

Ipswich Road United Reformed Church

Morning Family Church (9.45 a.m.) 3rd October 2021

Hold down "Ctrl" and "Right click" on the hymn links to be taken to online versions of the hymns.

Welcome, notices and lighting of candle for a moment's peace as we prepare for worship

Call to Worship

Worship songs

865 [In the Lord I'll be ever thankful](#)

795 [You laid aside your majesty](#)

Welcome Prayer and the Lord's Prayer.

Bible Reading Psalm 8

¹ LORD, our Lord,

how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory in the heavens.² Through the praise of children and infants you have established a stronghold against your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger.

³ When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, ⁴ what is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them? ⁵ You have made them a little lower than the angels and crowned them with glory and honour. ⁶ You made them rulers over the works of your hands; you put everything under their feet: ⁷ all flocks and herds, and the animals of the wild, ⁸ the birds in the sky, and the fish in the sea all that swim the paths of the seas. ⁹ LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

All Age address

Song/Hymn 857 [I, the Lord of Sea and Sky](#)

Children & Youngsters leave for departments-

Bible Reading- Mark 10: 13-16

¹³ People were bringing little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples rebuked them. ¹⁴ When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. ¹⁵ Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." ¹⁶ And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them.

Hymn: Mission Praise 799: [All I once held dear](#) (Knowing you)

Sermon based on

Mark 10: 13-16

I always liked this reading as a child. It gave comfort and it gave hope. It also told me that I was safe and protected by a loving God. There is something nice and simple about the message. I rather liked the fact that Jesus had got "indignant" with the disciples as they tried to stop the children getting close to him. A cosy, warm and friendly part of the Gospel might be nice to read and it can give us a warm glow inside but how can we make it relevant to today?

During the past few days, Sheila and I had to visit Hampshire for a family memorial event. We decided to stay for a few days and to explore parts of the county. We visited two rather impressive

churches namely Romsey Abbey and Winchester Cathedral. Reading and listening to the history of these fine buildings illustrated the impact of different historical periods upon the lives of those people at the time but it also helped to explain the relevance of the past to the world in which we live today.

This past week we have seen fuel shortages, we have witnessed anger and frustration as people have judged those filling up their vehicles without knowing their individual stories, politicians have certainly had a lot to say with their blame culture responses and then we have seen the horrendous consequences of the murder of a young woman by a serving police officer. Meanwhile, the pandemic and its continuing impact seems to have been demoted on the principal news channels; we hear little about life in Afghanistan after the western powers have pulled out; Palestine and the impact of the Israeli Government's Policies, refugees, natural disasters of flooding and famine and recovery from the wildfires that hit several parts of the world have disappeared as stories and so life moves on.

You may be wondering how the Gospel reading and Jesus' approach to children is in anyway linked to the last paragraph. If you think of the Disciples as being the ones trying to organise an event, maintain health and safety, stop people from getting too close and giving their leader Jesus, space, it can appear to be rather like the security officers and personnel of today attempting to protect a President or a world leader. They were following generally acceptable practices, maintaining an order and dealing with matters of public safety. However, they were not operating in the new way. Jesus knew that if you educate children they will absorb, they will listen, they are also the future and by nurturing the children you can change society. Children, after a certain age, may be influenced by their families and their local communities but if you welcome them in their innocence, give them time and an experience to remember, they will be forever changed. Just think back in your own lives at those very special moments where something changed your beliefs, your ambitions, your dreams and your goals and reflect on the what, why, how and which that happened to make a change.

There is a challenge for those of us of faith and that is that we have to be prepared to once again act like children in the way of coming with an open mind, an ambition for our church to show Faith in Action, to accept the teachings of Jesus and to recognise that we are individuals in a team approach to Mission and Ministry.

Prayer

Heavenly Father,

We thank you that you show us the way to act and to know that you are walking with us. Encourage us to be open to your Gospel and to respond as you want us to.

In your name we pray,

Amen

Hymn: 769 [Who is on the Lord's Side](#)

Prayers of Intercession

Hymn: 116 [Down from His Glory](#)

Blessing/Grace