



Heacham Parish Church

3rd Sunday before Lent - 13th February 2022

This is Heacham Parish Church on-line. You join us for our Service of Worship for the 3rd Sunday before Lent. Although we join this at various times, from various places and in various ways we come together as one body, the Church of Jesus Christ.

The Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns.

Let us rejoice and shout for joy, giving God the glory.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;

as it was in the beginning is now and shall be for ever. Amen.

God in Christ has revealed his glory.

Come let us worship.

From the rising of the sun to its setting

the Lord's name is greatly to be praised.

Give him praise, you servants of the Lord.

O praise the name of the Lord!

We meet in the presence of God

who knows our needs, hears our cries,

Faithful one, whose word is life:

come with saving power

to free our praise,

inspire our prayer

and shape our lives

for the kingdom of your Son,

Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Hymn : **Healing God Almighty Father (MP226)**

Healing God, almighty Father,
active throughout history;
ever saving, guiding, working
for Your children to be free.
Shepherd, king, inspiring prophets
to foresee Your suffering role –
Lord, we raise our prayers and voices;
Make us one and make us whole.

Healing Christ, God's Word incarnate,
reconciling man to man;
God's atonement, dying for us
in His great redemptive plan.
Jesus, Saviour, healer, victor,
drawing out for us death's sting;
Lord we bow our hearts in worship,
and united praises bring.

Healing Spirit, Christ-anointing,
Raising to new life in Him;
Help the poor; release to captives;
Cure of body; health within.
Life-renewing and empowering
Christ-like service to the lost;
Lord, we pray, 'Renew Your wonders
As of a new Pentecost!'

Healing Church, called-out and chosen
to enlarge God's kingdom here;
Lord-obeying; Spirit-strengthened
to bring God's salvation near:
for creation's reconciling
gifts of love in us release.
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
make us instruments of peace.

Prayers of Penitence

The gospel calls us to turn away from sin and be faithful to Christ.

As we offer ourselves to him in penitence and faith, we renew our confidence and trust in his mercy.

God our Father, we come to you in sorrow for our sins.
For turning away from you
and ignoring your will for our lives;

Father, forgive us: save us and help us.

For behaving just as we wish, without thinking of you;

Father, forgive us: save us and help us.

For failing you by what we do, and think and say;

Father, forgive us: save us and help us.

For letting ourselves be drawn away from you
by temptations in the world about us;

Father, forgive us: save us and help us.

For living as if we were ashamed to belong to your Son;

Father, forgive us: save us and help us.

The almighty and merciful Lord
grant us pardon and forgiveness of all our sins,
time for amendment of life,
and the grace and strength of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Bible Reading Luke 6: 17-26 read by Lynn

Sermon by Veronica

I have found preparing this sermon a struggle this week, not because the reading is a particularly difficult one but for 2 reasons I think.

1: we know the beatitudes so well, not necessarily Luke's version, but we know the principles, we have preached (or heard sermons and even sermon series) on them, we have studied them alone or in home groups, we have prayed and sung them, most of us can quote them!

2: I have been pondering Bishop Jane's sermon from last week - where should we put out net, how do we discern the deep, and how to we live by faith in Jesus as the darkness of Covid begins to scatter.

So, with those both in mind and starting from knowing that Jesus lived with and spoke no empty rhetoric, he lived by costly compassion, I have been thinking about how we do the same. How do we live with that demanding, costly, uncomfortable compassion rather than a sanitary churchy one?

How does this reading from Luke's Gospel, how do the beatitudes, help us to live like Jesus with deep costly compassion?

There is something about Jesus' 3-fold ministry towards people, concerned and interested in their body, mind, and spirit, through healing (body and spirit) and teaching. This is seen in the beatitudes but also in many other places in the gospels.

There is also something about the now and the not yet, the life being lived presently and the life to come reflected in the beatitudes and other places in the gospels. And there is something about Jesus calling us to love and respect those who are outside our social circles, and experience.

