

ARUSHA COMMUNITY CHURCH (ACC)

SUNDAY 16th August. 2020

Theme: The Son of Man came to Seek and Save the Lost

ORDER OF SERVICE

1. GATHERING:

Welcome: Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, greetings in the mighty name of our Lord Jesus Christ, We are delighted to welcome you to this Sunday service, Its my hope that by God's grace you are fine and continuing with your life trusting In the Lord our God.

Opening hymn: Let's sing together Mission Praise Hymn number 685

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pp7HZ1My3II>

*Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return,
And come with singing to Zion
And everlasting joy shall be upon their heads*2
They shall obtain gladness and joy,
and sorrow and mourning shall flee away
Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return,
and come with singing to Zion
and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads.*

Confession of sin: All as sheep we have fall short of God's glory, let us confess our sings

ALL: *Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent, for the sake of your Son Jesus Chris, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.*

A leader: *God is merciful, and has given His Son Jesus Christ to die for us, for His sake God forgives all our sins. To all who believes in Jesus Christ, He gives power to become children of God, and gives them his Holy Spirit.*

Hymn: Mission Praise 1019 "You are my all in all"

<https://youtu.be/4keCdusv9jA>

1. You are my strength when I am weak,
You are the treasure that I seek,
You are my all in all;
Seeking You as precious jewel,
Lord, to give up I'd be a fool,
You are my all in all.
Jesus Lamb of God,
Worthy is Your name;
Jesus lamb of God,
Worthy is your name.
2. Taking my sin, my cross, my shame,
Rising again, I bless your name,
You are my all in all;
When I fall down you pick me up,
When I am dry you fill my cup,
You are my all in all.
Jesus, Lamb of God.....

2. THE WORD

Psalm.67

Al leader: Lets read the Psalm 67 together

1. May God be gracious to us and bless us make his face shine on us—^[b]
² so that your ways may be known on earth, your salvation among all nations.
- ³ May the peoples praise you, God; may all the peoples praise you.
- ⁴ May the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you rule the peoples with equity
and guide the nations of the earth.
- ⁵ May the peoples praise you, God; may all the peoples praise you.

First reading: Isaiah 56:1-6,

1. This is what the LORD says: “Maintain justice and do what is right, for my salvation is close at hand and my righteousness will soon be revealed.

2 Blessed is the one who does this— the person who holds it fast, who keeps the Sabbath without desecrating it, and keeps their hands from doing any evil.”

3 Let no foreigner who is bound to the LORD say, “The LORD will surely exclude me from his people.” And let no eunuch complain, “I am only a dry tree.”

4 For this is what the LORD says: “To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths, who choose what pleases me and hold fast to my covenant—

5 to them I will give within my temple and its walls a memorial and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that will endure forever.

6 And foreigners who bind themselves to the LORD to minister to him, to love the name of the LORD, and to be his servants, all who keep the Sabbath without desecrating it and who hold fast to my covenant

Second reading: Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32

1. I ask then did God reject his people? May it never be! For I also am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. 2a God did not reject his people, which he foreknew.

29 For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. 30 For as you in time past were disobedient to God, but now have obtained mercy by their disobedience, 31 even so these also have now been disobedient, that by the mercy shown to you they may also obtain mercy. 32 For God has shut up all to disobedience, that he might have mercy on all.

Sermon hymn: MP 544 “Open my eyes that I may see!”.

Sermon: Mike Taylor Lk 19:1–10

1. He entered Jericho and was passing through.² And behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector and was rich.³ And he was seeking to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was small in stature.⁴ So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was about to pass that way.⁵ And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today.”⁶ So he hurried and came down and received him joyfully.⁷ And when they saw it, they all grumbled, “He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner.”⁸ And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, “Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold.”⁹ And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham.¹⁰ For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”

The Son of Man came to Seek and Save the Lost

I think many of us love a lost and found story.

A few weeks ago, a young boy, William Callaghan was lost 2 nights in the bush in Australia. When he was found, the policewoman in charge said reuniting him with his parents was the highlight of her career.

