



## Worship at Home – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Lent – 7<sup>th</sup> March

Father God help us to come to you this morning with open and thankful hearts. Fill us with the joy and peace that comes with knowing you. Be with us as we walk in your light, rejoice in your love and reflect your glory.

**Amen**

### Hymn 58: Awake, my soul

#### Welcome

The Lord be with you,  
**and also with you**

#### Prayer of Preparation

**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**

#### Prayer of Confession

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.**

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith, firmly resolved to keep God's commandments and to live in love and peace with all.

**Almighty God, our heavenly Father, we have sinned against you and against our neighbour in thought and word and deed, through negligence, through weakness, through our own deliberate fault. We are truly sorry and repent of all our sins. For the sake of your son Jesus Christ, who died for us, forgive us all that is past and grant that we may serve you in newness of life to the glory of your name. Amen**

Lord have mercy

**Lord have mercy**

Christ have mercy

## **Christ have mercy**

Lord have mercy

**Lord have mercy**

Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness and keep you in life eternal through Jesus Christ our lord. **Amen**

## **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. **Amen**

## **Old Testament Reading: Exodus 20: 1 – 17**

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 adultery.

You shall not steal.

You shall not bear false witness against your 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.

## New Testament Reading: 1 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 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.

## Hymn 411: Lord Jesus Christ

## Gospel Reading: John 2: 13 - 22

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John

**Glory to you, O Lord**

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 marketplace!' 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**

## Sermon: Revd Petra Shakeshaft

Many years ago, when I was leading the Sunday School here, I showed the children a clip of this scene, known as the cleansing of the Temple, from Jesus Christ Superstar.

The scene is full of market stalls and Jesus is wonderfully screamy tipping them over and sending coins and trinkets to the floor while the animals and people scatter. One little girl watched open mouthed and wide-eyed and as the clip ended, she exclaimed  
What d'he want to go and do that for? Look at the mess he's made!

Today we hear this story when our own holy building is temporarily out of bounds and we are exploring ways of being a church without a building.

Remember, John's Gospel was written after the Temple was destroyed by the Romans in 70AD, so the Temple is a memory and the Jews

are still trying to come to terms with who they are as a people without the Temple, for the Temple was the place where the presence of God was located; on a single geographical site, to which Jews from far and wide would gather for festivals. And it is at the greatest festival, that Jesus arrives this particular day.

The Torah required sacrifices, which is why the animal traders were there.

The Temple cult also required that the Temple tax be paid in Tyrian coins, which didn't bear the image of the Emperor –

graven images being unlawful according to the Mosaic Law.

So, in fact the traders and money-changers had every right to be there.

Of course, trade in the Temple also lent political and financial power to the leadership

- the cult is centralised on the Temple.

Passover must have been a lucrative time for traders and Temple officials alike.

Jesus comes to the Temple for the Feast of the Passover to worship and finds it full of traders – no doubt he's seen it before, so maybe he knew exactly what he was going to do.

Certainly, he is enraged and sets about driving out the animals and the money changers.

Jesus cries out,

*Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a market-place!*

*What sign can you show us for doing this?* ask the Jews, that is, the Scribes and the Pharisees.

The early part of this chapter is taken up with, the Wedding at Cana, the first of Jesus' signs.

And in the verse that follows this passage, vs 23, John tells us,

*When he was in Jerusalem during the Passover festival,*

*many believed in his name because they saw the signs that he was doing.*

The Jews believe in signs. If Jesus is who he says he is, then he has the power to show them a sign.

Of course, the signs are there but they are blind to them –

they don't want to see them, not least because if they see, if they really see,

and if they listen and hear; really listen and really hear,

the Temple culture that has served them so well will come tumbling down. Little do they know.

*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.*

The six jars of water for Jewish rites of purification Jesus turns into wine are the first sign.

The fullness of God's glory is being perfected or fulfilled *through* the former gift to Israel.

Jesus' disruption of the Passover festival causes a temporary halt to the sacrificial system ordained by God in Law, a sign that this is no longer required.

God's presence in the Temple will be perfected, or fulfilled

when the Temple of the body of Jesus is destroyed and then resurrected and God will no longer be located in one Geographical place, but in all places and all times making all places and all times sacred.

The presence of God is still in the Temple, but now the Temple is the body of Christ. I wonder how we feel about ourselves as church when we meet like this. We are perhaps fragmented – there are those of our community, who, for one reason or another cannot, or choose not to join us on Zoom. And, I wonder, how will we feel when we are back in church – together, how will we view this period of absence, or different presence in the future? How will it affect who we are in the days and years to come. How will we think of our building, I wonder?

The church, of course is not the Temple in Jerusalem, nor do we think of it as the location of God, but perhaps we have learned to exist as a church more outside the building over this last year and there maybe – perhaps even should be – lasting consequences, lessons, as we reflect on this time.

