

# Order of Service Digital Service

10th January 2021

(Christine Wilkins)

## CALL TO WORSHIP

In the beginning . . . . . God  
From chaos . . . . . form  
From darkness . . . . . light  
From silence . . . . . a word  
In our confusion, busyness, noise . . . . God's word in us  
In our beginning . . . . . God

(From Companion to the Rev. Common Lectionary Vol 3 YrB Judy Jarvis and Donald Pickard)

## HYMN

For the beauty of the earth

Words: Folliot S. Pierpoint

Source: Small Church Music

Tune: England's Lane

## A PRAYER OF ADORATION

Lord God, how awesome you are.  
Your voice is powerful and majestic.  
Once, the earth was without shape.  
Dark and empty.  
Then you spoke, awesome God.  
And light shone.  
You separated the light from the darkness.  
The whole world changed.  
You later sent your Son, Jesus.  
To live and walk among us on the earth.  
His ministry heralded by John the Baptist.  
Who baptized Jesus in the Jordan.  
The whole world changed.  
The sky split open.  
And your Holy Spirit came down like a dove.  
Then you spoke, awesome God.  
And continue to speak today through your Holy Spirit.  
Majestic, awesome, all-powerful God,  
we adore your holy name. Amen.

## A PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Lord,  
when you came into the world,  
things changed.  
When we came into a relationship with you,  
things changed.  
Life became filled with a new sense of purpose and peace.  
But, Lord,  
sometimes we let you down by doing wrong things  
or failing to do right things.

**We are sorry, Lord.**

Sometimes, Lord,  
through pride,  
stubbornness or fear  
we build barriers and keep others at arm's length  
– even you, Lord.

**We are sorry, Lord.**

At times we give in to our weaknesses and temptations,  
failing to draw on your strength.  
At times we are troubled by difficult situations

and find it hard to trust you.

**We are sorry, Lord.**

Help us to turn such things around and turn to you.

Help us to learn from the past and,  
drawing on your strength and peace,  
make a better future.

**Amen.**

### **ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

O God, when Jesus was baptized,  
you spoke of your love for him.  
You showed your love for us  
through Jesus' death and resurrection.

By the power of the cross,  
the darkness of our wrongdoing  
is banished by the light of your loving forgiveness.

**Thanks be to God. Amen**

### **A PRAYER OF PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING**

God,  
through your might and power the world was created,  
and through it now the world is changed,  
and ever changing.

We read in the Scriptures of how you changed people's lives.

We hear it in the stories of saints old and new.

We know it through the experience  
and lives of our own communities.

We thank and praise you for all that you have done  
through the changes you have made  
– and are still making –  
in our lives.

We thank and praise you for the gift of your Holy Spirit  
who gives us  
– your people –  
strength, and the blessing of peace. **Amen**

### **READING:**

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### **MEDITATION ON A JIGSAW PUZZLE**

#### **TALK (Part 1)**

Order, order. Those are the words we hear the Speaker of the House of Commons say when he's trying to keep the MP's in order to debate substantial matters. There's been plenty of those in these past 10 months. Sometimes he's successful and other times, he appears to struggle. He's valiantly trying to get back to some order and form.

I'm going to look at today's readings firstly by looking at God creating order out of something formless and a bit chaotic.

In our Genesis reading today, that is exactly what God was doing when he created the World. Order out of something formless and chaotic.

Now, I'll be the first to admit, this whole reading in Genesis, the first 27 verses give a picture of a perfect world made in just a very short time, but we know from scientific endeavours and from archaeology, it actually took millions of years. But, stripping it back just to those first 5 verses, the basics water and light, would have been a shorter time.

However, it really is immaterial how many days God took to create the world, as the words in Genesis are not a factual account. They are not words dictated but are stories from an oral tradition inspired by God.

We notice in those words that the Spirit is present. The Holy Spirit was part of the creation. So, we have water and we have the Holy Spirit and then God creates light, in the words "Let there be light".

God gave us something else that is important as well in these actions. He names things in this story and therefore, creates a relationship. It is this relationship which develops as Creation continues to evolve. He calls the light “day” and the dark” night” and as He creates more, He sees that it is good.

