

WELCOME AND NOTICES

- Thanks for all those who have helped and are due to help at the arts festival.
- Noosha's baptism 10 July

CALL TO WORSHIP: Exodus 15:26 says, "I am the LORD, who heals you."

OPENING PRAYER & CONFESSION

God of life, you have made the world in all its beauty, and in its beauty you have reflected your beauty and shown us your creativity. As we worship you today, may our lives reveal your beauty in the world you have put us in, that others may see how wonderful you are; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

God of hope, just as you put us in a world of beauty, forgive us for spoiling the world through greed, negligence and indifference. Help us to see the beauty all around us and preserve it for the next generation and those that will follow them. This we pray for your mercy's sake. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

God is our Healer, who forgives all who come to him. Hear his words to you. He says, "Your sins are forgiven." Let us receive his forgiveness; in Jesus' name. Amen.

SONG BLOCK

**Come on and celebrate
These are the days of Elijah
Indescribable**

Come on and celebrate

Come on and celebrate
His gift of love, we will celebrate
The Son of God who loved us
And gave us life.
We'll shout Your praise, O King,
You give us joy nothing else can bring,
We'll give to You our offering
In celebration praise.

Come on and celebrate, celebrate
Celebrate and sing,
Celebrate and sing to the King.
Come on and celebrate, celebrate
Celebrate and sing,
Celebrate and sing to the King.

These are the days of Elijah

These are the days of Elijah,
Declaring the word of the Lord
And these are the days of Your servant
Moses,
Righteousness being restored.
And though these are days of great trial,
Of famine and darkness and sword,
Still, we are the voice in the desert crying
"Prepare ye the way of the Lord!"

Behold He comes riding on the clouds,
Shining like the sun at the trumpet call,
Lift your voice, it's the year of jubilee,
And out of Zion's hill salvation comes.

These are the days of Ezekiel,
The dry bones becoming as flesh,
And these are the days of Your servant
David,
Rebuilding a temple of praise.
These are the days of the harvest,
The fields are as white in Your world,
And we are the labourers in Your
vineyard,
Declaring the word of the Lord!

Behold He comes riding on the clouds,
Shining like the sun at the trumpet call,
Lift your voice, it's the year of jubilee,
And out of Zion's hill salvation comes

Indescribable

From the highest of heights to the depths
of the sea
Creations revealing Your majesty
From the colours of fall to the fragrance of
spring
Every creature unique in the song that it
sings
All exclaiming

Indescribable, uncontainable
You placed the stars in the sky
And You know them by name
You are amazing, God

All powerful, untameable
Awestruck, we fall to our knees
As we humbly proclaim
You are amazing, God

Who has told every lightning bolt where it
should go?
Or seen heavenly storehouses laden with
snow
Who imagined the sun and gives source to
its light?
Yet, conceals it to bring us the coolness of
night
None can fathom

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You placed the stars in the sky
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Awestruck, we fall to our knees
As we humbly proclaim
You are amazing, God

Indescribable, uncontainable
You placed the stars in the sky
And You know them by name
You are amazing, God

You see the depths of my heart
And You love me the same
You are amazing, God
You are amazing, God

INTRODUCTION TO THE THEME: CREATIVITY

Creativity is an aid to the work of God in us. In her book 'Healing Through Creativity', Fiona Horrobin describes creativity as a bridge from the head to the heart, and that God uses creativity to break into places where we need healing, restoring us where we have been robbed of life in all its fullness. We can all be creative, whether we are a musician with an instrument, a cook with some ingredients, a potter with clay, a scientist with an experiment. A person with a camera on their phone can be creative, as can a person with a pen and a piece of paper. We are all made in the image of the Creator.

Creativity within us needs expression. But so often this creativity has been crushed along life's way. We then see creativity as

some kind of test or performance, and we naturally shun it. But creativity is a part of our human identity because we are made in God's image, in the image of the Creator, and this includes our spirituality. Spirituality is having a sense of eternity within us (Eccl. 3:11).

To the person who says "I'm not creative" I ask, "What stopped your creativity?" "When did you last take time to be creative?" Creativity, Creativity doesn't have to be for others to view or comment on. It can be fun and enjoyable. It can bring wholeness and healing.

So, as we are celebrating creativity in our arts festival weekend, why not pick up a pen and paper and write a line about yourself or about your faith in God. You could draw instead of writing, and could use the title 'God is my creator' or 'God is my healer.'

There are some things on your table. Take whatever is there and be creative! Write a few lines of poetry, or journal a few words of your weekend so far. Turn the paper into something, origami style, or draw a picture on the paper. It doesn't matter what you do as no-one will be inspecting it or marking it. It's not a performance. It is taking the creativity God has placed within you and doing something with it. You have 5-7 minutes to be creative.

TESTIMONY: HEALING THROUGH CREATIVITY - HELEN BLAKE

OFFERTORY

Generous God, we offer you all that we have, all that brings us joy, all that excites us and lifts our spirits. Lord, take now these gifts and our thankfulness, for your glory's sake. **Amen.**

READING: Acts 3:1-10

One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer—at three in the afternoon.² Now a man who was lame from birth was being carried to the temple gate called Beautiful, where he was put every day to beg from those going into the temple courts.³ When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money.⁴ Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, "Look at us!"⁵ So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them.

⁶ Then Peter said, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk."⁷ Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man's feet and ankles became strong.⁸ He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God.⁹ When all the people saw him walking and praising God,¹⁰ they recognized him as the same man who used to sit begging at the temple gate called Beautiful, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

REFLECTION:

Have you ever got more than you bargained for? Now we all know about the buy 2 get a 3rd free offers, or buy one get the second half price, or even 70% off sale offers. We all love a bargain, to get something for a lot less than expected. You

could say we love to get more than we bargained for. That's exactly what happened to the disabled man when he met with the apostles Peter and John, he got more than he bargained for. Filled with the Spirit of God, Peter and John were able to serve God in ways they could possibly never have imagined.

