



**The Church at Carrs Lane**  
Sunday Worship, 17<sup>th</sup> January 2021



**Welcome**

**Call to worship Psalm 139: 1-7, 17-20**

O Lord, you have searched me out  
and known me;  
you know my sitting down and my rising up;  
you discern my thoughts from afar.

**You mark out my journeys  
and my resting place  
and are acquainted with all my ways.**

For there is not a word on my tongue,  
but you, O Lord, know it altogether.

**You encompass me behind and before  
and lay your hand upon me.**

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,  
so high that I cannot attain it.

Where can I go then from your spirit?

Or where can I flee from your presence?

**If I climb up to heaven, you are there;  
if I make the grave my bed, you are there also.**

How deep are your counsels to me, O God!

**How great is the sum of them!**

If I count them, they are more in number than the sand,  
**and at the end, I am still in your presence.**

Search me out, O God, and know my heart;  
try me and examine my thoughts.

**See if there is any way of wickedness in me and lead me in the way everlasting.**

**Hymn 673 (StF) Will you come and follow me?**

- |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Will you come and follow me<br>if I but call your name?<br>Will you go where you don't know<br>and never be the same?<br>Will you let my love be shown,<br>will you let my name be known,<br>will you let my life be grown<br>in you and you in me? | 2 | Will you leave yourself behind<br>if I but call your name?<br>Will you care for cruel and kind<br>and never be the same?<br>Will you risk the hostile stare<br>should your life attract or scare?<br>Will you let me answer prayer<br>in you and you in me? |
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3 Will you let the blinded see  
if I but call your name?  
Will you set the prisoners free  
and never be the same?  
Will you kiss the leper clean,  
and do such as this unseen,  
and admit to what I mean  
in you and you in me?

4 Will you love the 'you' you hide  
if I but call your name?  
Will you quell the fear inside  
and never be the same?  
Will you use the faith you've found  
to reshape the world around,  
through my sight and touch and  
sound  
in you and you in me?

5 Lord, your summons echoes true  
when you but call my name.  
Let me turn and follow you  
and never be the same.  
In your company I'll go  
where your love and footsteps show.  
Thus I'll move and live and grow  
in you and you in me.

*John L. Bell (b. 1949) and Graham Maule (b. 1958)*  
Words: © 1987, WGRG, Iona Community,  
Glasgow G2 3DH Scotland.  
<[www.wgrg.co.uk](http://www.wgrg.co.uk)>

### **Prayer**

Gracious and powerful God,  
we gather together to worship and praise you,  
You speak to us in so many ways  
Help us to hear your voice and know it is you.

As we open ourselves to the encounter,  
Help us to hear your voice through Scripture, by the Spirit, through your creation and  
through others.

As we celebrate you,  
donate to us the capacity to look at your creation in wonder and awe,  
remind us of the joy that comes from being in your presence.

We come before you also to say sorry.  
When we are surrounded with too much noise  
and we fail to hear you  
When instead of stopping and listening,  
we lose ourselves into empty activities.  
We ask for forgiveness for all the times that we neglect your creation and your creatures  
by concentrating only on ourselves.

As we spend a few moments in personal reflection, we ask you to speak to us, to show us  
all for which we have to say sorry, but also show us a new way, your way.

Silence

Let us rejoice because in Jesus our Saviour we are forgiven,  
by pure grace our sins are forgiven and we are called beloved.

**Amen**

### **Reading: 1 Samuel 3:1-20**

**3** Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the LORD under Eli. The word of the LORD was rare in those days; visions were not widespread.

<sup>2</sup> At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his room; <sup>3</sup> the lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was. <sup>4</sup> Then the LORD called, 'Samuel! Samuel!' and

he said, 'Here I am!' <sup>5</sup> and ran to Eli, and said, 'Here I am, for you called me.' But he said, 'I did not call; lie down again.' So he went and lay down. <sup>6</sup> The LORD called again, 'Samuel!' Samuel got up and went to Eli, and said, 'Here I am, for you called me.' But he said, 'I did not call, my son; lie down again.' <sup>7</sup> Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, and the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him. <sup>8</sup> The LORD called Samuel again, a third time. And he got up and went to Eli, and said, 'Here I am, for you called me.' Then Eli perceived that the LORD was calling the boy. <sup>9</sup> Therefore Eli said to Samuel, 'Go, lie down; and if he calls you, you shall say, "Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening."' So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

<sup>10</sup> Now the LORD came and stood there, calling as before, 'Samuel! Samuel!' And Samuel said, 'Speak, for your servant is listening.' <sup>11</sup> Then the LORD said to Samuel, 'See, I am about to do something in Israel that will make both ears of anyone who hears of it tingle. <sup>12</sup> On that day I will fulfil against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. <sup>13</sup> For I have told him that I am about to punish his house for ever, for the iniquity that he knew, because his sons were blaspheming God, and he did not restrain them. <sup>14</sup> Therefore I swear to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be expiated by sacrifice or offering for ever.'

