



Heacham Parish Church



Sunday Service – Lent 1 6th March 2022

The Greeting

This is Heacham Parish Church on-line. You join us for our Service of Worship for the 1st Sunday of 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.

We come from scattered lives to meet with God.
Let us recognize his presence with us.
As God's people we have gathered:
let us worship him together.

Let everything be said and done in the name of the Lord Jesus,
giving thanks to God through Jesus Christ.
Sing psalms, hymns, and sacred songs:
let us sing to God with thankful hearts.
Open our lips, Lord:
and we shall praise your name.

Hymn: **The kingdom of God (HON 646)**

The kingdom of God
is justice and joy,
for Jesus restores
what sin would destroy;
God's power and glory
in Jesus we know,
and here and hereafter
the kingdom shall grow.

The kingdom of God
is mercy and grace,
the captives are freed,
the sinners find place,
the outcast are welcomed
God's banquet to share,
and hope is awakened
in place of despair.

The kingdom of God
is challenge and choice,
believe the good news,
repent and rejoice!
His love for us sinners
brought Christ to his cross,
our crisis of judgement
for gain or for loss.

God's kingdom is come,
the gift and the goal,
in Jesus begun,
in heaven made whole;
the heirs of the kingdom
shall answer his call,
and all things cry 'Glory!'
to God all in all.

Prayer of preparation

We meet in the presence of God
who knows our needs,
hears our cries,
feels our pain,
and heals our wounds.
Be with us, Spirit of God;
nothing can separate us from your love.

Breathe on us, breath of God;
fill us with your saving power.
Speak in us, wisdom of God;
bring strength, healing, and peace.

The Lord is here.
His Spirit is with us.

Prayers of penitence

The word of God is living and active.
It judges the thoughts and intentions of the heart.
All is open and laid bare before the eyes of him
to whom we give account.
We confess our sins in penitence and faith.

Lord God,
we have sinned against you;
we have done evil in your sight.
We are sorry and repent.
Have mercy on us according to your love.
Wash away our wrongdoing and cleanse us from our
sin.
Renew a right spirit within us
and restore us to the joy of your salvation,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

May almighty God,
who sent his Son into the world to save sinners,
bring us his pardon and peace, now and for ever.
Amen.

Hymn: **Beauty for brokenness (HON 60)**

Beauty for brokenness,
hope for despair,
Lord, in the suffering,
this is our prayer.
Bread for the children,
justice, joy, peace,
sunrise to sunset
your kingdom increase.

Shelter for fragile lives,
cures for their ills,
work for the craftsmen,
trade for their skills.
Land for the dispossessed,
rights for the weak,
voices to plead the cause
of those who can't speak.

*God of the poor,
friend of the weak,
give us compassion, we pray,
melt our cold hearts,
let tears fall like rain.
Come, change our love
from a spark to a flame.*

Refuge from cruel wars,
havens from fear,
cities for sanctu'ry,
freedoms to share.
Peace to the killing fields,
scorched earth to green,
Christ for the bitterness,
his cross for the pain.

Rest for the ravaged earth,
oceans and streams,
plundered and poisoned,
our future, our dreams.
Lord, end our madness,
carelessness, greed;
make us content with
the things that we need.

Lighten our darkness,
breathe on this flame,
until your justice
burns brightly again;
until the nations
learn of your ways,
seek your salvation
and bring you their praise.

Bible reading – Luke 4: 1-13 read by Andrew

A reflection – by Veronica

Today is the 1st Sunday of Lent - I wonder what your plans are for lent this year, and how you are getting on with them?

Have you given up chocolate, or beer, or caffeine, or social media?

Have you committed to pray or read your Bible more?

Have you got a Lent book or app to look at every day?

Have you signed up to the Diocesan 40 prayers for 40 days?

Have you looked at the updated prayer board at the back of church with 40 suggestions for prayer?

Have you responded to John's challenge to us last week, to listen to Jesus this lent?

Within the church calendar, lent gives us the opportunity to reflect, review, and act.

Our bible reading is a well-known one, with Jesus being tested in the wilderness, I want to look at these today in terms of identity and vocation. Who am I and what am I called to do/be?

I found these words from Rowan Williams helpful as I prepared this week:

Who am I? and What am I here for? These crucial questions about identity and vocation are ones Jesus now faces in the desert and we will often face too.

After the assurance of his heavenly Father's voice at his Baptism: 'You are my Son, whom I love, with You I am well pleased' the wilderness is where Jesus will clarify and define the Kingdom he wants to build in the hearts and minds of people.

