



THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

SUNDAY 7th MARCH

Once again, we are not able to worship in church, but here below we have an outline of our service. Choose a quiet reflective space and to make it more meaningful have a cross, bible and candle to make your sacred space.



INTRODUCTION

Next week church will be open for private prayer between 10am and 11am, the same will happen the week after. On the 28th March, it is Palm Sunday and we will be open for worship for one service at 9.30. Robin is taking that service for us. There is no pressure to attend and we will still do our service at home and other online services so do keep in touch. If you are attending please can you remember to wear a mask at all times and adhere to the safety rules both inside and outside the building.

Some sad news that we mentioned last week, Doris Kilner passed away after a long struggle with her health. Doris was a strong member of the church being a PCC member, a long standing soprano in the choir, a key member of the Mothers Union and an organiser and font of all knowledge of church protocols and affairs., it was Doris' idea to decorate the windows in church for Harvest, Easter and Christmas and she used to coordinate this with the church organisations. She will be sadly missed and our thoughts and prayers go out to her and her family. Her funeral takes place on Wednesday.

Today's reflection has been written by Rev Canon Peter Reiss and the intercession prayers by Mark Pearson, thank to them both for their input.

Jan B.

PRAYER OF PREPARATION

We meet in the presence of God.

Who knows our needs, hears our cries, feels our pain and heals our wounds.

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 ELEISON

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

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

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

THE COLLECT

Almighty God, whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory before he was crucified: mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace;

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.

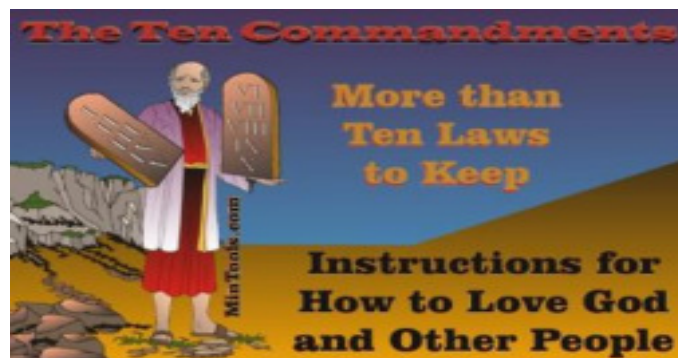
THE OLD TESTAMENT READING - EXODUS 20,1-7

Then God spoke all these words: I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me, but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.

You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not acquit anyone who misuses his name. Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. For six days you shall labour and do all your work. But the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it.

Honour your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you. You shall not murder. You shall not commit neighbour. You shall not covet your neighbour's house; you shall not covet your neighbour's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbour.

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



THE NEW TESTAMENT READING

CORINTHIANS 1, 18-25

For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, 'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.'

Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling-block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

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

THE GOSPEL

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.**

JOHN 2, 13-22

The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money-changers seated at their tables. Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. He told those who were selling the doves, 'Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a market-place!' His disciples remembered that it was written, 'Zeal for your house will consume me.' The Jews then said to him, 'What sign can you show us for doing this?' Jesus answered them, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.' The Jews then said, 'This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?' But he was speaking of the temple of his body. After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

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



REFLECTION

In John's Gospel the clearing / cleansing of the Temple is put near the beginning of the gospel, whereas in the other gospels it happens in the final week of Jesus' life, as Jesus enters Jerusalem.

In John's Gospel it comes after the wedding at Cana – and John wants us to understand in these two incidents who Jesus is and what this means. The two together define who Jesus is and the offer he makes. In the rest of the Gospel, we find people either accepting this or arguing and rejecting it.

Jesus is the one who offers the best wine – and who will drink the bitter wine to the dregs as he dies on the cross. Jesus is the one who is the new Temple, the new “place” where we find God, and the ultimate sacrifice as – again – we see on the Cross. There is invitation and challenge.

