



Mark's gospel tells of a woman who, for 12 years, had been haemorrhaging, and was healed by Jesus when she touched the bottom of his coat. Twelve years of being isolated from her community as, due to her ailment, she was deemed to be unclean.

Our inconvenience may seem trivial by comparison, but it highlights how wonderful her healing was – not just physically, but in restoring her ability to mix with others after such a long time!

Post-coronavirus many aspects of society may well change and, as people perhaps re-evaluate their working lives. As a church we, too, need to 'rethink' and consider how to extend God's kingdom in our locality. Please make sure you complete our survey – to help us plan our activities in church, as new guidance is released.

Song

You call me out upon the waters
The great unknown where feet may fail
And there I find You in the mystery
In oceans deep
My faith will stand

And I will call upon Your name
And keep my eyes above the waves
When oceans rise, my soul will rest in Your
embrace
For I am Yours and You are mine

Your grace abounds in deepest waters
Your sovereign hand
Will be my guide
Where feet may fail and fear surrounds me
You've never failed and You won't start now

So I will call upon Your name
And keep my eyes above the waves
When oceans rise, my soul will rest in Your
embrace
For I am Yours and You are mine

Spirit lead me where my trust is without
borders
Let me walk upon the waters
Wherever You would call me

Take me deeper than my feet could ever
wander

And my faith will be made stronger
In the presence of my Saviour

Joel Houston | Matt Crocker | Salomon Ligthelm
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Teaching Ruth 4

Which of the main characters challenge you most, to be more like them ?

Communion

Pause as we take bread and wine together and reflect on His sacrifice

Luke 22:19-20

And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you."



Update from Helen Cobbold

- Africa as a continent had a swift response to the pandemic and closed borders quickly (this was starting while I was visiting a translation in Angola, so the return journey was quite different to the first).
- SA went into lock down on 27 March, where you could only go outside for essential travel, wearing a mask. Houses aren't open along the street like in the UK; most houses and apartments are in estates and complexes with security entrances. All visitor entrances were closed, and people weren't allowed to move around within their estates or complexes because of social distancing. I was in an apartment in a complex with lots of apartments close together, so basically only went out the front door 4-5 times in 2 months (most of those to take trash out and be able to put my feet on some grass).
- The country has many townships and unofficial settlements, which are packed close together. Due to lock down, all little businesses had to stop and people living in poor conditions had no income. The money the government could provide was minimal so charities and churches set up poles with water and soap distributed between the houses and LOTS of food parcels have gone out. The government sent food parcels too, but a lot of their trucks were hijacked by large crowds who grabbed what they could.
- Restrictions have been gradually eased recently and we've been told that soon they will lift restrictions even more.
- There was an epidemic of gender-based violence in the country before the pandemic, that the government were targeting. It's got worse as lock down lifts so they are trying to make a way for women to go back to work, get income and be more supported and independent.
- The Wycliffe offices have opened, but you can only have up to 1/3 of the staff in, and each one needs a permit. So, we have 2 staff back in the office right now. I hope to start going back in July or August.
- The amount of cases has been low compared to the rest of the world, but it's increasing as restrictions lift - we haven't reached our peak yet. The Western Cape has been worst hit (where Cape Town is). I'm up in Gauteng (where Johannesburg and Pretoria are) which is another hot-spot, but we've had a lot fewer deaths compared to cases than other provinces.
- Overall, we're at 83,890 cases, and 1,737 deaths, and rising. Please pray that the preparations in hospitals for the rising cases will be enough, for safety in work places and schools as things reopen, for support for those struggling in poor conditions, and for the women and children of the country!

Prayer

Thank you, God, for the work being done by Wycliffe across South Africa.

Thank you for the quick response which the country had to the pandemic, after giving Helen a safe journey back from Angola.

We pray for the small businesses across South Africa which had to stop and the lack of income which this meant for so many people.

Thank you God, for the work being done by charities and churches to help those who are really struggling right now, and we pray for this to continue and to increase.

Some government food parcels were hijacked by large crowds, and we pray that those who lost out because of this would know your goodness. In her message, Helen refers to an epidemic of violence against women at the start of lock down, and we want to pray that all those who are victims of this injustice will feel your goodness, your protection as they leave lock down and enter the working world again.

The Wycliffe offices have opened, but not to max capacity. And so we pray that the crucial work which we know they provide, will be up and running to max capacity soon again.

We pray for the work being done in hospitals across South Africa, and they continue to treat and work with patients.

We pray too for protection in work places in schools across the country, and support all those living in the poorest conditions.

In Romans 12 v2 it says "for your will alone, lives are transformed and minds made new"

Thank you for all that Helen is doing to ensure this is carried out in S Africa. Bless her and be with her. Show your love and bless all of South Africa at this time, in Jesus name. Amen

Song

How deep the Father's love for us,
How vast beyond all measure,
That He should give His only Son
To make a wretch His treasure.
How great the pain of searing loss –
The Father turns His face away,
As wounds which mar the Chosen One
Bring many sons to glory.

Behold the man upon a cross,
My sin upon His shoulders;
Ashamed, I hear my mocking voice
Call out among the scoffers.
It was my sin that held Him there
Until it was accomplished;
His dying breath has brought me life –
I know that it is finished.

I will not boast in anything,
No gifts, no power, no wisdom;
But I will boast in Jesus Christ,
His death and resurrection.
Why should I gain from His reward?
I cannot give an answer;
But this I know with all my heart –
His wounds have paid my ransom.

Stuart Townend

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God's love surround you, God's Spirit guide you,
God's whisper cheer you, God's peace calm you,
God's shield protect you, God's wisdom arm you,
wherever God may lead you.