Forty days alone in the wilderness will take Jesus to the limits of his physical endurance and strength. Exhausted and hungry he will experience deep despair, and in his mental struggle with temptation, he will face the reality of evil. But it will also become a place of transparency and spiritual clarity which shapes the priorities of his ministry.

Jesus will face subtle temptations in his mind all probing and doubting his identity beginning with 'If you are the Son of God' then prove it. Prove it by turning stones into bread. Prove it by leaping from the temple roof to impress people. Prove it by bowing down before the throne of power, greed and popularity

making them the signs of your Kingdom. But secure in his identity and assured of his Father's love Jesus resists these temptations and clings on to his vocation.

On this, the first Sunday in Lent we are invited to enter the wilderness through the doorway of our imagination: are we willing to receive the vocation God has prepared for us and then to put it into practice.

For us here in Heacham (or wherever you are reading or watching this) what does it mean for us here and now this lent in 2022?

- 1) Our identity: I think this lent each of us needs to spend time listening to Jesus, listening to God, to hear God say to each of us 'you are my child whom I love' we need to be reminded of our identity in Christ, as loved children, knowing there is nothing we need to do or be to earn that love, Jesus has already done that! We as a church need to do the same, to reflect on our identity in Christ to shape our priorities in ministry.
- 2) Our vocation: secondly we need to reflect on what our vocation is, what we are being called to do here and now, as a church and as individuals. This lent I am particularly asking you to do so in relation to Heacham Parish Church.

As a church we need your help, we need to galvanise the gifts, skills, and talents of everyone, so that we can continue to build the church and kingdom here in Heacham and the local area.

If you are in the church email list, or paper delivery list you will have received a copy of 'Heacham Parish Church needs your help' If you have not had one, and are in church you can pick one up from the welcome desk or if you are watching this on-line contact the church office or me and we will send you one.

Please read though this carefully and prayerfully and see what you can do, God gives each of us gifts and experience, for the church to continue to grow we need each of us to do our bit, to use our gifts and talents. It was St David's day this week, and one of the things he is quoted as saying is, 'Be joyful, keep the faith and do the little things.' Please prayerfully consider what little things, or big things you can do for God within Heacham Parish Church.

Each of us is loved and valued by God, let's receive that afresh this lent claiming our identity , and then reflect and act on that love by action, receiving our vocation and then serving him and building his church and kingdom here in Heacham.

Amen

Hymn: **Forty days & Forty nights in Judah's desert (HON191)**

Forty days and forty nights
in Judah's desert Jesus stayed;
all alone he fought temptation,
all alone he fasted, prayed.
When the heat of passion rules me,
when I feel alone, betrayed,
Lord, you meet me in the desert,
strong in faith and unafraid.

In the garden, his disciples
slept the darkest hours away,
but our Lord did not condemn them
when they would not watch or pray.
Make me constant in your service,
keeping watch both night and day.
Give me grace that I may never
such a love as yours betray.

When the rooster crowed at daybreak,
Peter's fear and panic grew.
He denied three times the charge
that Jesus was a man he knew.
When my love for you is challenged,
when the faithful ones are few,
give me courage and conviction
to proclaim my Lord anew.

Soldiers came, the Galilean
was arrested, bound and tried,
and upon a wooden cross
the Son of God was crucified.
In the darkest hour of torture,
Jesus raised his head and cried,
'Why hast thou forsaken me?,'
and faithful to the end, he died.

With a sword they pierced his side –
himself, they jeered, he could not save;
Joseph then prepared the body
with sweet spices for the grave.
This the precious, broken body
which for me my Saviour gave;
such a love as his I long for,
such a faith as his I crave.

Affirmation of faith

Do you believe and trust in God the Father?

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

Do you believe and trust in his Son Jesus Christ?

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,**

**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 to judge the living and the dead.**

Do you believe and trust in the Holy Spirit?

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

Prayers of Intercession - Led by Lynda

In peace let us pray to the Lord.

Thank you, Lord, that you came to a troubled world to bring us the gift of new life that we could have peace in our hearts and a hope anchored in Jesus Christ.

We lift before you the people of Ukraine, and we cry out to you for peace in this nation that has found itself at war with its neighbour.

We cry out to you to bring hope for a people who are in turmoil and despair.

We cry out to you for your new life where there is death and destruction.

Lord in your mercy – **Hear our prayer**

Oh Lord, we remember too that there are many other nations around the world where there is war and unrest, where terrorism and political turmoil is leading to death and injury for many.

Lord help us remember the people where there is civil war - in countries such as Afghanistan, Yemen, Myanmar, Syria, Ethiopia and Eritrea, and Libya.

