

Sermon

21st February 2021

10.00am



Good morning

Welcome to our service. I would like to focus your attention to the Lent Bible study that is happening every Wednesday at 12 noon through ZOOM. If you would like to take part, please register your interest by emailing me. The videos and the script will also be made available on the website and Facebook every Thursday. Our new newsletter is out and published on our website. Thanks to the editors for their hard work. For all the other news please look at the intimations on our website.

Worshipping God Together

Let us worship God through our call to worship: (Psalm 99:5)

Exalt the Lord our God and worship at his footstool; he is holy. Beloved I greet you in the Name of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen

Opening prayer and The Lord's Prayer

Let us pray:

God of justice, we pray for our world of plenty, help those who govern to act justly, and help those who have plenty to share.

God of justice, **hear our prayer. silence**

We pray for the Church, as it observes Lent.

May we walk in the way of Jesus,

we pray for all those who work for fair trade; for those whose lives are empty because of failed harvests, for those who go to bed hungry at night.

We pray for the stranger in our midst: for those who have no shelter, for the drug addicts, for all those who are different from us.

we pray for all whose life's journey is drawing to a close ...

we pray for their family and friends,

and we remember with thanksgiving all who have served you in this place.

God of justice,

hear our prayer for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord, in whose name we pray:

Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory for ever. Amen.

Hymn 641 Seek ye first the kingdom of God

Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness;

And all these things shall be added unto you;

Allelu, alleluia.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Ask, and it shall be given unto you, seek, and ye shall find;

Knock, and the door shall be opened unto you;

Allelu, alleluia.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word

That proceeds from the mouth of the Lord;

Allelu, alleluia.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

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Reflecting on God's Word

Bible Reading Matthew 6:1-15

“Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. ² “So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honoured by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. ³ But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴ so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Prayer

⁵ “And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. ⁶ But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. ⁷ And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. ⁸ Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. ⁹ “This, then, is how you should pray:

“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, ¹⁰ your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. ¹¹ Give us today our daily bread. ¹² And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. ¹³ And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.’

¹⁴ For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵ But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Children's Address

In our Bible reading Jesus gives us a recipe of how to behave as His children. He is telling us to share all that we have with others but in such a way that we do not “brag” or boast by telling everyone about our good deeds. No Jesus said NO One should know this. It is between God, us and the other person alone.

He also is giving us the words to speak to God. We do not have any excuse anymore of saying Well I do not know what to say to God. Jesus gave us the words to speak to God as often as we can.

Speaking of recipes... last Tuesday was Pancake day and I asked some children to share with me their recipes of baking pancakes.. so let us listen to the recipe first.

Was that not great fun, boys and girls...

But let us see if it works... I have asked another two girls to put their recipe into practice..

Wow, their recipe worked....

And just like that – we have a recipe of how to behave but the proof to see if it works will only be apparent and visible when others see us act upon it. So boys and girls let us try these two recipes of Jesus in the weeks to come...when we do good to others, tell no -one and don't brag about it and secondly use the words of Jesus to speak to God.

Amen

Hymn 564 Jesus loves me this I know

Jesus loves me! This I know, for the Bible tells me so;
Little ones to him belong; they are weak, but he is strong.

Yes! Jesus loves me! Yes! Jesus loves me!

Yes! Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.

Jesus loves me! This I know, He loved children long ago;
He can always make me glad, even when I'm feeling sad.

Yes! Jesus loves me!....

Jesus loves me! He will stay close beside me all the way;
He will always be my friend, and his love will never end.

Yes! Jesus loves me!....

Sermon

Our Bible reading is part of the bigger Sermon on the Mount delivered by Jesus. In this sermon Jesus gives all the believers a handbook or like I said in the children's talk, a recipe of how to behave as His children. If we want to follow Jesus we should live out His words.

In Jesus' day they had a totally different social culture of shame and honour. All your actions especially those in public, were scrutinized by the critical eyes of others. Now Jesus is saying that when they do good, no-one else should know - or in his words the left hand should not know what the right hand is doing. We also know that the right hand was the most important hand since it was the hand that held the sword and would help you in times of battle. He says not even what you have achieved with your right hand should be known.

Jesus applied the same rule for speaking to God. It is not a public matter to be seen and scrutinized by all. Speaking to God should happen behind closed doors where it is a matter of heartfelt and soulful honesty in the presence of the Most Holy". Jesus even provided appropriate words for this experience. So there is no excuse anymore for anyone **not to speak to God**.

In our reading Jesus is clear: it is not what we do or say, but **how** we act and speak as followers of Jesus!

It applies to us as well especially now in lockdown. How are we being viewed as Christian people. How do we act and speak to others? What does our actions really portray of our relationship with God?

The world's eyes are upon us as well, scrutinising our deeds and words. We have a big responsibility to show others to whom we belong, while we should remember how we speak to and of God and how to treat other people.

We have a great opportunity and challenge as we walk with so many other Christians on the Journey of Lent – remembering the journey Jesus travelled on our behalf. We can indeed show with our actions, what it means to be a follower of Jesus, when we give to the needy, when we pray and when we forgive.....

If we cannot follow a "recipe" there is usually just one outcome namely disaster. If we do not live our faith – if we do not believe with heart and soul and mind that Jesus walked the journey of pain and suffering to heavenly glory on our behalf – the world will see it and follow in our example. When we show the world by the "how" we conduct ourselves, then the words of Jesus will become true for millions more.

Jesus wants us to be his disciples in this world – telling and showing the world what He has done on our behalf. May never forget, that it is sometimes not in what we are saying and doing but HOW we are doing.

We belong to Christ. Our faith, hope and love should inform our actions and words –

each and every moment of every day.

