



Sunday 11th October 2020  
Welcome to our Service  
Guest Speaker - James Gregory

Here in the South Lakes we live in a beautiful area that **welcomes** hundreds of thousands of visitors every year to this world heritage site, also known as, The Adventure Capital of the UK!

God is **welcoming** each one of us into his family and his kingdom which is where our true heritage lies. He created us, he declared that we were 'very good' and he gave us free choice to go it alone, or find our true purpose within his family. In it's fullest sense, his world-shaking, life-changing kingdom must surely be the ultimate adventure capital of the universe! Let's make way for Jesus The King and **welcome** him into our lives.



Make way, make way for Christ the King  
In splendour arrives  
Fling wide the gates and **welcome** Him  
Into your lives

*Make way! (Make way!)  
Make way! (Make way!)  
For the King of kings  
(For the King of kings)  
Make way! (Make way!)  
Make way! (Make way!)  
And let His kingdom in*

He comes the broken hearts to heal  
The prisoners to free  
The deaf shall hear, the lame shall dance  
The blind shall see

And those who mourn with heavy hearts  
Who weep and sigh  
With laughter, joy and royal crown  
He'll beautify

We call you now to worship Him  
As Lord of all  
To have no gods before Him  
Their thrones must fall! By G Kendrick



Let's Pray... Father God, we welcome you. We welcome you Lord Jesus, we open our hearts and lives to welcome in your kingdom. Holy Spirit, we welcome you, do something new in our lives today. Amen

Birthday greetings today  
May God bless you we pray  
Live for Jesus dear...



George (12th)

Harry (13th)

Sarah (15th)

and Dave (15th)



May he guide you each day!



**Sunflower  
Competition  
Results  
2020**



Sheila - 229cm - 7'6"



**Angela & Mark - 206cm - 6'9"**



Steve & Lin  
198cm - 6'6"



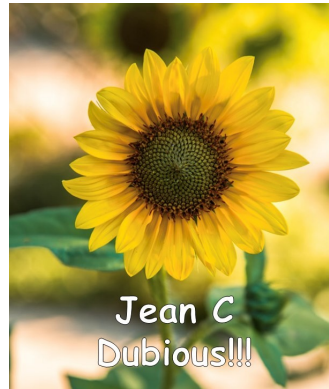
Pauline  
188cm - 6'2"



Jack & Mitchell  
170cm - 5'7"



Dave & Emma  
2cm - 1"



Jean C  
Dubious!!!



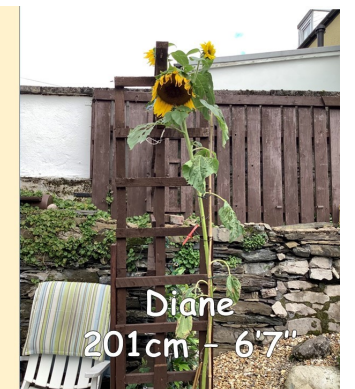
Pete & Kath  
274cm - 9'



Yasmin, Sophie & Matthew  
220cm - 7'3"



Rodger's neighbour  
163cm - 5'4"



Diane  
201cm - 6'7"



The Bedford's  
241cm - 7'11"



Jane P  
HmMMMM??



Jen & Pete  
330cm - 10'10"



Richard & Jean  
191cm - 6'3"

## Matthew 10. 40-42

<sup>40</sup> “Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me, and anyone who welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. <sup>41</sup> Whoever welcomes a prophet as a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward, and whoever welcomes a righteous person as a righteous person will receive a righteous person’s reward. <sup>42</sup> And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is my disciple, truly I tell you, that person will certainly not lose their reward.”



These words are the end of Jesus’ commissioning of the disciples - he sends them out as missionaries to share what they have seen and heard and experienced. You might want to find some time this week to read the earlier bit of chapter 10.

- ◆ Are you aware of any reaction you had to those words at the end of chapter 10 as you heard them read?
- ◆ How did they resonate with you?
- ◆ Or did they just go over your head?

In some ways they are innocuous sounding words, vaguely comforting, also comfortingly vague.

The reoccurring word is that word, **welcome!**

- ◆ This passage is about welcome, about being received.
- ◆ It’s about welcoming prophets and receiving a prophet’s reward - whatever that is; we’ll come back to that.
- ◆ Its about welcoming righteous people, welcoming Jesus, and welcoming the Father who sent Jesus.

I’m sure that Croftlands Community Church, like my church in Devon is really good at welcoming people! But, actually, that’s not what Jesus is talking about, is it?

Jesus doesn’t say “anyone *you welcome* is welcoming me and the one who sent me”

He is not saying “if *you welcome* a prophet it’ll do you good”

Or “if *you welcome* a righteous person you will be blessed”

That’s what we may be think he is saying, but we are mistaken.

Jesus is saying that we are somehow prophets, we are in some way righteous ones, and whoever welcomes us is welcoming him and sharing in our reward.

Jesus is not saying, *'welcome others onto your turf so that they can find me with you'*

He is saying: *Go to others, go to their homes, be received into their world, make yourselves at home in their lives.* And when THEY welcome YOU they are welcoming ME.

It's amazing how relevant this is for us today, isn't it?

Here in Crediton we have welcomed people into our building to worship every Sunday morning for the last 155 years.

We have welcomed them into our building and they have experienced the welcome of the Father there. We have made room for them and they have realised that Jesus has made room for them in the heart of God. Hallelujah!