One Friday night at our Bible college in Arusha, just settling back after a long week I got a call. One of the college cows had gone missing! Apparently some other guy was taking his cows up the road past our college, and one of our cows had got caught up and gone with them. So we jumped in my car with a couple of students and Kimu, the

guy who works at college looking after the cows. We rushed up the street to the first corner - and stopped to ask those there. Did you see some cows? Which way did they go? Off we went again, zooming along the road til the next corner. Luckily there were some folks here as well. Did you see some cows? Which way did they go? Off we went again, bumpy dirt roads now. Across the old railway line and around the corner. Another intersection. No one here. Out they all pile to have a look of the hoof prints. I can't believe it! These are all city guys. They've never tracked anything in their lives. This has gone on too long.

Anyway, off we go again - they've gone straight ahead apparently. We speed off around the curves, past the army base, climbing the ridge around the lake. And, woah!, can you believe it, some cows up ahead. We catch up to them and the guys jump out while I turn the car around and wait. A couple of minutes pass and I'm told, the cow's not here. What?! Is it the right bunch? Yep. What happened? The guy said the cow never came. he chased it off. What!?? We ring the college and they send someone to look in the cow sheds. And sure enough, there he was, safe and sound, in his shed, back at college!

Today's passage is another lost and found story. It's actually a well known Bible passage. It's featured in many children's Bibles. Short Zacchaeus climbs a tree to see Jesus. It's a story used often to teach repentance. But its mainly about God's grace Its about how God in his abundant love pursues and rescues imperfect and unworthy people. Or, as it says in v 10 ... The son of man — Jesus — came to seek and save the lost. 1 Let's have a look. Zacchaeus is lost. The first thing we see in the story is that Zacchaeus is lost.

Lk 19:1–4

Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. 2 A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. 3 He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short he could not see over the crowd. 4 So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.

Poor old Zaccheus wanted to see Jesus but couldn't because he was short. So he runs ahead and climbs a tree so that when Jesus comes past he could have a look. The tree not only gave him a good vantage point but also would have kept him pretty well hidden. He could have a look at who Jesus was without being noticed himself. Maybe Zaccheus felt guilty. There's a sense here that the crowd was deliberately keeping Zaccheus from getting a look. He was small in height, and small in their opinion. Zaccheus was a tax collector. Although a Jew, Zaccheus worked for the Roman Empire collecting tolls. He took taxes from his own people and gave it to the Colonial masters. Oh and he kept some for himself. These tax collectors were despised by the Jews and seen as thieves, sinners and traitors. They were social outcasts.

It's hard for us to a get a sense of this, especially if you've read the Bible before. I'm sure as I have you have heard of some charities and orphanages who have misused the trust placed in them. The director has taken the donated money and used it for

himself, or even used the orphanage as a profit making business. We are rightly outraged and disgusted by these sorts of people. I think that helps us understand how tax collectors were considered in Israel at Jesus' time. It's no surprise that the crowd had a small opinion of him. Though outwardly successful as a chief government official and rich, Zaccheus, is in fact, lost.

The thing about being lost is that you are stuck. Zaccheus was unable to see Jesus even though he wanted to. He was lost. So I want to pause here and ask what it means to be lost. It wasn't his wealth or his political alliances that made Zaccheus lost, Nor was it how the crowd saw him, What made him lost is something deeper, something within him: his basic stance towards the world and away from God, his desire for autonomy and self rule, Zaccheus was lost because he had turned from God and towards his own self. In the end he was stuck , and unable to get himself free, unable to see Jesus,

Many people today live with this basic stance towards the world and away from God. Outwardly perhaps they seem successful, perhaps not, but according to the Bible, they are lost. Maybe you know someone like this. Maybe you feel this describes you. Often the lost are not who we'd think. We can't tell by physical appearance or life situation. What matters is where they are with God. It's important that we respect and show kindness to all people. It's important that we don't judge by appearances, but seek to genuinely know people. Many people are lost, But the good news is that Jesus has come to find them.

The second thing we see in this story is that Zaccheus is found. Jesus finds Zaccheus and shows him grace.

Lk 19:5-6

5 When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today." 6 So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly.

