



Heacham Parish Church

**Sunday before Lent – 27<sup>th</sup> February 2022**

**The Greeting**

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

**and also with you.**

This is the day that the Lord has made

**Let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

Hymn: **Be still (MP 50)**

Be still, for the presence of the Lord,  
the Holy One, is here;  
come bow before Him now  
with reverence and fear:  
in Him no sin is found –  
we stand on holy ground.  
Be still, for the presence of the Lord,  
the Holy One, is here.

Be still, for the glory of the Lord  
is shining all around;  
He burns with holy fire,  
with splendour He is crowned:  
how awesome is the sight –  
our radiant King of light!  
Be still, for the glory of the Lord  
is shining all around.

Be still, for the power of the Lord  
is moving in this place:  
He comes to cleanse and heal,  
to minister His grace –  
no work too hard for Him.  
In faith receive from Him.  
Be still, for the power of the Lord  
is moving in this place.

### **Prayer of preparation**

**We have come together in the name of Christ to offer our praise and thanksgiving, to hear and receive God's holy word, to pray for the needs of the world, and to seek forgiveness of our sins, that by the power of the Holy Spirit we may give ourselves to the service of God.**

Jesus says 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand.' So let us turn away from our sin and turn to Christ, confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

### **Confession**

Almighty God, long suffering and of great goodness: I confess to you, I confess with my whole heart my neglect and forgetfulness of your commandments, my wrongdoing, thinking, and speaking; the hurts I have done to others and the good that I have left undone. O God forgive me, for I have sinned against you; and raise me to newness of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Almighty God, who in Jesus Christ has given us a kingdom that cannot be destroyed, forgive us our sins, open our eyes to God's truth, strengthen us to do God's will and give us the joy of his kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Bible reading** – Luke 9: 28-36 read by Adrian

**Hymn: My Jesus, my saviour (MP 1003)**

My Jesus, my Saviour,  
Lord, there is none like You.  
All of my days I want to praise  
the wonders of Your mighty love.  
My comfort, my shelter,  
tower of refuge and strength,  
let every breath, all that I am,  
never cease to worship You.

*Shout to the Lord all the earth, let us sing,  
power and majesty, praise to the King.  
Mountains bow down  
and the seas will roar  
at the sound of Your name.  
I sing for joy at the work of Your hands,  
for ever I'll love You, for ever I'll stand.  
Nothing compares to the promise  
I have in You.*

**Psalm 89: 1-8**

I will sing of the Lord's great love forever;  
with my mouth I will make your faithfulness known through all  
generations.

I will declare that your love stands firm for ever, that you established your faithfulness in heaven itself.

You said, "I have made a covenant with my chosen one, I have sworn to David my servant, I will establish your line forever and make your throne firm through all generations."

The heavens praise your wonders, O Lord, your faithfulness too, in the assembly of the holy ones. For who in the skies above can compare with the Lord? Who is like the Lord among the heavenly beings? In the council of the holy ones God is greatly feared; he is more awesome than all who surround him.

Oh Lord God Almighty, who is like you? You are mighty, O Lord, and your faithfulness surrounds you.  
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.**

**A reflection** – by John W

Today I want to start by telling you a story, it is a true story set approximately sixty-five years ago.

As a young boy I was interested in trains and all things mechanical (I still am!). Each year there was an exhibition called the "Schoolboys Own Exhibition" in London. It was my dream to go and see it. But unfortunately, we did not have the money or time to go. You see my father had to work five and half days each week and perhaps even six days a week, long days so there was little time left. So, it was just a dream and I soon forget about it.

One Saturday I was woken up and told to get ready as dad was going to take me out to London. I asked why but mum didn't answer, so we got ready, and dad and I went off by train and underground till we arrived at our destination. I was amazed at

the number of people all around and when I saw where we had arrived at, I was so happy. It was the site of Schoolboys Own Exhibition, it was a dream come true, he had given up a day's work and saved up the money to go with me. I looked at my dad and knew he was the greatest dad in the world.