So, looking at Luke's text how do we show costly compassion with the love of Jesus, caring for body mind and spirit, now and for the future in our local area? Yes, of course, we need to do the same further afield but today I am focussing on our village community of Heacham and the local area.

Luke mentions:

Poor – Covid has made the gaps between the have and have nots even wider locally, prices for so much have gone up, and energy prices are rising, people have lost jobs, been put on zero hours contracts etc. There are many people in our community and locally who simply don't have the money to live adequately (example: Baby Basics a charity who provide basic needs for life for women and families with a new-born baby have seen their requests for bundles quadrupled in the last 2 years).

Hungry- linked, of course to those who do not have enough money, who have to make choices daily about whether to eat, or feed the meter, or replace shoes, etc. (example: On just one day last week the foodbank in Hunstanton delivered food parcels to 6 households in Heacham).

Weeping- As a church, our ministry team will have led 9 funerals, this year by 1st March. There are many individuals and families in our village who are grieving. There are also many of us for whom the last 2 years have affected our mental health, for who daily life is a struggle who weep with loneliness, anxiety, depression, fear etc.

The excluded, the hated and the insulted-I suspect we would all like to think that there is no one in our village, local area and even church(!) who is excluded, hated, or insulted, but that is simply not the case. There are people who are excluded, due to how they live their lives, due to their gender, ethnicity, sexuality, age, disability, or just for being different in our midst.

What can we do to reach out with Jesus' costly compassion to support and meet the needs in body, mind, and spirit of those who are poor, hungry, weeping or excluded? What can we do practically, emotionally, and spiritually to reach out in love, so that lives are changed now and in the future by Jesus transforming grace?

Well, the reality is of course, we can't do it all, and as Bishop Jane reminded us last week, we are all tired and drained from pandemic living, our resources financially, in personnel, and energy are limited.

Yet we can do something - as individuals - we can pray, we can listen, we can watch out for those on the edges, we can support the foodbanks, Baby Basics, West Norfolk Mind and the other groups and charities who work locally, we can be good neighbours.

We can do something – as a church. It seems to me that we are at a bit of a transition point in the life of Heacham Parish Church, as we move forward after 2 years of Pandemic. We need to listen to Jesus and review what we do as a church, where we are going to put our energy and focus, where, to echo Bishop Jane, are we going to throw our net? Not

everything we have done before will restart in the same way, if at all. We need to listen to God and listen to our village, so we recognise the changes that have taken place in the last couple of years. Please join me in praying for wisdom and direction for us a church, as to how we live the beatitudes and show the compassion of Jesus, in body, mind, and spirit to those around us.

Hymn : **Because he lives (MP52)**

God sent His Son, they called Him Jesus;
He came to love, heal, and forgive;
He lived and died to buy my pardon,
an empty grave is there
to prove my Saviour lives.

*Because He lives I can face tomorrow;
because He lives all fear is gone;
because I know He holds the future,
and life is worth the living
just because He lives.*

How sweet to hold a new-born baby,
and feel the pride and joy he gives;
but greater still the calm assurance,
this child can face uncertain days
because He lives.

Because He lives

And then one day I'll cross the river;
I'll fight life's final war with pain;
and then as death gives way to victory,
I'll see the lights of glory
and I'll know He lives.

Because He lives

Affirmation of faith

Do you believe and trust in God the Father,
source of all being and life, the one for whom we exist?

We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Son,
who took our human nature, died for us and rose again?

We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,
who gives life to the people of God
and makes Christ known in the world?

We believe and trust in him.

This is the faith of the Church.

**This is our faith. We believe and trust in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**

Amen.

Prayers of intercession - led by Richard G

Heavenly Father, Jesus spoke to many people from all over Judaea.
He taught them about blessings. May we recognise and be thankful
for the many blessings which we experience in God's world.

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

We pray for the Church and for the world in the name of Jesus Christ.
Renew the life and faith of the Church at this time. We are encouraged
by fellowship with fellow Christians, and we thank you that we are able to
meet and worship together again.