The activity Jesus objects to so furiously in the Temple is that it makes Temple worship exclusive; it makes access to the presence of God exclusive. Those who can't afford the price of a sacrifice are denied the privileges of the Temple cult. Remember, by the time John's Gospel is written, sacrifices are no longer a part of Temple cultic practice – the Temple has gone. The cleansing of the Temple points forward to the destruction of both the Temple building which housed the presence of God, and the destruction of Jesus body in his Crucifixion and a new way of imagining Temple and the location of the presence of God. The presence of God is 'located' if you like in His Church –that is, in us. In each of us.

*Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.*  
Says Paul to the Corinthians, and,

*do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own,*

We are the body of Christ. We are the presence of God.  
You are a Temple.

## **Nicene Creed**

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered**

**death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

## **Prayers**

Let us pray: Our prayers use some ideas from Psalm 19 – which is set for today.

*“The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims His handiwork.”*

Lord of all earth and heaven, we bless You for Your handiwork, the beauty of Your creation and the wonders of Your revelation of Yourself. We remember the church is Your new creation and ask You to help her grow in confidence and faith, here and across the world. We pray for our Diocesan Bishops, Stephen and Dagmar, and in Sawston and Babraham we pray for Kathryn Waite as she prepares to minister here, and for all who will be particularly supporting her initially, and for our Wardens, Marian and Andy, Mary and Sheena in this new era of our histories.

We bring to You our concerns for different groups within the congregation: the elderly, the families and children, the parents much pressurised by home schooling, and young people whose learning and employment have been jeopardised. We ask for grace to be genuine with You and with one another – for firmness to keep a good Lent, and for all activities still able to happen to make this time more meaningful.

Lord in Your mercy **Hear our prayer.**

*“Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge; their voice goes out through all the earth.”*

Lord, look upon us as we consider Your world and the issues that face us all.

We pray for increased wisdom in managing the pandemic, for all countries whose resources are overwhelmed, and for those countries who have additional vaccines and resources to offer them to those less fortunate. We remember all who are learning about the world in schoolwork and Lent courses, that they come to respect the varied peoples of the earth, the rich resources and future possibilities for human society.

We pray for the nation of China at this time, with many upheavals and changes, for fear to reduce and for opportunities to increase for all the diverse groups to read and experience Your word. We pray for greater investment in the human future, not just in money but in terms of reconciliation between peoples and nations, and proper planning for human flourishing.

Lord in Your mercy **Hear our prayer.**

*“In the heavens He has set a tent for the sun, rising from the end of the heavens and circuiting to the very far end of them.”*



Lord, remind us of the constant rhythm of human life and make us keen to co-operate in doing good within that. We pray for all children returning to school this week, and for their teachers, that all may be kept safe and adjust well to learning together again.

We remember all parents as routines change again; those still working from home; those caring for others who are older, sick or with special needs. We bring to You all anxious about livelihoods, new financial provisions, and restrictions that still limit relationships, work and planning'

Lord in Your mercy **Hear our prayer.**

*"The sun like a strong man runs its course with joy."*

So, Lord, we remember all who will not spend today in joy: all who are sick or injured; all whose mobility is impaired; all whose minds are troubled.

We pray for those known to us in their sickness, including Isobel Darling, Margaret Grey, Steve Burgess, their families and friends; members of our own family or neighbourhood in need, and those at Orchard House and Bircham House in this village. We ask Your comfort for all who will spend today in grief or perplexity, including any known to us; and we confess our own needs for consolation and guidance.

Lord in Your mercy **Hear our prayer.**

*"The ordinances of the Lord are more to be desired than gold, sweeter also than honey."*

Lord, grant to those who have died Your peace, and to their families and friends also comfort. We remember especially Caroline Bonham, Patrick Barker, Robert Binge - and others known to us – and, outside the parish, Dianne Langford.

We ask that we may live with our eyes enlightened by You, until we come to our journey's end.

Lord in Your mercy **Hear our prayer.**

May the words of our mouths, and the meditation of all our hearts, be now and always acceptable in Your sight, o Lord, our Rock and our Redeemer.

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

## **The Peace**

Take a moment and offer a prayer of thanksgiving to God for each other and our church family church community. Maybe call or text someone who would enjoy sharing the peace with you.

May the God of peace make you perfect and holy, that you may be kept safe and blameless in spirit, soul and body, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

**And also with you.**

## **Hymn 211: God be in my head**

### **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 for ever.**

**Amen.**

## **Remembering the Lord's Supper**

Take a moment to remember the final meal that Jesus shared with his disciples. As we think about this meal - with the washing of feet and bread and wine shared with friends - we remember Jesus' offering of himself on the cross. We rejoice in his resurrection from the dead and look forward to the coming of God's Kingdom. While we cannot receive Christ in the sacraments in the usual way, we can be the presence of Christ in our homes and communities and we can be a praying presence wherever we are.

## **Hymn 19: All my hope on God is founded**

### **Closing Prayer**

Lord God, we thank you for this time of worship; may your love and peace remain with us in the coming days. Be with us in all that we will think, say and do so that our lives may reflect your glory. We ask this in the name of your Son Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord

**In the name of Christ. Amen**

If you have any prayer or pastoral needs, please don't hesitate to contact  
Revd Petra Shakeshaft (07847 307416)  
or Sally Bard (01223 501165)