Unlike the disciples in the Bible story we just heard, I could not stop talking about the exhibition, about the things that we had seen and about the trains!

So back to our reading, Jesus with Peter, John, and James were going off to pray but not just to pray - up a mountain. It was not unusual to see Jesus wanting to pray but he was generally alone in a quiet place. Something was about to happen, but the disciples did not know what they were to expect, they were excited and full of expectation.

They arrived at the top of the mountain and the three disciples were tired. These were fit men used to hard work so it must have been hard work to get up the mountain. Yet Jesus started to pray.

What happened next was a truly amazing event, Jesus was transformed, "the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning. Two men, Moses and Elijah appeared in glorious splendour, talking with Jesus".

The disciples had followed Jesus with no expectation of what was about to happen unknowing that they were about to see the transfiguration. Moses and Elijah appeared to stand beside Jesus symbolising that Jesus is their successor.

He is bringing a new covenant from God for all people both Jews and Gentiles to replace the old covenant which Moses had

given to the Jews. He is reassuring the disciples that even though Jesus must suffer they must listen to him and obey.

For the disciples it was a time of great joy but something they were told not speak about.

This is the bit of the story I want us to focus on today, “a cloud appeared and enveloped them....and a voice came from the cloud, saying This is my Son, whom I have chosen; Listen to him”.

To follow Jesus requires obeying him, which requires hearing him, which requires listening to him. As simple as that might sound this is the heart of our journey together through the coming season of Lent. We will seek to listen to him. We will try to avoid the temptation of believing we know what he meant. We will lean into what he actually said. We will hang on his words and ask them to challenge us, shape us, break us, and heal us.

To listen to someone means to pay attention to what they say — to their words. Over the course of our lifetime, we all do a lot of talking! How many words would you estimate the average person speaks in their lifetime? Got a number in your mind.. one expert estimates, the average person speaks 900,000,000 words over the course of a lifetime.

Multiply that by those in your own family or multiply by the numbers sitting in this church today or watching the service at home. In no time we have billions and billions of words bouncing around us all the time. That’s before you turn on the TV, radio, or check into social media.

Now, how many words would you estimate are in the Bible? The King James Version boasts 783,137 words. And how many of those would you estimate are the recorded words of Jesus?

36,450. Very roughly speaking, if you take out the duplicated words as they are repeated across the synoptic Gospels, it gets us down to less than 20,000 words.

I need to be careful here, but studies show the average woman speaks approximately 20,000 words a day and the average man speaks approximately 7,000 words a day!

The millions of words we will speak over the course of our lifetime and the billions of words we will hear, doesn't it make sense that we would want to give the absolute fullness of our attention to the twenty-thousand or so words spoken by the most significant person in the history of history—Jesus Christ, The Son of God? The second person of the Trinity—who among those 20,000 words said, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away" (Luke 21:33).

I challenge both you and me to get ready as we enter the season of lent. Will we take the challenge of actively listen to Jesus, and then actively respond? It sounds simple but is a dangerous proposition. There is no way to predict how His Word may transform your life.

Yet remember this as the Father stated, "This is my Son, whom I have chosen; Listen to Him."

We have been to the Transfiguration Mountain, and we are on the road to the Cross, which is the road, the resurrection, Jesus has something to say to each one of us. Are you ready to receive his words for us?

How will you hear him?

What will it take to get yourself to a place where you can hear him? **Amen**

## **Musical offering**

### **Creed**

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only son, our Lord,  
born of 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;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and life everlasting. Amen.

### **Hymn: Father hear the prayer we offer (MP 132)**

Father, hear the prayer we offer:  
not for ease that prayer shall be,  
but for strength, that we may ever  
live our lives courageously.

Not for ever in green pastures  
do we ask our way to be:  
but by steep and rugged pathways  
would be strive to climb to Thee.

Not for ever by still waters  
would we idly quiet stay;  
but would smite the living fountains  
from the rocks along our way.

Be our strength in hours of weakness,  
in our wanderings be our guide;  
through endeavour, failure, danger,  
Father, be Thou at our side.

