

Welcome to Glen Park this morning. We may not be allowed to meet in person to “catch up” and to encourage each other but we are not alone.

Opening Prayer.

Jesus taught us to say “Our Father”. Our Father, we acknowledge that You are with us all the time. We are not alone for You have promised “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” But in our minds we approach You this morning because we so quickly forget this promise. Help us to worship You “in Spirit and in truth for the Father is seeking such people as His worshippers”. (Jn. 4:23) Bless us we pray as we worship You this morning. Let us pray together the words found in our red hymn book number 606.....

“Let the beauty of Jesus be seen in me,  
all His wonderful passion and purity.

O Thou Spirit divine all my nature refine  
until the beauty of Jesus be seen in me.”

Amen.

As I read the words of that song I thought of a proverb I was taught as a child. I was taught it as a proverb but I don’t think you will find it in your Bible.

“You can’t make a silk purse out of a sow’s ear.”

But God can. Is that encouraging?

There is a song we learned while in Papua New Guinea which speaks of this.

“Little by little every day  
little by little in every way  
Jesus is changing me.”

(Response “He’s changing me.”)

O yes, it’s slow going  
but there’s a knowing  
that one day perfect I will be.”

Yesssssss! (Make it sound jubilant!)

Let us continue with hymn 6 in the red book, verses one, three and four.

“Holy God we praise Your Name.  
Lord of all we bow before You.  
All on earth Your sceptre claim,  
all in heaven above adore You.

Infinite Your vast domain  
everlasting is Your reign.

See, the apostolic train

join Your sacred Name to hallow.

Prophets swell the glad refrain

and the white robed martyrs follow.

And from morn to set of sun

through the church the song goes on.

Holy Father, Holy Son

Holy Spirit, three we name You

though in essence only one.

Undivided God we claim You

and adoring bend the knee

while we sing our praise to Thee.”

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Lockdowns have become a part of our way of life at the moment but the Word of God tells of a time when lockdowns will be no more.

## REVELATION 22

22 Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. 3 No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. 4 They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. 5 There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.

6 The angel said to me, “These words are trustworthy and true. The Lord, the God who inspires the prophets, sent his angel to show his servants the things that must soon take place.” 7 “Look, I am coming soon! Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy written in this scroll.” 8 I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I had heard and seen them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who had been showing them to me.

9 But he said to me, “Don’t do that! I am a fellow servant with you and with your fellow prophets and with all who keep the words of this scroll. Worship God!”

10 Then he told me, “Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this scroll, because the time is near.

11 Let the one who does wrong continue to do wrong; let the vile person continue to be vile; let the one who does right continue to do right; and let the holy person

continue to be holy.” 12 “Look, I am coming soon!  
My reward is with me, and I will give to each person  
according to what they have done. 13 I am the Alpha  
and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning  
and the End.”

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Prayer Time.

I suggest some items below. The list is not exhaustive.  
Please feel free to add other items as you feel The Lord  
putting them on your heart.

Remember: a) The Lord IS in control.

b) He wishes to bless; but it is not always what we  
would ask for. Do you trust Him enough to conclude as  
Jesus did; “Not My will, but Yours be done.”

Do you trust Him enough to conclude the same way  
when praying for somebody else for whom you care  
deeply?

Pray for:

Leaders: in Churches, Missions, Government,  
Medical

Your own prayer points.

Conclude with Hymn 34 in the red book; a paraphrase  
of The Lord’s prayer. (Slightly updated words below.)

“Our Father Who in heaven art  
holy are You in voice and heart.

You bid us call upon Your Name  
for ever blest, for ever the same!

O may Your kingdom soon appear  
Your will be done Your reign be here.

Give us this day our daily bread  
by You we are both clothed and fed.

Forgive us, Lord, the sins we own  
contrite we bow before Your throne.

As we to men forgiveness show  
and thus obey You here below.

Lead not into temptations sore  
from evil shield us we implore.

Gird us with might, Your Spirit lend  
Yours is the kingdom without end.