The Temple of Jesus' time was being grandly rebuilt by Herod – remember the Temple of Solomon was destroyed in 586BC and the one that Haggai and others built later was a much more modest building. Herod's new Temple was undoubtedly grand to look at, but the religious practices were corrupt, with money-making and advantage-taking being the order of the day.

2000 years later we may not get the significance of what Jesus was saying; Yes he was declaring that the religious practices had become corrupt – but, more fundamentally, he was saying that people now do not need to go through the temple to find God, that God is now present in the person of Jesus (and subsequently in the presence of his Spirit to all, wherever they are).

Protestants have sometimes taken this as a reason for not needing church gatherings, but Jesus is not offering us individualised tickets to heaven, but calling us to form and be the people of God and live out the signs of the Kingdom **as a people**, together, centred on him, led by him, constituted by him. We are now to be **a holy people**; we are to be a royal priesthood (as Peter puts it). It is not for a religious elite, but open to all. We are to gather around Jesus.

Covid has meant we cannot gather; it has kept people isolated; we have had to do our best despite. Christ is with us but we look for the time when we can gather again.

The vision of God's people gathered around Jesus is not a holy huddle but a dynamic movement, and always with outward-stretched arms, and a welcome for others. It is about invitation and welcome and service to the needy; it is about praise and joy and peace within and flowing out of the community; it is also about service and vulnerability not power and pomp. We don't always live this vision, sadly; and sometimes we fail badly. There is a challenge to us – are our churches, the buildings, the governance, the worship, ministry and mission rooted in Christ and showing his fruits, or have we lost our first love, become fearful and turned in on ourselves?

Revd Canon Peter Reiss

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH



Do you believe and trust in God the Father?

I believe in God, the Father almighty creator of heaven and earth.

Do you believe and trust in his Son Jesus Christ?

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by 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, he will come to judge the living and the dead.

Do you believe and trust in the Holy Spirit?

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

INTERCESSIONS

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.*



Everlasting God, be with us in this time of prayer, and help us to feel your presence. Mindful of the Commandments that you gave to Moses, we pray that you will be worshipped above all else, in our land and that we can, at all times, be given the strength to reject the idolatry of our secular world.

Lord in your mercy, Hear our Prayer

Faithful God, we pray for the church throughout the world and especially for our church in Bradshaw. We give thanks for all of the Clergy of the Turton Moorland Team and ask you to bless the work that they do to bring diversity to our worship.

Lord in your mercy, Hear our Prayer

Creator God, we pray for the governments of the world, that they may always seek for peaceful solutions in their dealings with other nations and rule their own countries with compassion and justice. We remember especially the people of Myanmar and also those who live in countries, which are blighted by famine. At this time of the worldwide Pandemic, we especially pray for all leaders, as they seek to

help to manage the challenges of the economic impact of the virus, in travel, manufacturing, hospitality or so many other industries.

Lord in your mercy, Hear our Prayer

Heavenly Father, we thank you for our families, friends and neighbours and for the people with whom we work or share our daily lives. We ask you to bless our children as they return to school. We pray that they will quickly settle back into the school environment. We also pray for their teachers and all who contribute to the learning experience and the running of schools.

Lord in your mercy, Hear our Prayer

Gracious God, we pray for all who are in pain or suffering at this time. We remember especially all who are suffering from mental stress. We pray for those taken into care and those who are a danger to themselves or to others. We pray for them and any we know who are in any kind of need at this time.

Lord in your mercy, Hear our Prayer

Merciful God, we pray for those we love but see no longer. Grant them your peace and the joy of eternal life. We remember before God those who have recently died especially Doris Kilner and also Susanna Humphreys whose anniversary falls at this time.

Lord in your mercy, Hear our Prayer

Faithful God, as we turn from our worship into the Marketplace which is our world, we thank you for the help you give us to resist the temptations that will assail us in the weeks ahead.

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 this day 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 God give to us and to all those we love his comfort and peace, his light and his joy in this world and the next and the blessing of God almighty, the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit be with us all evermore. **Amen.**