Lord help us to remember the people who live under constant terrorist threats and political unrest in countries we do not often hear about in our news such as Algeria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Tanzania, and Tunisia.

Lord we bring before you countries where ethnic violence is leading to great misery for the population – such as in South Sudan.

Lord we remember the people living in Central and South American countries such as Mexico and Colombia where the so-called drug wars result in as many deaths and casualties as if the countries were at war with another nation.

Lord it is overwhelming how much pain, and sorrow there is, and we do not have the words or wisdom to know how to pray. But Lord you do hear the very cry of our hearts as we lift these impossible situations to you.

Lord in your mercy – **Hear our prayer**

Lord we pray for the leaders of the nations, that you will guide them in the ways of freedom, justice, and truth.

Lord we pray for all who are working to bring peace and reconciliation. Strengthen those who seek to bring an end to warfare, and to those who bring healing to body, mind, or

spirit. Resource and strengthen those who can rebuild and re-equip nations.

Lord we pray for all those who work to bring peace and hope to those who have lost so much.

Lord, in your mercy – **Hear our prayer**

Lord we pray for your miraculous, redemptive love, to be poured out onto these troubled lands.

Enable us to pray for our enemies, and those who wish us harm. We pray that you will turn the hearts of all to kindness and friendship.

Let us be a people who can reveal your love in a hurting world. Let us be a channel for your peace.

Lord, in your mercy - **Hear our prayer**

And finally, Lord we lift up to you those we know by name who need your touch today. For those who are mourning, for those in pain and those who are struggling we silently lift them by name to you.

Lord bring your perfect peace that passes all our understanding. Let your river of peace wash over us all.

**Most holy God and Father,
hear our prayers for all who strive for peace
and all who fight for justice.
Help us, who today remember the cost of war,
to work for a better tomorrow;
and, as we commend to you lives lost in terror and
conflict,
bring us all, in the end, to the peace of your presence;
through Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

The Collect

Heavenly Father,
your Son battled with the powers of darkness,
and grew closer to you in the desert:
help us to use these days to grow in wisdom and prayer
that we may witness to your saving love
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Hymn: Who can sound the depths of sorrow (HON 747)

Who can sound the depths of sorrow
in the Father heart of God,
for the children we've rejected,
for the lives so deeply scarred?
And each light that we've extinguished
has brought darkness to our land:
upon our nation, upon our nation
have mercy, Lord.

We have scorned the truth you gave us,
we have bowed to other lords.
We have sacrificed the children
on the altar of our gods.
O let truth again shine on us,
let your holy fear descend:
upon our nation, upon our nation
have mercy, Lord.

(Men) Who can stand before your anger?
Who can face your piercing eyes?
For you love the weak and helpless,
And you hear the victims' cries.

(All) Yes, you are a God of justice,
and your judgement surely comes:
upon our nation, upon our nation
have mercy, Lord.

(Women) Who will stand against the violence?
Who will comfort those who mourn?
In an age of cruel rejection,
who will build for love a home?

(All) Come and shake us into action,
come and melt our hearts of stone:
upon your people, upon your people
have mercy, Lord.

Who can sound the depths of mercy
in the Father heart of God?
For there is a Man of sorrows
who for sinners shed his blood.
He can heal the wounds of nations,
he can wash the guilty clean:
because of Jesus, because of Jesus
have mercy, Lord.

Christ has brought us out of darkness
to dwell in his marvellous light.

Here are words you may trust.
Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead:
he is our salvation, our eternal glory.
If we die with him, we shall live with him;
if we endure, we shall reign with him.
If we deny him, he will deny us;
if we are faithless, he keeps faith.

For he has broken the power of death
**and brought life and immortality to light through
the gospel.**

And now we give you thanks through Jesus Christ our Lord.
In him who rose from the dead
our hope of resurrection dawned.
The sting of death has been drawn
by the glorious promise of his risen life.

Closing Prayers

Jesus, lord of time,
hold us in your eternity.
Jesus, image of God,
travel with us the life of faith.
Jesus, friend of sinners,
heal the brokenness of our world.
Jesus, lord of tomorrow,
draw us into your future. Amen.

May God the Father, who does not despise the broken spirit,
give each one of us a contrite heart.

Amen.

May Christ, who bore our sins in his body on the tree,
heal each one of us by his wounds.

Amen.

May the Holy Spirit, who leads us into all truth,
speak to each one of us words of pardon and peace.

Amen.

And may the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy
Spirit be among us and remain upon each one of us now and
forever.

Amen.

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