

Sunday 27th September 2020
Welcome to our All Age Worship Service
Prepared by Phil and Sal

God doesn't give people things
He doesn't want them to use



Happy Birthday Harriet T
God bless you.
We hope you have a
lovely day on Wednesday.



10,000 Reasons by Matt Redman

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

chorus

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

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

On Thursday 1st October, we will be meeting together at the Croftlands community centre at 6.30 pm for a prayer meeting and communion. Government guidelines will be in place to make the environment as safe as we possibly can.

Sunday 4th October is our **Sunflower Harvest Service**. We will let you know all the details in the next couple of days, so you know exactly how that will work.

Going forward, it's unsustainable to facilitate two services each week, particularly with the constantly changing situation as we go into the winter, and the practicalities involved. We will therefore continue with on-line services being the main stay, with a monthly prayer meeting and occasionally getting together on a Sunday morning like we will on the 4th, if circumstances allow.

Some of us of a certain age will recognize this image immediately

It is, of course from the Karate Kid, and I don't know about you, but I never painted a fence, or sanded a floor or waxed a car the same way after this – I mean, I was only 5 when the film came out, so I had probably never done any of those things anyway, but you know what I mean!!



Now, I'll try not to spoil anything with this quick summary, but the film revolves around a boy called Daniel who has to move home when a teenager, and gets picked on by other kids at his school who do karate at a dojo called Cobra Kai. Some of this bullying is seen by Mr. Miyagi, an old Japanese guy who takes Daniel under his wing, and trains him in karate. The film culminates in a fight in the final of a karate competition where Daniel fights his main enemy Johnny. It is all very tense as Daniel is injured, and it comes down to the final point to decide who wins.

We're going to fast forward 30 years to a new series Netflix has released – other streaming services are available – called Cobra Kai. I'm not going to endorse this series in anyway, as to be honest, it's not great!! From what I've seen of it, Cobra Kai revolves around our 2 fighters Daniel and Johnny, one of whom is a successful businessman, the other has just lost his job as a handyman and is now unemployed. This person is seen sitting in his apartment watching tv one night, when a line is said in the film he's watching....**“God doesn't give people things He doesn't want them to use”** This inspires a change in attitude, and a new dojo is opened up. I'm going to leave the story there as it's not particularly wholesome, and I didn't know some of those words even existed in the English language! That phrase kept repeating in my head until I blurted it out loud, shocking Sallyann somewhat!!

“God doesn't give people things He doesn't want them to use”

I was thinking a lot about this, and about all the gifts God gives to us, and it challenged me to think. **Do we use them to Gods Glory?**

We read in James 1 v 17 that, **“every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows”**

Every good gift we receive is because of Gods love for us. His love for us is so great, He looks for every opportunity to give us a gift. He desperately wants us to know that we are loved and valued by Him, He wants us to know that He isn't distant from us, but is working in us to lead us to joy, peace and life.

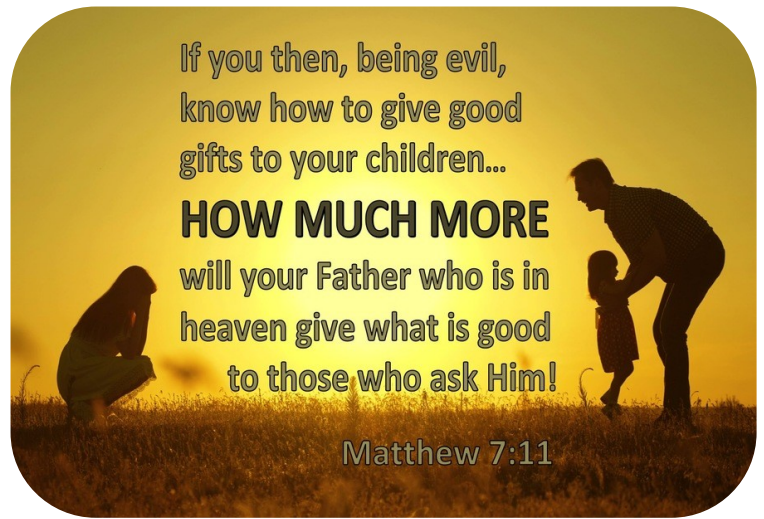
“Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.”