That all changed in March.

We stopped welcoming people into our building for worship. We told them not to come.



**But worshipping has not stopped. And welcoming has not stopped...**

Instead of welcoming people to Church, we went into their homes through online services, and they have welcomed us there as we've led them in worship there.

I know you have done the same.

**Instead of welcoming people here to worship, we have been welcomed into their homes to worship with them there.**

You have done it this morning too, you have let me and Mervyn and Kathryn and others into your home, you have made room for us, you've put to one side the other things you could have usefully been doing, you might even have put some clothes on and tidied up a little - you have blessed us greatly!

You have welcomed us, so that we can know and love God with you on your own turf.

## Jesus said, anyone who welcomes you welcomes me.

Here Jesus is not telling us to set up a base to welcome others into.

Here Jesus invites us to go and *be welcomed by others*.

- ◆ Have you ever thought of mission as being the task of going and being welcomed by others?
- ◆ Have you ever thought of mission as letting others host you?
- ◆ Have you ever thought of mission as being invited onto someone else's turf, of being welcomed into their community, into their world?

Lots of people prefer being the host themselves. They like to be 'at home'. They like to be the ones making others feel comfortable, they like to hold court on their own patch, they are more comfortable serving, more comfortable eating their own food, sitting on their own sofa.

It can certainly be safer that way. It would be easier for me this morning if you all came to my church and I could see you all, and read your body language and be surrounded by all the things and people that are familiar to me. Instead my face and my voice are being beamed into your homes which, for the most part, are strange places for me, unknown places, possibly hostile places; I don't know whether I fit in with the surroundings in your home. I don't know how you are going to receive me.



- ◆ Have you ever thought of mission as being welcomed into someone else's world and, in due course, sharing your story there - and then waiting, not knowing, if your story will be received or not?
- ◆ Have you ever thought of mission as leaving your home comforts, your own tribe, your family, and being welcomed by a stranger into a strange place?

My friend Glyn was a pastor at a church in Oxford for 10 years. He met with some of his mission team to think up new activities his church could put on that new people would want to come to. Then someone said, "why are we putting on new groups, why don't we all go and join the groups that are already happening in our community?" And they did. They joined the fitness classes and the reading groups and the gyms and they volunteered at the school and the scout group. **Maybe sometimes that is what mission is? - being welcomed by others into their world, joining them in their life.**

But, if mission is being welcomed by others doesn't that seem a little presumptuous? It *could* be a bit presumptuous couldn't it? Pitching up at someone else's home - "hello, I have come to join in with your life! Please share with me!"

Perhaps sometimes mission *is* being a bit presumptuous and knocking a door in the hope of a welcome into someone else's life? and maybe God might even use that little risk you take to change someone's life?

We are commissioned by Jesus who took that journey before us, Jesus who entered a strange and sometimes recalcitrant world in the name of love.

Jesus who left his eternal home, and came to *our* home, breaking into *our* reality, prizing open *our* inward-focussed hearts and lives, re-configuring our world, re-making our creation.

*Eugene Peterson says it like this:*

### **The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into our neighbourhood.**

Why? We saw the glory with our own eyes, the one-of-a-kind glory, like Father, like Son, generous inside and out, true from start to finish. Jesus sends us out into the worlds of other people because that's the way he does it, leaving his home and coming into our home, our world, our neighbourhood, so that we can see the Father. People who follow Jesus are often met with the astonishing grace of God when they take a risk and step out of their world into the strange new world that others live in, being welcomed - or sometimes rejected by them.

**Why is it that people who follow Jesus are comfortable being welcomed by others?**

Well, Jesus himself was a master of making himself at home in other people's lives! Jesus had no home that we know about: *'Foxes have holes and birds have nests but the Son of Man has no home of his own.'* And yet he was nearly always at dinner somewhere! Nearly anywhere you turn in Luke's gospel Jesus is at a dinner party, going to a dinner party, or having only just left a dinner party.

Jesus is sending out these disciples - and sending out us - to be welcomed by others, to make ourselves at home their world's. And this is the pattern we have seen him follow too.



I already said that this passage is really relevant to us right now.

It is relevant to us who have been isolated for months but are now beginning to come out and meet with people again in their homes.

And for us who have found new ways of entering others' lives through technology. And even if you are not emerging yet you are at least preparing yourself for when you will emerge.

Maybe Jesus is sending you somewhere new?

Jesus invites us out into his wild and wonderful world to be welcomed by others in new places, new situations, perhaps in new communities, new worlds.

Jesus has broken into your world - perhaps he even came to you as an uninvited guest? Jesus has broken into your world, and not only that he has sent his Spirit to do some heart-work on you, so that as Jesus breaks into your world you are ready to welcome and receive him. Jesus has entered into your world, made himself at home in your life, put his feet up on your sofa, gotten involved in your every day stuff, become a continuing presence in your life.

### **Why?**

So that as you welcome him you can welcome the Father who sent him, the Father whom you were made to enjoy and glorify forever, the Father who is your very great reward.

Jesus is sending you to be welcomed by others so that as they welcome you they welcome him and as they welcome him they welcome the Father... so that they can share with you in your very great reward, in the world-shaking, life-changing, forgiving and remaking love of the Father.

Amen?



**Thank you to everyone who made a donation to the hospice last week. We raised exactly £100**



**May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all, now and evermore. Amen.**