Yours all the power and glory be  
now and throughout eternity.”

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## DEUTERONOMY 32

Listen, you heavens, and I will speak;  
hear, you earth, the words of my mouth.

2 Let my teaching fall like rain  
and my words descend like dew,  
like showers on new grass,  
like abundant rain on tender plants.

3 I will proclaim the name of the Lord.

Oh, praise the greatness of our God!

4 He is the Rock, his works are perfect,  
and all his ways are just.

A faithful God who does no wrong,  
upright and just is he.

5 They are corrupt and not his children;  
to their shame they are a warped and crooked  
generation.

6 Is this the way you repay the Lord,  
you foolish and unwise people?

Is he not your Father, your Creator,  
who made you and formed you?

7 Remember the days of old;  
consider the generations long past.

Ask your father and he will tell you,  
your elders, and they will explain to you.

8 When the Most High gave the nations their  
inheritance,

when he divided all mankind,  
he set up boundaries for the peoples  
according to the number of the sons of Israel.

9 For the Lord’s portion is his people,  
Jacob his allotted inheritance.

10 In a desert land he found him,  
in a barren and howling waste.

He shielded him and cared for him;  
he guarded him as the apple of his eye,

11 like an eagle that stirs up its nest  
and hovers over its young,

that spreads its wings to catch them  
and carries them aloft.

12 The Lord alone led him;  
no foreign god was with him.

13 He made him ride on the heights of the land  
and fed him with the fruit of the fields.

He nourished him with honey from the rock,  
and with oil from the flinty crag,

14 with curds and milk from herd and flock  
and with fattened lambs and goats,

with choice rams of Bashan  
and the finest kernels of wheat.

You drank the foaming blood of the grape.

15 Jeshurun grew fat and kicked;  
filled with food, they became heavy and sleek.

They abandoned the God who made them  
and rejected the Rock their Saviour.

16 They made him jealous with their foreign gods  
and angered him with their detestable idols.

17 They sacrificed to false gods, which are not God—

gods they had not known,  
 gods that recently appeared,  
 gods your ancestors did not fear.  
 18 You deserted the Rock, who fathered you;  
 you forgot the God who gave you birth.  
 19 The Lord saw this and rejected them  
 because he was angered by his sons and daughters.  
 20 "I will hide my face from them," he said,  
 "and see what their end will be;  
 for they are a perverse generation,  
 children who are unfaithful.  
 21 They made me jealous by what is no god  
 and angered me with their worthless idols.  
 I will make them envious by those who are not a  
 people;  
 I will make them angry by a nation that has no  
 understanding.  
 22 For a fire will be kindled by my wrath,  
 one that burns down to the realm of the dead below.  
 It will devour the earth and its harvests  
 and set afire the foundations of the mountains.  
 23 "I will heap calamities on them  
 and spend my arrows against them.  
 24 I will send wasting famine against them,  
 consuming pestilence and deadly plague;  
 I will send against them the fangs of wild beasts,  
 the venom of vipers that glide in the dust.  
 25 In the street the sword will make them childless;  
 in their homes terror will reign.  
 The young men and young women will perish,  
 the infants and those with grey hair.  
 26 I said I would scatter them  
 and erase their name from human memory,  
 27 but I dreaded the taunt of the enemy,  
 lest the adversary misunderstand  
 and say, 'Our hand has triumphed;  
 the Lord has not done all this.'  
 28 They are a nation without sense,  
 there is no discernment in them.  
 29 If only they were wise and would understand this  
 and discern what their end will be!  
 30 How could one man chase a thousand,  
 or two put ten thousand to flight,  
 unless their Rock had sold them,  
 unless the Lord had given them up?  
 31 For their rock is not like our Rock,  
 as even our enemies concede.  
 32 Their vine comes from the vine of Sodom  
 and from the fields of Gomorrah.  
 Their grapes are filled with poison,  
 and their clusters with bitterness.  
 33 Their wine is the venom of serpents,  
 the deadly poison of cobras.  
 34 "Have I not kept this in reserve  
 and sealed it in my vaults?  
 35 It is mine to avenge; I will repay.  
 In due time their foot will slip;

their day of disaster is near  
 and their doom rushes upon them."