Interestingly although its Zaccheus who wants to see Jesus, and who goes out of his way to do so, its actually Jesus who sees him. Did you notice that in v.5? how it was Jesus who looked up and spoke—and remember that Zaccheus was probably partly concealed in the tree and trying not to be noticed. Jesus stops, looks up, and sees Zaccheus. Jesus reaches out to him. Jesus speaks to him — and, amazingly, knows his name. This is no chance encounter. Jesus does not just stop in surprise because someone had gone over the top. No. Jesus was looking for him. Jesus intentionally went through Jericho in order to find Zaccheus, to embrace him and to stay with him. This is quite astonishing. And more so when we recall how Zaccheus was imperfect and unworthy and unloved.

The story ends with Jesus' words to the crowd, v.10 that he, the Son of Man, has come to seek and save the lost. That word seek is the same word used of Zaccheus in v. 3, that he was seeking to see Jesus. Zaccheus was seeking, but he was lost, ashamed and unable. It took Jesus to seek him and to find him. Perhaps this is one of the most important ways in which the message of Jesus is different to so many other religions

and worldviews. Elsewhere we are encouraged to seek out god, strive for inner peace or reach out for more and better, but in Jesus God himself comes to us, intentionally seeking out imperfect, unloved and unworthy people, seeking them out by name.

The good shepherd has come to those who are lost. He comes because they are lost. Amazing! Quite simply God cares for those who are lost. An astonishing God and an amazing message of extravagant love and carefree compassion! Jesus went through Jericho intentionally to find and embrace this unworthy and imperfect lost person.

The good news of the gospel is that although Zaccheus was unworthy, unloved and imperfect, Jesus was for him. Jesus came for lost people like him. He came to find them and bring the new life by his death on the cross. This good news is for you and for your friends. Because Jesus is for the lost, for the unworthy, the unloved, and the imperfect. The Scandal of Grace But maybe this message doesn't sit quite right. Many there that day didn't like what Jesus did. The crowd complain and mutter.

Lk 19:7 7

All the people saw this and began to mutter, "He has gone to be the guest of a sinner."

We've spent the last few months doing school at home with our kids. I don't think we are alone in finding it quite the challenge. One of our children has been rather testing. Each day we exhaust ourselves struggling to get her to do her work. Pleading, cajoling, threatening, and of course, the respite of many of us who are weak, bribing. And in the end she's playing with some new soft toy for basically doing what the rest of our kids did without a problem. That's not really fair. The others worked well but the one who was a nightmare is rewarded.

We see that sort of thing all the time don't we? Surely you've felt overlooked when someone else undeserving is celebrated or gets off scot free. I reckon we can get the complaints of the crowd here, especially if we remember that the tax collector is like that dodgy CEO stealing from needy kids. Why him? why does Jesus choose to stay at HIS place? This word mutter, or grumble, is a loaded word in the Bible. Back in Moses' time, after God rescued the people from slavery in Egypt, the people muttered against Moses time and time again. They even said 'better if we'd died in Egypt than to be here with you'. The complaining was against God's chosen leader and the steps that God was taking to rescue his people. They preferred their own way, even if it meant slavery and death. So too here, the people complain and mutter against God's chosen leader, Jesus, and what God is doing to save. How dare he lodge with sinners! How dare he eat with tax collectors! How could he show mercy and compassion to people who are so bad.

Jesus' love cuts across those attitudes and exposes them as heartless. Imperfect and unworthy he may be, a sinner and a traitor, but Zaccheus is still valued in God's sight. And so v. 9 ... 9 Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because

this man, too, is a son of Abraham. This one too, this one too, despite his actions and poor decisions, even though he is lost, God sees him and cares.

Actually, Its because Zaccheus was lost, because he was imperfect and unworthy that Jesus went to find him. The Bible shows that God is so full of mercy and compassion and grace that he seeks out lost, wicked and sinful people, outcasts and traitors, in order to rescue them. He doesn't wait for them. He actually seeks them out! What do you think of a God like that? If we recognise our own weakness, wrongdoing and lostness, then like Zaccheus, I think we'll see it as good news of great joy. But, if like many of the crowd, we count ourselves as okay, as righteous, if we are resting on our laurels, content with our moral goodness, then maybe it makes us uncomfortable? Are you on board with a God who's deliberating going out in the world to forgive evil people and bring into his kingdom people who don't deserve it? Let's not write anyone off, but remember that despite their life decisions, each person is of immense value. Since God is full of compassion, Wouldn't it be great if we too had that same attitude of generosity and kindness to all and especially to the lost, imperfect and unworthy. to care and value and love and to see them found!