We pray for our leaders, Archbishops Justin and John and Bishops
Graham and Jane. May they continue to guide us in ways of truth and
faith. We pray for our own Veronica, and the group of readers at St
Mary's. May we faithfully follow their leadership and teaching. We thank
you that we are a growing faith community.

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

We pray for good government.

We need to turn to you and to embrace Jesus' message to love one another
and work for the common good. This church family is a loving one and
gives us all such valuable support. As we return to normal, our society will
need to examine its priorities and become less selfish. Guide us as we re-

build a more just vision. Good overcomes evil when we walk in Jesus' footsteps. There are many signs of good within our people.

The voices and actions of climate conscious people are with us. May their actions be moderate and have the effect on the nation which will result in progress towards reducing the hazards. We all need to contribute. Government cannot be successful without our active support. Sustainability is a worthwhile target, and we need to understand how we as individuals should change our behaviour to approach it.

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

Continue to guide this church family at Heacham. Help us to decide our personal priorities and where the well-being of this community and the church should be.

Christians have been taught that the greatest calling is to love. May we show compassion towards those in need, wherever they come from. We continue to see desperate people who are exploited by gangs crossing the channel in dangerous circumstances. We cannot accommodate all-comers. There are wonderful examples of how desperate people can join communities and contribute in valuable ways. After all, most of us descend from people who came from somewhere else.

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

We thank you for the service of our queen and her family. May they continue to serve the nation and You, faithfully. Our queen is rightly admired for her wisdom and her sense of duty. Help her in her difficult family situations. Bless her in this 70th year of her reign. Thank you for guiding her in all she does and is.

Lord, in your Mercy: Hear our Prayer

We raise before you now in a few moments of silence those known to us who specially need prayer. In illness, bereavement, worry, people who are hurting. May we pray and to talk to you through this prayer.

(Short Silence)

Lord, in your Mercy: Hear our Prayer

Remember, the souls of your servants no longer here on earth with us and for those who are saddened by their passing. Be with the bereaved in their loneliness and give them the faith to look beyond their present troubles to your Son Jesus Christ, who died and rose again and who lives for evermore. We shall all be reunited in heaven.

(Short Silence)

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

Our Father, who art in heaven ...

The Collect

Eternal God,
whose Son went among the crowds
and brought healing with his touch:
help us to show his love,
in your Church as we gather together,
and by our lives as they are transformed
into the image of Christ our Lord.

Hymn: **Make way, make way** (MP457)

Make way, make way,
for Christ the King
in splendour arrives;
fling wide the gates
and welcome Him into your lives.

*Make way, make way,
for the King of kings;
make way, make way,
and let His kingdom in!*

He comes the broken hearts to heal,
the prisoners to free;
the deaf shall hear,
the lame shall dance, the blind shall see.

Make way.....

And those who mourn
with heavy hearts,
who weep and sigh,
with laughter, joy and royal crown
He'll beautify.

Make way.....

We call you now to worship Him
as Lord of all,
to have no gods before Him,
their thrones must fall!

Make way.....

Closing Prayers

And now we give you thanks
because he breathed upon his disciples
the power of your Spirit to proclaim
the good news to all peoples.

Eternal God, our beginning and our end,
accompany us in this day's journey.
Dawn on our darkness,
open our eyes to praise you for your creation
and to see the work you set before us today.
Take us and use us to bring to others
the new life you give in Jesus Christ our Lord.

God the Father,
who has given to his Son the name above every name,
strengthen you to proclaim Christ Jesus as Lord.

Amen.

God the Son,
who is our great high priest passed into the heavens,
plead for you at the right hand of the Father.

Amen.

God the Holy Spirit,
who pours out his abundant gifts upon the Church,
make you faithful servants of Christ our King.

Amen.

Glory to God,
whose power, at work among us,
can do infinitely more than all we can ask or conceive;
to him be glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus,
for ever and ever.

Amen.

Church Contact:

Rev. Veronica Wilson tel. 01485 570697

Or email: heacham.vicar@gmail.com

Church Office tel. 01485 572539 (answerphone)

Or email: heacham.church@gmail.com