36 The Lord will vindicate his people  
 and relent concerning his servants  
 when he sees their strength is gone  
 and no one is left, slave or free.  
 37 He will say: "Now where are their gods,  
 the rock they took refuge in,  
 38 the gods who ate the fat of their sacrifices  
 and drank the wine of their drink offerings?  
 Let them rise up to help you!  
 Let them give you shelter!  
 39 "See now that I myself am he!  
 There is no god besides me.  
 I put to death and I bring to life,  
 I have wounded and I will heal,  
 and no one can deliver out of my hand.  
 40 I lift my hand to heaven and solemnly swear:  
 As surely as I live forever,  
 41 when I sharpen my flashing sword  
 and my hand grasps it in judgment,  
 I will take vengeance on my adversaries  
 and repay those who hate me.  
 42 I will make my arrows drunk with blood,  
 while my sword devours flesh:  
 the blood of the slain and the captives,  
 the heads of the enemy leaders."  
 43 Rejoice, you nations, with his people,  
 for he will avenge the blood of his servants;  
 he will take vengeance on his enemies  
 and make atonement for his land and people.

44 Moses came with Joshua son of Nun and spoke all  
 the words of this song in the hearing of the people. 45  
 When Moses finished reciting all these words to all  
 Israel, 46 he said to them, "Take to heart all the words  
 I have solemnly declared to you this day, so that you  
 may command your children to obey carefully all the  
 words of this law. 47 They are not just idle words for  
 you—they are your life. By them you will live long in  
 the land you are crossing the Jordan to possess."

48 On that same day the Lord told Moses, 49 "Go up  
 into the Abarim Range to Mount Nebo in Moab, across  
 from Jericho, and view Canaan, the land I am giving the  
 Israelites as their own possession.  
 50 There on the mountain that you have climbed you  
 will die and be gathered to your people, just as your  
 brother Aaron died on Mount Hor and was gathered to  
 his people. 51 This is because both of you broke faith  
 with me in the presence of the Israelites at the waters  
 of Meribah Kadesh in the Desert of Zin and because you  
 did not uphold my holiness among the Israelites. 52

Therefore, you will see the land only from a distance; you will not enter the land I am giving to the people of Israel.”

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As we prepare to give heed to what The Lord has laid on Chris to share with us this morning let us sing verse one only of Hymn 503 , red book.

“Like the woman at the well I was seeking  
for things that could not satisfy.  
And then I heard my Saviour speaking,  
Draw from My well that never shall run dry.  
Fill my cup, Lord, I lift it up, Lord.  
Come and quench this thirsting of my soul.  
Bread of heaven, feed me till I want no more.  
Fill my cup, fill it up and make me whole.”

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Chris’s message

## Life’s Choices

George MacDonald, 1824-1905, In his poem, “Sweet Peril” writes,

“Alas, how easily things go wrong!  
A sigh too deep, a kiss too long,  
And there follows a mist and weeping rain,  
And life is never the same again.”

He touches on an all too common human emotion that we all must endure, to learn for bairn or blessing to be accommodating. We all must deal with the inevitable unexpecteds that life serves up. The trick is to accept things sweetly, learning the lessons, taking advantage of opportunities that even adversity brings; but not allowing it all to become too much. Becoming embittered only makes things worse. Turning off gets us nowhere.

The Bible text selected for this message comes as part of a sermon in a song by Moses, given to him by the Lord - Deuteronomy 31:19-22, in which he anticipates Mose’s death and the difficulty Joshua, especially being an alone leader, would experience in the land with the fractious, rebellious people who had being put into his care.

This was a time of mega change for Moses, for Joshua and the nation. . . The death of somebody we love, especially a leader such as was Moses is at once a crisis and an opportunity.