And when we have no adequate words left to speak to God - when our circumstances makes it too difficult to find the right words, then we can use the words of Jesus, believing that God is listening.

May all of us reflect in our journey of Lent on HOW we speak and act as believers of Jesus Christ.

Amen

Prayer of thanksgiving and for others

Let us pray:

We thank you, faithful Lord, for your patience, provision and power;
for your tenderness, trust and triumph; for your security and strength;
for your compassion and wisdom.

We thank you, Lord, that through your grace and mercy, the blessings of faith,
and your covenant love, you equip, teach and guide us as we traverse today's world,
ever mindful of your steadfast love.

As we walk into the long weeks of Lent, we begin a journey into the wilderness:
may your Spirit rest upon us.

We travel from suffering to hope: may your Spirit rest upon us

We travel through death to new life: may your Spirit rest upon us.

As we look to the example of Jesus, who in the wilderness chose the difficult path,
help us to know that you are with us –

though the way ahead may be hard and we so often falter and fail.

strengthen us for the journey ahead, and teach us to trust in you.

We walk in relative security, thankful for the comforts we know.

We pray for people who cannot afford to work from home
and ask that we would address the inequality this shows us.

We pray for people in homes that are insecure
and for people living in life threatening weather

We give thanks for the peace we experience, and ask that our church communities
can offer hope and safety for those in distress.

May we share what we have, and work to lift the burden that others carry.

As we look to the example of Jesus, who embraced all who were in pain,
may we reach out to others in generosity and kindness.

We walk in separation, apart from friends and those we love:
give us strength to endure in hope.

We pray especially for all who are burdened by loneliness; for all who are in pain;
for the bereaved and the despairing; the sick and the dying:
may we work to make our communities places of warmth and friendship

where all are included and each one finds a place.

As we look to the example of Jesus, who welcomed the least and the lost and brought the overlooked into the light, may we extend our circle of belonging and believe that your love is big enough for all to enter in.

We walk in hope for a future as the rollout of the vaccine continues across the UK, and there are signs of success in the data as death rates among over 80s fall.

We give thanks for the work of the NHS as they administer vaccines to the public and manage long lists of people needing urgent surgery.

May we be mindful of countries yet to begin vaccination, and countries who cannot afford the vaccines, and we ask that governments would enable fair distribution.

When we begin to emerge from crisis, may we work to build a better world where the poorest are protected.

As we look to the example of Jesus, who placed such great value on children, may we create a space where the young can dream again, and all of us can grow, rest and be secure.

In love you made us; in love you call us; in love you lead us –
through this world, through sorrow and joy, until we see you face to face.

Amen

Hymn 502 Take my life Lord, let it be

Take my life, Lord, let it be consecrated, glad, and free;

Take my moments and my days, let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my hands and let them move at the impulse of your love.

Take my feet, that I may run, bearing news of Christ your Son.

Take my voice, and let me sing always, only, for my King;

Take my intellect and use every power as you shall choose.

Take my will – your will be done, may my will and your be one;

Take my heart – it is your own, it shall be your royal throne.

Take my love – my Lord, I pour at your feet its treasure-store;

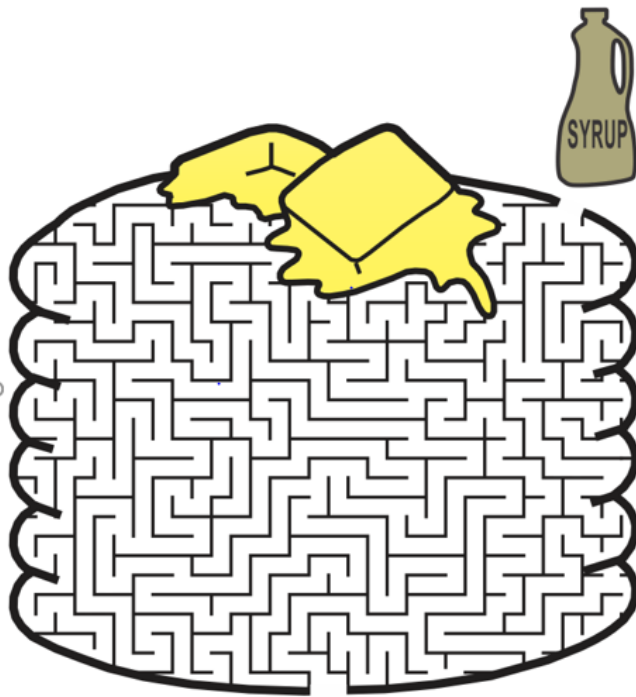
Take myself, and I will be all for you, eternally.

Frances Ridley Havergal

Blessing Receive the blessing of God and go in peace:

Go from this place, in the peace of Christ who died to save you. Seek to make the world a better place and love the Lord your God with all your heart and mind and strength, and the blessing God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit will be with you, always and ever!

Amen



PANCAKE DAY WORD SEARCH

G	L	R	E	N	A	P	G	N	I	Y	R	F	T	O	P	E	K
E	X	S	L	T	U	I	O	R	E	F	S	L	C	L	W	Z	L
A	D	U	E	A	J	S	X	H	E	O	B	I	N	F	K	P	I
V	H	R	M	T	G	F	O	E	R	N	C	P	P	E	J	A	M
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S	E	R	P	A	N	C	A	K	E	K	Z	O	N	U	B	X	I



Ash Wednesday	Flour	Milk
Batter	Frying Pan	Pancake
Christian	Honey	Shrove
Drizzle	Jam	Sugar
Eggs	Lemon	Syrup
February	Lent	Toppings
Flip	March	Tuesday