<sup>15</sup> Samuel lay there until morning; then he opened the doors of the house of the LORD. Samuel was afraid to tell the vision to Eli. <sup>16</sup> But Eli called Samuel and said, 'Samuel, my son.' He said, 'Here I am.' <sup>17</sup> Eli said, 'What was it that he told you? Do not hide it from me. May God do so to you and more also, if you hide anything from me of all that he told you.' <sup>18</sup> So Samuel told him everything and hid nothing from him. Then he said, 'It is the LORD; let him do what seems good to him.'

<sup>19</sup> As Samuel grew up, the LORD was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground. <sup>20</sup> And all Israel from Dan to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was a trustworthy prophet of the LORD.

## Sermon

### Prayers of Intercession

Calling God.

You call us to follow you.

As we seek to follow your example, we bring our prayers of concern today.

We pray for Christians everywhere who have heard your call and answered.

For those who are new in faith, full of excitement and the joy of following you.

For mature Christians whose lives are sustained and guided by you.

For Christians who live in difficult times and face persecution because they follow you.

Calling God, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the needs of the world. For justice among the nations and we remember all who suffer under despotic regimes, under grinding poverty and all kinds of prejudice.

In this time of global pandemic, we hold before you the peoples of the world who all face the anxieties and tragedies of the virus. Give wisdom to our leaders and the will to share the vaccine among all countries. Give strength and courage and inspiration to all who give care and hope and kindness.

Calling God, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for your Church here at Carrs Lane. We pray for the Ministers and leaders of the Church, for the members and friends. We are living in difficult times and we ask for your guidance as to how we should continue your mission in the centre of Birmingham. We remember all who are missing the fellowship and joy of worshipping you together in our church building.

Calling God, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for our family and friends, those who are dear to us and those we cannot meet, for all who are in our thoughts and prayers this morning. In a time of quiet we name them in our hearts.....

We remember before you our loved ones who have died and give thanks for their lives and all they have meant to us.

We pray for ourselves, that we will hear your call renewed again and answer with glad and faithful hearts.

Calling God, **hear our prayer.**

In Jesus' name we pray, **Amen.**

### ***Hymn StF 545 Be Thou my vision***

1 Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart,  
be all else but naught to me, save that  
thou art ;  
be thou my best thought in the day and  
the night,  
both waking and sleeping, thy presence  
my light.

2 Be thou my wisdom, be thou my true  
word,  
be thou ever with me, and I with thee,  
Lord ;  
be thou my great Father, thy child let  
me be ;  
be thou in me dwelling, and I one with  
thee.

3 Be thou my breastplate, my sword for  
the fight ;  
be thou my whole armour, be thou my  
true might ;  
be thou my soul's shelter, be thou my  
strong tower :  
O raise thou me heavenward, great  
Power of my power.

4 Riches I heed not, nor earth's empty  
praise :  
be thou mine inheritance now and  
always ;  
be thou and thou only the first in my  
heart :  
O Sovereign of heaven, my treasure  
thou art.

5 High King of heaven, thou heaven's  
bright Sun,  
O grant me its joys after victory is won ;  
Great Heart of my own heart, whatever  
befall,  
still be thou my vision, O Ruler of all.

*Irish, 8th century*  
*translated by Mary Elizabeth Byrne (1880–*  
*1931)*  
*versified by Eleanor Henrietta Hull (1860–*  
*1935) (alt.)*

### **Benediction**

Holy God, may we hear your voice  
In the stillness of night, in clatter of day  
You call us, and we respond,  
Here I am!  
May we follow you and  
May we love as you love.

written by Terri, and posted on the  
***RevGalBlogPals*** blog.  
<http://revgalblogpals.blogspot.com/>

You speak in unexpected places,  
and with unexpected voices, God.  
And we aren't always sure how to listen.  
We aren't always sure who to listen to.  
We aren't always sure if we're really  
hearing you.

Be blunt with us, please. Be clear.  
Give us the challenge  
of loving you,  
of loving the other,  
of loving ourselves.  
And help us to live it out!

written by Richard Bott, and posted on ***Sharing Liturgy.***  
<http://liturgy.richardbott.com/>

### **Opening music, closing music and hymns played by Tim Batty**

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