Change is inevitable also in your life and mine. Sometimes we precipitate it ourselves, especially when we are young. But, if nothing else, just time will work change into our experience, whether we want it or not. How am I to deal with it? Some people thrive on it, others dread it. Change is always both an opportunity and a crisis. Let’s explore this text a little,

You will recognise these opening words and thoughts from our Scripture in Song sessions of days past (32 vv1-8). Its message takes us back to the days after the flood when the Lord disbursed Noah’s sons into their future geographic locations. Paul spoke of it to the Greeks in Acts 17:26.

“And he made from one man (Noah) every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place.”

The concept of family inheritance as an abiding possession for a predetermined time was built into the law and religion of the ancient Israelite people. Their inheritance could not finally and fully pass out of the possession of the family. Their right to share was an inheritance

that gave to every child an identity based in the land of promise, a permanent share, however small, in antiquity.

If every child within their father’s home was thus endowed by the law of permanent inheritance, what was the Lord’s inheritance? Does God have an inheritance amongst His people? This word is variously translated as a possession, an heritage, a portion or a share. Many Bibles translate that into English as a phrase, ‘an allotment or portion of (his) inheritance.’ What share does God have?

What an astonishing saying! What this verse tells us is that as earnest believers take God for their portion, so God takes them as his portion. He represents himself as being happy in his followers; and they are infinitely happy in, and satisfied with God on their part. He who is seeking for an earthly heritage, has little counterpart with the Most High. What else to you need other than almighty God. What else could you have. And the further you go

with God, the less you need of all else, for what an astonishing saying! As holy souls take God for their portion, so God takes them for his portion. He represents himself as happy in his followers; and they are infinitely happy in, and satisfied with, God as their portion. It has been well said that we do not know what faith in God truly is until in some situation we have no other resource than God. No money in your pocket. No back-up in the bank. No food stored in the pantry. Children that expect to be fed. Your only resource is God in Heaven. This is what is implied in being a saint, a child of God. He or she who is seeking for an earthly portion, has little truck with the Most High. For my God will supply every genuine need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. Philippians 1:19. That is what it means to have God as your inheritance.

But it goes two ways, for I read that "The LORD's portion is his people, Jacob is his allotted heritage". Are you happy and complete in your Lord? And is He satisfied with you? We have no concrete way of answering this question, vital as it may be but the more we know of God and the more closely we live with and in Him the more we identify with Him, the more we appreciate, the more clearly the Holy Spirit communes with our spirit, that we are the sons of God, not in fact only but also in application. Romans 8:12-17.

Notice too, that here our text calls God's people, Jacob. Jacob, the second of twins was born holding Esau, his brother's heel. This is a wrestler's grip. Therefore he was named Jacob meaning a supplanter, a word meaning one who superceded, one who replaces.

So Jacob, true to his name, took the birthright, the heritage from his brother, claiming for himself, that which was traditional in that society, the right of the first born, the heritage of blessings of almighty God for that family. Genesis 25:27-34.

This dealt with Esau's claim, but the striving with God for His recognition, approval and cooperation was yet to come, and it did come in Genesis 32:24-29. There the story is told of Jacob wrestling with God, all night in an extended encounter, until first light of a new day (That symbolism is significant). The event was the physical outcome of Jacob's spiritual ambition for the blessing, the heritage of God.

I know men who being called of God to a particular service in His name, have experienced a similar struggle of surrender which may last for some days where all else is put aside until their surrender is completed. In reading the biographical records of great and powerful men of God there came into their lives an event that is the counterpart of Jacob's hold upon the presence and enabling of God. It seems that power and enabling of God for useful service must be won in a spiritual battle, a wrestling with God. The power and heritage of God does not come to a man with a seminary course, as necessary as that may be for effective presentation, but with winning power of God in the place of prevailing prayer.

"Your name will no longer be called Jacob, (which means "a twister - a cheat,") but Israel (which means "Striven with God and prevailed.")

Thus it is that the LORD's portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage.

