



LENT 5 – SUNDAY 21ST MARCH 2021

Church is open today for private prayer only, between 10 and 11am and but we will open for our Palm Sunday service next week. If you prefer not to come into church to worship, here below we have an outline of our service for you to follow at home. Choose a quiet reflective space and to make it more meaningful have a cross, bible and candle to make your sacred space.



INTRODUCTION

We opened our doors last week for private prayer and we had eleven people who came to church, it was lovely to see them and our safety measures seemed to work well.

We will do the same next week and then on the 28th March, it is Palm Sunday and Rev Robin Usher is taking our communion service, we have our palm crosses and we will ensure those who are unable or not ready to join us will receive them in via Chris, Jo and the communications team.

During Holy week there will be a service every day, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday there will be a service of Holy Communion at Christ Church Walmsley each morning, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday there will be a service at 10am here at St. Maxentius and then obviously Easter Sunday will be at 9.30. Nearer the time, we will have to ask who is intending coming so we can ensure all Covid safety procedures are adhered to. A list will be coming to you of all the team services during Holy week so you can choose which are best for you.

This year the windows for Easter will be decorated by Jo, Joyce and myself to stay in line with Covid regulations.

It was lovely to see Wendy reading prayers on behalf of St. Maxentius Mothers Union and also some of our children's work and photos during the team service on line last week. I hope all the ladies got their bookmark gift from our own MU and I'm sure if you didn't then they will be forthcoming.

Our reflection today is by Rev Chris Jamieson from St. Peter's, many thanks Chris. Intercessions are by myself.

Jan B

PRAYERS OF PREPARATION

God is spirit – **Let us worship him in spirit and truth**

The Lord is with us – **Let us praise his name together**

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYERS OF PENITENCE



Our Lord Jesus Christ said:

The first commandment is this: “Hear O Israel the Lord our God is the only Lord. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength”.

The second is this: “Love your neighbour as yourself.” There is no other commandment greater than these. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. **Amen Lord have mercy.**

The Spirit of the Lord fills the world and knows our every word and deed. Let us then open ourselves to the Lord and confess our sins in penitence and faith.

Lord God, we have sinned against you; we have done evil in your sight. We are sorry and repent. Have mercy on us according to your love. Wash away our wrongdoing and cleanse us from our sin. Renew a right spirit within us and restore us to the joy of your salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

KYRIE ELEISION



Lord have mercy. **Lord have mercy.**

Christ have mercy. **Christ have mercy.**

Lord have mercy. **Christ have mercy.**

THE COLLECT

Most merciful God, who by the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ delivered and saved the world: grant that by faith in him who suffered on the cross we may triumph in the power of his victory; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

THE OLD TESTAMENT READING - JEREMIAH 31, 31-34

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, ‘Know the LORD’, for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

This is the word of the Lord – **Thanks be to God**

THE NEW TESTAMENT READING - HEBREWS 5, 5-10

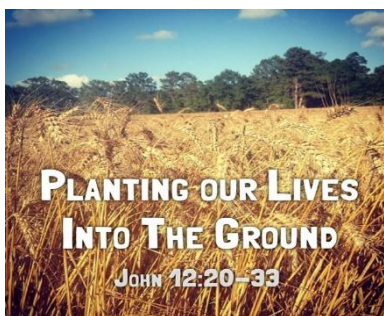
So also Christ did not glorify himself in becoming a high priest, but was appointed by the one who said to him, ‘You are my Son, today I have begotten you’; as he says also in another place, ‘You are a priest for ever, according to the order of Melchizedek.’

In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him, having been designated by God a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

This is the word of the Lord – **Thanks be to God**

THE GOSPEL - JOHN 12, 20-33

Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory. Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John. **Glory to you O Lord.**



Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, ‘Sir, we wish to see Jesus.’ Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. Jesus answered them, ‘The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honour.

‘Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—“Father, save me from this hour”? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name.’ Then a voice came from heaven, ‘I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.’ The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, ‘An angel has spoken to him.’ Jesus answered, ‘This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. Now is the judgement of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.’ He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.

This is the Gospel of the Lord – **Praise to you O Christ.**

REFLECTION

Our Gospel reading this morning tells of some Greeks who say that they want to see Jesus. It is probable that what they really wanted was the chance for a lengthy and an in depth discussion with Jesus. It is possible they were confused by the multitude of Greek and other pagan religions and were attracted by the Monotheism of Judaism and what they had heard about the teachings of Jesus. They want to find out more but are unsure of how to go about this. They approach Philip, who could probably speak Greek, and ask for his advice. Perhaps too, Philip wasn’t sure how to approach Jesus with a request from a group of Gentiles. He asks Andrew for help and together they take the request to Jesus.

