Know that the Lord has set a part the godly for himself." Who are the godly? That word is in the singular. And first this is David speaking, the Anointed King. God's has chosen his King. The promise of Psalm 2 and Psalm 3 echoing God's covenant with David (2 Samuel 7). God has set a part Jesus as the rightful king. And if you're a Christian, in Christ God has chosen you before the foundation of the world. A Christian is chosen. Set apart. Elect. And why did God single you out? So you could serve him? Because he was looking for a pair of extra hands to work? You're not set a part to serve first of all. But God set you a part for himself.

And notice this is David's grounds that the Lord will hear him. "The LORD will hear me when I call." You and I can also be sure that God will hear us through Jesus. Jesus himself said, "if you ask anything in my name you'll be answer." When we come to God through Jesus we can be sure God hears us. And notice it's "at the time I call". At the very moment you're speaking God hears you.

To have a heart in tune with God's word we need to believe it. Believe his word to us about the King. But we don't just accept we should also do it. Notice in verse 4-6. These are all these imperatives: "Stand in awe. Don't sin. Meditate. Be still. Trust". A lot of this has to do with your quiet time. Who you really are before God. You need some quiet time to tune your instrument don't you. You also need some quite time to get your heart in tune with God's word. We often so busy Running around like chooks without heads, we don't realise we are out of tune. We need to

be instructed with some silence. Be still. Do some self-examination. Put your phone on silent and be silent. Meditate on God's truth and see how your life squares with it. See if you're in tune. Alone in silence we can reflect.

The 15th Century French Mathematician and Philosopher, Blaise Pascal, pointed out that the reason why everyone is so busy all of the time, is so they don't have be still. So we don't have to be alone with our thoughts before God. Because then we start to realise who we really are and who God is. Silence can be scary can't it. But without it we'll rush into sin. So in the rush of your day, when can you take time out? The evening is a good time, as you're lying on your bed. Why don't you have a few minutes silence now? Or after the you finish reading the sermon?

Then you'll be ready to offer right sacrifices. Sacrifice is giving stuff up isn't it. Our time and money etc. But notice David says, 'right sacrifices'. What does he mean? He means we can do the right stuff for the wrong reasons. Perhaps they were offering sacrifices to the wrong god? The god of money. The god of family. The god of success? Perhaps they were doing right but their hearts weren't right before God? Get your heart in tune with God's word. Do good, but do it by faith, putting your trust in the Lord.

3. A heart which sings of joy (v. 7)

Well David's tone changes in verse 6 doesn't it? Notice there's some cynical folks out there saying, "Who will show us any good?" It's the same today isn't it? There's a lot of cynicism out there. Many people are sceptical about where the world is heading. Doubtful of the future. It's all doom and gloom. "Who will show us any good?" Everything is falling apart. Trump is president. COVID-19 spreading. The Climate is changing. There's no sense of community anymore. The divide between rich and poor is growing. Racial tensions are high. The church is shrinking. What good is there? Where is it? And David prays for the best possible good: the presence of God. "Lord lift up the light of your countenance upon us." This is the Aaronic blessing from Numbers 6. It's a prayer for revival isn't it. Revive us Lord! David has tasted this before and it makes his heart sing of joy. Notice in verse 7, "You have put joy in my heart more than at the time their grain and wine increased." More joy than buying a house. More joy than buying my new car. More joy than getting married. More joy than holding your first child. More joy than passing your final exams. More joy than getting that promotion. David's heart sings the joy of knowing God. He's tasted and seen that the Lord is good. And it's a joy that doesn't depend on circumstances. No amount of sour dough or fine wine could ever make the heart sing like this. This joy doesn't depend on whether the sun is shining down on him or not. But if God's face is turned upon him, he's happy. God face is his sunshine. His only sunshine. God makes me happy when skies are grey. God's smile is more to me than all the smiles or frowns of this world. When everything is falling apart. When my life is threatened by death. David says, "I'll lie down in peace and sleep, for you alone O Lord makes me dwell in safety." The Lord who doesn't sleep keeps his people.

And for you and I this peace is only possible because of Jesus. The Lord Jesus who experienced the night from hell for us. In the garden he was tormented. Tossing and turning. Sweating blood. Crying and praying. Knowing he would be abandoned by His Father on the cross. On the cross when Jesus cried out, the echo came back empty. He was forsaken in your place. He was cut off from the God of Peace so that you and I could be filled with the peace that surpasses all understanding. This is the one who keeps us. The LORD our righteousness. He is all our acceptance and peace with God. Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Accepted. Loved. Now you can sleep in peace. Even the sleep of death.

It is Well with My Soul

IT IS WELL WITH MY SOUL

Benediction.

““The Lord bless you
and keep you;

the Lord make his face shine on you
and be gracious to you;

the Lord turn his face toward you
and give you peace.”

Church Engagement

To help us know who has participated in today's service would you please either

- Like the sermon on Facebook OR
- Share the sermon on Facebook with someone that you believe would benefit from it. OR
- Fill out a two question survey (approx. 1 minute) at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/6D9VPZK>

Morning Tea

Our morning tea is a vital way that we give and receive fellowship during a time like this. We don't want to be just consumers of Church, we want to be a part of the family of God. Why not join our virtual morning tea on Zoom. Click on the link at 10:45am to join: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89081952206?pwd=aGVTCm1oOHp3VXMxYVg0bk5HSS9rZz09>
Meeting ID: 890 8195 2206 Password: 797654

Or you could give one or two people a call. Who might your ring now?