When the apostles Peter and John came by, the disabled man would have hoped for a few coins, but probably no more. Just like people who beg today, so many who walk by don't look at them, or if they do all they might do is give a few coins. Yet, when Peter and John came across the man begging at the Gate Beautiful, they looked straight at him and said "Look at us!" (v4). And the man gave them his full attention, possibly hoping for a good amount of money, or maybe expecting to be scolded by them. Who knows? What did Peter and John see as they looked at the man? Luke tells us in Acts that Peter and John looked intently at the man. What were they looking for? Did they simply see another beggar, another disabled person? Did they see a man whose life had been a life of pain and struggle? Did they see someone ready to be touched by God, someone with a sincere heart and hope for more than just money?

Often those with disabilities and hidden disabilities are ignored in society; misunderstood, unappreciated, passed over, not seen. Mandy and I were discussing this the other evening, and how those with Chronic Fatigue are so often not seen, and when they are seen people think they look fine. But it may have taken several days of struggle to be able to get out, and the exhaustion of going out may affect them for several days more. Peter and John noticed the man. They stopped

and looked at him. This was not simply a man begging, here was someone to whom the Lord would show mercy and compassion.

I wonder whether in that moment the Holy Spirit was whispering for Peter and John to stop and take a good look at the man, for the Spirit was about to work through them in Jesus' name.

Peter didn't have any money on him, but he had something much better. He didn't even ask the disabled man if he wanted to be healed. He just went ahead and told the man, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk" (v6). And helping the man up his lameness was healed. The man jumped up and followed Peter and John into the temple, continuing to walk and jump (v8). Not only that, he praised God. This miracle caused the people who recognised the man to be filled with 'wonder and amazement' (v10).

It's the power of the name of Jesus here that matters in this healing. The idea of names having power is strange to us in our modern world. Here we read that the name of Jesus carries power, and in this situation the name carried power to heal. This is as true today as it ever was. Still people today find healing in Jesus' name. Sometimes it is miraculous, like this episode in Acts; sometimes it is equally as miraculous but not as spectacular, like someone finding healing through the creative arts, such as finding healing using pottery or painting or creative writing. It turned the man from a beggar into a worshipper who was able to go into the temple courts, probably for the first time in his life.

Up to this point all the action in Acts has been in Jerusalem, and this healing of the

disabled man took place outside the temple, outside the temple gate. You see, God is not confined to places of worship. Luke's gospel began and ended in the temple, but here the good news of Jesus, in this case the good news of healing, is outside the temple. God is on the move, reaching out to anyone and everyone who needs good news. And that could be you today or someone you meet this coming week. Pray for an opportunity to tell someone about Jesus this week, and about his healing power.

**SONG: O Lord My God When I in
Awesome Wonder (How Great Thou Art)**

O Lord, my God, when I in awesome
wonder
Consider all the worlds Thy Hands have
made;
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder,
Thy power throughout the universe
displayed

Then sings my soul, My Saviour God, to
Thee,
How great Thou art, how great Thou art.
Then sings my soul, My Saviour God, to
Thee,
How great Thou art, how great Thou art!

And when I think of God, His Son not
sparing;
Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in;
That on the Cross, my burden gladly
bearing,
He bled and died to take away my sin.

When Christ shall come with shout of
acclamation
And lead me home, what joy shall fill my
heart!
Then I shall bow with humble adoration,

And then proclaim, "My God, how great
Thou art!"

Then sings my soul, My Saviour God, to
Thee,
How great Thou art, how great Thou art.
Then sings my soul, My Saviour God, to
Thee,
How great Thou art, how great Thou

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION: LOUISE

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**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.**

SONG: Bless the lord, O my soul

Bless the Lord, O my soul,
O my soul, worship His holy Name.
Sing like never before, O my soul.
I'll worship Your holy Name.

The sun comes up, it's a new day dawning;
It's time to sing Your song again.
Whatever may pass and whatever lies
before me,
Let me be singing when the evening
comes.

Bless the Lord, O my soul,
O my soul, worship His holy Name.
Sing like never before, O my soul.
I'll worship Your holy Name.

You're rich in love and You're slow to
anger,
Your Name is great and Your heart is kind;
For all Your goodness I will keep on
singing,
Ten thousand reasons for my heart to
find.

Bless the Lord, O my soul,
O my soul, worship His holy Name.
Sing like never before, O my soul.
I'll worship Your holy Name.

And on that day when my strength is
failing,
The end draws near and my time has
come;
Still my soul sings Your praise unending,
Ten thousand years and then
forevermore.

Bless the Lord, O my soul,
O my soul, worship His holy Name.
Sing like never before, O my soul.
I'll worship Your holy Name.

Bless the Lord, O my soul,
O my soul, worship His holy Name.
Sing like never before, O my soul.
I'll worship Your holy Name.
I'll worship Your holy Name.
I'll worship Your holy Name.

CLOSING PRAYER AND BLESSING

God of beauty and wonder, we thank and
praise you that you are a God who heals.
In your infinite mercy and love you have
placed in a world full of beauty and
wonder. We pray that through this arts
and crafts festival we may continue to see
your beauty and wonder through the
creative gifts you have given; through
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

And the blessing of God Almighty, the
Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be
among you and remain with you always.
Amen.

Go in peace to love and serve and share
the Lord
In the name of Christ. Amen.