Our last point then, is that Jesus still seeks and saves the lost. By his death on the cross for our sins Jesus won forgiveness for all who trust in him. He rose again in order to bring this forgiveness to people in every place. He does that from heaven above through his people here on earth. This is what he promised in Matthew 28 after he had risen from the dead. He promised to be with his people always.

Mt 28:18–20.

18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

This means that if you are a follower of Jesus, As you love your neighbour, And reach out to them in compassion, and share the good news of his victory over sin and death on the cross, As you do that, Jesus is present with you and through you he is seeking and saving the lost. Amazing! This is why we can confidently be involved in mission at home, in our community, and in every place. We can confidently pray, we can boldly go, we can give extravagantly, and we can care. Actually care for people who are lost. Maybe we don't always know the best way to help them, but we can care — we must care, because Jesus came to seek and save the lost. And best of all we have the message of Jesus, a message which saves everyone who believes it, no matter who they are, what they've done or what's in their past. It saves and gives new life, hope and freedom. That's why Katie and I and our four kids have given up our comfort, family and lives in Australia and relocated to Tanzania. In Tanzania we serve the local church training pastors. There are many challenges, tears and frustrations, but we stay because we believe that in every place Jesus is intentionally seeking lost people and saving them. People lost in witchcraft, lost in greed, lost in self-rule, lost in ambition, lost

in oppression and need, lost in sin and false teaching: people who are lost. Jesus is present with his people in every place and through them he seeks out lost people in order to save. He shows extravagant love and carefree compassion! What an astonishing God and what amazing grace!

3. Communion service

Hymn: MP. 1061 "Hungry I come to you"

<https://youtu.be/bKcqJzi6WBU?t=274>

1. Hungry I come to You
For I know You satisfy
I am empty but I know
Your love does not run dry
So I wait for You
So I wait for You
*I am fallen on my knees
Offering all my needs
Jesus, You're all
This heart is living for,*
2. Broken I run to You
For Your arms are open wide
I am weary but I know Your touch
Restores my life
So I wait for You
So I wait for You
*I am fallen on my knees
Offering all my needs
Jesus You're all
This heart is living for,*
3. Hungry I come to You
For I know You satisfy
I am empty but I know
Your love does not run dry

*I am fallen on my knees
Offering all my needs
Jesus, You're all
This heart is living for,*

Holy Communion: Led by service leader

Let us pray. Blessed are you, Lord of heaven and earth. In mercy for our fallen world, you gave your only Son, that all those who believe in him should not perish but have eternal life. We give

thanks to you for the salvation you have prepared for us through Jesus Christ. Send now your Holy Spirit into our hearts, that we may receive our Lord with a living faith as he comes to us in his Holy Supper.

ALL: **Amen. Come Lord Jesus.**

LEADER: In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord took bread and gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat: this is my body, given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." Again, after supper, he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this in remembrance of me."

ALL: **Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name; your kingdom come; your will be done, on earth as it is 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 yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

Distribution of bread and wine

May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and keep you in his grace.

ALL: **Amen.**

LEADER: Let us pray:

ALL: **We give thanks, Almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life; and we pray that in your mercy you would strengthen us, through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Announcements

Please fill in any announcements

Sending Hymn: MP 59 Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine.

<https://youtu.be/rDeiy9-t2GE?list=TLPQMTEwODlwMjDh5pg7rkOPDg>

1. Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine! O what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God, Born of his Spirit, washed in his blood.
This is my story, this is my song, Praising my Savior all the day long; This is my story, this is my song, Praising my Savior all the day long.
2. Perfect submission, perfect delight, Visions of rapture now burst on my sight;
Angels descending bring from above Echoes of mercy, whispers of love.
This is my story,.....
3. This is my story, this is my song, Praising my Savior all the day long;
This is my story, this is my song, Praising my Savior all the day long
This is my story,

Leader : Go in peace and serve the Lord.