We may feel that this is rather a mystery, but we have just celebrated another mystery and we do so every year.....that of the birth of a little baby boy, a baby called Jesus. We will have spent several weeks organising things, albeit very differently this last Christmas due to events, but it is still a mystery, the events that surround the birth that we celebrate. However, it helps to give form and order to our Christian faith.

At the dawn of Creation, I wonder, was God’s voice like the roaring waterfall, or was it entirely different, like the whisper of the Head teacher who can bring a chaotic, formless class back to order in just a few words.?

God is like that in our lives too, He speaks quietly to us and puts our jumbled, higgledy-piggledly lives back together, if we’re prepared to listen to Him.

## **READING**

Mark 1 v4 -11

## **HYMN**

From heaven you came helpless babe

The Servant King

Words & Music: Graham Kendrick

Source: MyMidi © 1983 Thankyou Music (admin. SHOUT! Music Publishing)

## **TALK**

### **Part 2**

Turning to the gospel reading, we again have that picture of putting order to things. John the Baptist was living in the wilderness and going about the area preparing folk for the time when the Messiah would come into their lives.

In Mark’s reading, John is baptising in the river Jordan and talks of the coming Messiah. On confession of their sins, John baptised them We know from his words, he does not consider himself even adequate to touch the sandals of the feet of Jesus.

However, John is showing in this act of Baptism that he accepts the divine nature of Jesus and proclaims to his hearers , only Jesus is the Messiah. At this particular time, in this particular Baptism of Jesus, God reveals to the world that Jesus is His own Son.

I am sure that, like me, over the years, you have seen pictures of this particular scene with a dove hovering over Jesus with words above the picture. Although this may be a rather romanticised view, it does help us to remember the story.

God has created the Light of the World and is showing this to everyone through this action of Baptism. Jesus goes through this to declare to the world that He is ready to take on His mission for the world. He is ready to create order again for humans to be put right with God .

God affirms this in His spoken words to the world, “You are my Son whom I love. In you I am well pleased”. Again, we do not know whether those words came with a roar or a very quiet proclamation.

In our own baptism into the Christian faith, we are called by name to renounce the chaos of sin that has gone before and to accept our new, ordered life, living with God in a daily relationship enabled through the Messiah.

In the Creation story God spoke things into being. In the Baptism of His son, again He spoke.

Are we so busy in our lives, are they so cluttered that we do not hear the words that God speaks to us? Do we sometimes go in the wrong direction because we have missed the way God is guiding us to go?

We need to make sure we recognise Him through the working of His Holy Spirit and what He is asking us to do, however uncomfortable that might sometimes be. Nobody ever said the Christian life would be a bed of roses. It was always going to be a challenge. God names us as His own and recognises us as such,

We need to recognise God then we can reassess our priorities and make sure we create loving relationships with those in the world who need us and share God’s voice this coming week and beyond. Amen

## **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION** (With response)

Lord, who created order from the chaos,  
bring light to darkness.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

In places of war and conflict,  
where there is famine and suffering,  
where we struggle to see how we can make a difference,  
bring light to darkness.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

In countries where the pandemic is rife,  
for those who feel they have  
no ownership of the good news of vaccines,  
for those who are suffering injustice  
bring light to darkness

**Lord, hear our prayer**

In our own communities,  
for those who are poor,  
for the homeless and hungry,  
for the lonely and the prisoner,  
bring light to darkness.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

In those whose lives are made harder by illness  
that we name silently in our hearts . . .  
and those who search for peace and cannot find it,  
uphold them with your loving peace and hand of compassion  
bring light to darkness.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

In the lives of those who are grieving . . .,  
bring light to darkness.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

In the lives of those we live with,  
those we work with and those we play with,  
and for ourselves,  
bring light to darkness.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

**Amen**

(Adapted from Roots 2015 7th – 13th Jan)

**THE LORD'S PRAYER**

**HYMN**

I am a new creation

Words & Music Dave Bilbrough  
CCLI Song No 48425

Source : My Midi© 1983 Thankyou Music (Admin. by SHOUT! Music Publishing)

**BLESSING**

(A sending out prayer)

Lord, help us to be open to your prompting  
as we seek to discover what you would have us be and do.

Remind us again and again that  
you have promised to be  
our guide and companion on our journey.

Help us to look forward with renewed commitment,  
and bless our thinking and speaking and doing.

In your name.

**Amen**

(From Roots 10th – 16th Jan 2021)