JAMES 1:17

Matthew 7 v 11 says **“ If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him”**

God has chosen to be known to us as a Father, not a distant, unapproachable being, but as close to us as a Father. Because of this we can more easily understand the love of God by looking to good earthly parents.

God longs to bless us the same way a good father would, but at the same time, he loves us more deeply and powerfully than any earthly parent ever could...our Heavenly Father far outdoes any example an earthly father gives us.



What gift are you longing for today?

- ♦ Do you long for friendship? Do you need a greater sense of being loved? Do you just need to know that He is with you?
- ♦ Gods gifts may not look like a present you opened for Christmas last year, but they will be exactly what you need when you need it!!
- ♦ If you need a friend, ask God for one! He's promised us His friendship, and He loves to guide His children into community with others.
- ♦ Do you need to know you're loved? God longs for us to know the depth of His love that He sent his only Son to die for us!
- ♦ Do you need to know that God is with you? Ask God to reveal the ways He was, is and will be with you. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you eyes to see all the ways he is working in your life.



Whatever gift you need from God, His word promises in 1 John 5

“if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of Him”

Now, before all you kids get excited and think that you've got a Playstation 5 coming just because you asked for it....that's not how it works!!

God may bless us with money, a nice house and good health but that's no guarantee. What we need to be doing with our blessings from God is use them to help others.

God's gifts are more life-giving than any gift an earthly father can give. He gives the gift of a beautiful sunrise, because He knows we long to gaze upon beauty. He gives the gift of His presence, because He knows we need the peace that only He can bring. He gives us the gift of friendship, because He knows we aren't made to do life alone.



God also gives us other practical gifts and talents....you might be able to play a musical instrument; you might be good at sports; you might be really good at making friends, or even making cups of tea. These gifts are given to us by God, and what He wants is for us to use them to show the glory of God. I have been challenged to think about the gifts and talents God has given me and whether I am using them to the glory of God, and I think if it was a school report it would say, "improvement needed".

I think this is something we can all think about, no matter how old we are, and I challenge you to do that over the next few days....if you do feel that God is asking you to use your gifts in a new or particular way, then please do reach out to one of the church leadership team who would be delighted to talk to you.

It may be a little early to mention the C word...I can hear parents screaming "Nooooo"....but Boris has assured us it will still happen, not that we needed his permission to celebrate the greatest gift anyone has ever received, but yes, Christmas is now less than 100 days away!!

God so loves us, and we'd turned away from Him so far, that He needed to do something amazing to give us a way back to Him, so He sent Jesus to be born as a human just like us....Jesus knew what it was like to make friends, and have enemies. Jesus needed God to be with him, remember the 40 days and nights Jesus was tempted in the desert by Satan? He was tempted in every way you can imagine, but he did not sin...at no time did His Father desert him or leave him alone. God was always with His Son, and Jesus always walked, from the time of his baptism, in the spiritual awareness of his Father's love and delight in him. This is what God wants for us too....He wants us to know that He is with us every step of the way, and He wants us to reach out to Him for help.



All we need to do to know God's love in our lives is to believe that we are loved and accepted by God, admit that we are sinners and turn away from those sins, and ask Jesus to come into our lives and live our lives in a way that gives thanks to God.



Let's pray...

Heavenly Father,

thank you for the gifts and talents you have given to us. I pray that we are aware of these gifts. Help us to use these gifts to bless others and glorify You, and show us where and when we can use them. Thank you for trusting us with these gifts and I pray that we would grow and mature in them. And Father God, we want to thank you for the most amazing gift any of us have ever received, your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. We thank you that we now have a way back to life with You through your willingness to sacrifice your Son for our sins. Help us to accept this gift, come into our lives and teach us how to live for You. We know life will be tough at times, but we thank you that You are our friend who we can talk to at any time and will never leave us. We also pray for those who are ill at the moment, Lord as the weather gets colder and more bugs appear, we pray for your healing hand, help us to fight these illnesses and be a comfort to those who are suffering. Lord as we go into a new week, be with us we pray, guide our thoughts and deeds and help us keep our eyes on You.

In Your Precious name, Amen



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.