Let our path be bright or dreary,  
storm or sunshine be our share;  
may our souls, in hope unwearied,  
make Thy work our ceaseless prayer.

### **Prayers of Intercession** - Led by Jennifer

Really the only perfect prayer is “Thy will be done”. It covers everything. However, as we pray in more detail, we are in the presence of God; we are trusting Him to hear and answer us and we ourselves are changed. So – let’s ask, let’s intercede, let’s pray, let’s recognise the answers as they come!

1. Dear Lord and Father we are so privileged to be welcomed into Your presence and to be able to cast all our cares upon You. Currently we are so concerned about the situation with Russia and the Ukraine. We feel helpless so we bring the leaders and peoples of both countries to You, asking for their protection and the avoidance of full-scale war.

**Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.**

2. We pray for the millions who have had to leave their homes because of conflict and poverty. Please support the agencies that are trying to bring food and shelter. Guide us in what we can do in prayer and financial support.

**Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.**

3. We pray for those in authority in our own country that they may have wisdom, integrity, and vision in their discussions and plans. We remember especially the way forward regarding Covid and what help we should give to the situation in the Ukraine.

**Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.**

4. We pray for our Queen as she recovers from Covid. Help her to have proper rest so that she will be well soon and be able to enjoy the celebrations of her 70 years on the throne. We thank You for her deep, lifetime faith in You and for the example and encouragement it is to us.

**Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.**

5. Lord we pray for our village – for the schools, the surgery, community services, the shops, pubs and restaurants, the fire station, the residential homes, holiday accommodation, and all who visit. We pray for the life of our church as we return to more normal services. We pray for the worship, witness, and welcome that we give. May we be willing to be the channels of Your love as you guide us to those who might need a friend. Be with the ministry team, the PCC and Julie as they seek Your guidance in the way You want the church to develop and grow.

**Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.**

6. We pray for the bereaved and ill people in our community, asking for your comfort, presence, and healing for them. Bless the meetings of the bereavement group that people may be supported and loved. Be with those who take funerals.

**Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.**

7. We pray for our tithe partners:-

For Andrew and Shona Goodman, serving God in Thailand.

For Nelson's Journey as they support children and young people who have been bereaved.

For Tansen Mission Hospital in Nepal and Rachel Karrach who is the medical director.

For Christians against Poverty who support families who need help with financial management. They guide them in ways to get out of debt and its causes. They operate locally.

For the King's Lynn Night Shelter staff who help the homeless with accommodation and food

For Transaid, in Tanzania, which provides bicycle ambulances for women in labour and children. They also train lorry drivers and teach basic mechanics.

For the Leprosy Mission who are involved in the diagnosis, treatment, and reconstructive surgery for people with leprosy.

**Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.**

8. Lastly, Lord, we pray for ourselves that we may come ever closer to You; love and serve You more and more and bring the love of Jesus to all You put in our paths.

Accept these prayers for the sake of Jesus our Lord and Saviour.  
**Amen**

**The Collect**

Hymn: **Go tell it on the mountain (MP 179)**

*Go, tell in on the mountain,  
over the hills and everywhere;  
go, tell it on the mountain  
that Jesus is His name.*

He possessed no riches,  
No home to lay His head;  
He saw the needs of others  
And cared for them instead.

*Go tell it on the mountain.....*

He reached out and touched them,  
the blind, the deaf, the lame;  
He spoke and listened gladly  
to anyone who came.

*Go tell it on the mountain.....*

Some turned away in anger,  
with hatred in the eye;  
they tried Him and condemned Him,  
then led Him out to die.

*Go tell it on the mountain.....*

'Father, now forgive them' –  
those were the words He said;  
in three more days He was alive  
and risen from the dead.

*Go tell it on the mountain.....*

He still comes to people,  
His life moves through the lands;  
He uses us for speaking,  
He touches with our hands.

*Go tell it on the mountain.....*

**Blessing**

The Lord bless us and keep us, the Lord make his face shine upon us and be gracious to us, the Lord look kindly on us and give us peace; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be among us and remain with us. Amen.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.  
**and also with you.**

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