The word of the Greeks to Philip always strike me as significant, a simple request, ‘Sir, we wish to see Jesus.’ This was a defining point in their lives: they were actively seeking to get to know Jesus. If only more people would make that simple request, if only more people would try to find out about the saving power and love of God.

Jesus was excited by the request from those outside of the Jewish religion and exclaimed that the time had come for his true identity to be revealed. He was to be glorified but not in the way the disciples expected but rather through crucifixion and resurrection. In this Jesus is moving from the ‘not yet’ to the ‘now’. He has frequently said, ‘my time has not yet come’ now he is saying the time is ripe, the time is ready.

He then goes on to explain that he must suffer and die before the fruit of the Spirit can be realised for all of humankind. He uses the illustration of a seed that needs to die before it can produce a harvest. Jesus was ready to give up everything to fulfil the purposes of God.

We too, need to be ready to ask the question raised by the Greeks; we too, need to say, ‘Sir, we wish to see Jesus.’ We too need to be prepared to plant the seed of our faith into the good soil of God’s love and trust him for the growth. Unless we plant the seed in faith, then God won’t be able to make it grow in us and so there will be no harvest. So when we ask the question, ‘Sir, we want to see Jesus’ we need to be ready to respond to what he is asking each of us to do with our lives.

All too often, we seek the comfort and safety of the familiar, of the places and activities where we feel secure. We look to our own needs and not the needs of

others. Jesus was prepared to give of his all. We too need to be ready to face conflict, to put ourselves out and to take risks for the sake of the gospel. Jesus was lifted up on the cross for all to see and so that all could be drawn to him. It is our responsibility to continue this 'lifting up' so that people can be drawn into the love of God. We have to be prepared to live life to the full for the sake of the Saviour; to make sure that Jesus is the centre of our Christian service. This can be costly; in order to bring about fruitfulness we need to live self-sacrificial lives, to face up to our inward struggles, to wrestle with our doubts and weaknesses and to trust continually in the saving power of God.

So as we approach Easter, let us like the Greeks of our Gospel reading, ask that we may truly see Jesus and then be ready to plant our seed for him so that God can make it grow. Amen.

Rev Chris Jamieson.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH



I believe in God Almighty creator of Heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again; ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

During the intercessions, we pray for the church, our country, our government, people in difficulty and those who have died. You can use your own prayers or if you *prefer here are some on today's theme.*



Blessed are you creator of life and joy. We give you thanks for the promise of eternal life offered through the death and resurrection of your Son, Jesus Christ. As we rejoice in the gift of this new day we seek to delight in you and in your great love. Blessed are you forever.

We give thanks to all who have helped us to grow in faith, for teachers and preachers, for our bishops Mark and David, for our clergy and lay ministers in the Turton Moorland team, for friends and relatives. Bless all who by their goodness show us your ways.

Lord in your mercy – **Hear our prayers**

We give thanks for explorers and inventors, for all who extend our experience of the world and its mysteries. We remember especially all who are involved in research and scientific health developments. We ask you to bless all who work in farming and agriculture, all who seek to provide us with food. Help us care for the hungry and the homeless.

Lord in your mercy – **Hear our prayers.**

We give thanks for those who regularly sacrifice their time and energies for us. We remember especially our parents and all who care for us. Lord, as we are loved, help us to show love to others. We ask your blessing on all who feel unwanted or lonely.

Lord in your mercy – **Hear our prayers**

We give thanks for all medical research, for the caring of doctors and nurses. We pray for all our emergency workers and those who risk their lives for others. Lord bless all who are ill, in pain or in danger with an awareness of your love and care. We pray for those personally known to us and especially today for Margaret Thexton, Ann Hall and Jonathon Bennett (add your own names here)

Lord in your mercy – **Hear our prayers**

Glory be to you O God, for through our Saviour Jesus Christ you have opened to us the way to eternal life. We rejoice in the fellowship of St. Maxentius, St Anne, St. Peter and all your saints and we remember before you our loved ones departed from us and those whose anniversaries fall at this time Gertrud Erna Parton, Andrew John Kitchen, Herbert E Shuttleworth.

Merciful father **accept these prayers, for the sake of your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen**

THE LORD'S PRAYER



Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as 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 the Kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

THE BLESSING

May Christ's holy, healing, enabling Spirit be with us and guide us on our way at every change and turn and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be with us all evermore.

Amen.