### **We are the Lord's by the Lord's Choice**

As we read further the story of Jacob, we gather the impression that all this occurred by the will and choice of Jacob, and certainly the Lord chooses those who choose Him. Scripture tells us that we are His by His choice. It is nevertheless also true that the Lord does not normally choose those who have no or little time for Him.

Ephesians one tells us that "He chose us in him before the foundation of the world." That does not mean that I had little to do with it, but only because the choice had already been made. I remember telling Doreen, after we had met casually on three previous occasions, that I would like to see more of her. She told me that she already had that idea. Read Ephesians 1:3-14. It tells us that He chose us before we ever could know Him and He set about to do everything necessary to bring that relationship into being

### **We are the Lord's at the Lord's Cost.**

Verse seven of this passage tells us that God paid the cost of our redemption by the shedding of the blood of His Son, and by this made us fit to stand in His presence and share eternity with Him. My redemption cost God the price of the life of His Son. That is the value that He places upon the soul of one of His creatures. And then

## **We are His by Choice.**

To choose means - 'not this but that'. It means that for Him and it means that for us.

'But God's firm foundation stands, bearing this seal: "The Lord knows those who are his," and, "Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity." ' 2 Timothy 2:19.

We cannot have a bit of this world together with a bit of the next. There is a choice

"if anyone cleanses himself from what is dishonourable, he will be a vessel for honourable use, set apart as holy, useful to the master of the house, ready for every good work." 1 Timothy 2:21.

There is more to it than simple choosing the best:

## **We are His by Right.**

He is, He was and He always will be, God, and as God also Sovereign. As Sovereign He is the Creator and the planner, the designer, the engineer, the sustainer of this world. He does not rely on or remotely need the International Panel for Climate Change to tell Him what to do. He has all things in perfect control.

He in His stride planned my life and yours too. We simply need to acknowledge Him and walk with Him in holiness day by day. That which the Lord said to Israel in Hosea's day, He says to us in our day too, if we follow them. (Chapter 4:- Check it out.) Are not the sins of Hosea's day also a summary of the sins we read about in today's newspapers?

## **We are His by Inheritance.**

The Scripture discussion on inheritance is as much part of the New Testament as of the Old.

It was Paul's prayer, in part, that the Ephesian Christians may be vitally aware of "what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints." Ephesians 1:18b.

F B Meyer writes: The source of all we are, and have, and hope to be, so far as salvation is concerned, is the will of God for us; but the stream flows to us through our Lord, and the end to which all things are moving is the summing-up of all in Christ. As He was the Alpha, so He will be the Omega. . . . We are stamped with the likeness of Christ and so kept inviolate among all the vicissitudes of life.

From "Through the Bible, Day by Day." (In the Public Domain.)

Thus I am bound to Him and He to me.

'My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.'  
Psalm 73:26

Bible quotations are from  
the English Standard Version.

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Conclude with Hymn 587, red book.

"God of our fathers Whose almighty hand  
leads forth in beauty all the starry band  
of shining worlds in splendour through the skies  
our grateful songs before Thy throne arise.

Thy love divine has lead us in the past.  
In this free land by Thee our lot is cast.  
Be Thou our ruler, guardian, guide and stay  
Thy Word our law, Thy paths our chosen way.

From wars alarms, from deadly pestilence  
be Thy strong arm our ever sure defense.  
Thy true religion in our hearts increase  
Thy bounteous goodness nourish us in peace.

Refresh Thy people on their toilsome way.  
Lead us from night to never ending day.  
Fill all our lives with love and grace divine  
and glory, laud, and praise be ever Thine."

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To the only Wise God be glory for ever more through  
Jesus Christ the anointed one.  
May our peace-giving God be with you all. Amen.

(Rom. 16:27 and 15:33)

Response: (If you are with others, look at them as you sing this. If you are not, then just picture some of the ones that you care about in your minds.)  
"May God's blessings surround you each day,  
as you trust Him, and walk in His way.  
May Gods presence within,  
guard and keep you from sin.  
Go in peace, go in joy, go in love."