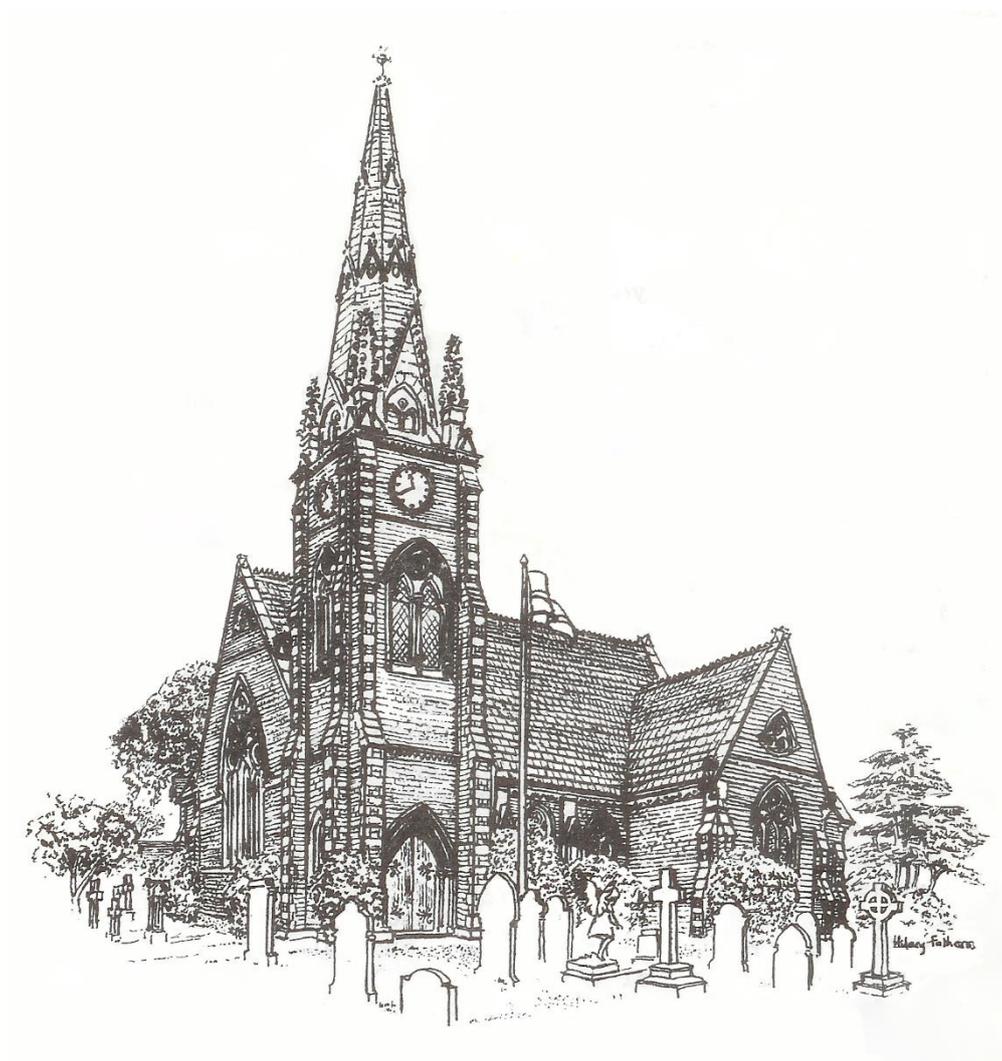


# All Saints' Church Thornton Hough



**Morning Prayer**

**Epiphany 2**

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Online (from 10:30am)

## The gathering

Welcome in the name of Christ.  
God's grace, mercy and peace be with you  
*and also with you*

## Hymn: O God you search me and you know me

- 1 O God, you search me and you know me.  
All my thoughts lie open to your gaze.  
When I walk or lie down you are before me:  
ever the maker and keeper of my days.
- 2 You know my resting and my rising.  
You discern my purpose from afar,  
and with love everlasting you besiege me:  
in every moment of life and death, you are.
- 3 Before a word is on my tongue, Lord,  
you have known its meaning through and through.  
You are with me beyond my understanding:  
God of my present, my past and future, too.
- 4 Although your Spirit is upon me,  
still I search for shelter from your light.  
There is nowhere on earth I can escape you:  
even the darkness is radiant in your sight.
- 5 For you created me and shaped me,  
gave me life within my mother's womb.  
For the wonder of who I am, I praise you:  
safe in your hands, all creation is made new.

Bernadette Farrell (b. 1957) based on Psalm 139

Reproduced from *Ancient & Modern* Electronic Words Edition, number 747

Words and Music: © 1992 Bernadette Farrell. Published by OCP, 5536 NE Hassalo, Portland, OR 97213, USA. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

## A prayer whilst lighting a candle

*You may like to join in this action and light a candle in your own home.*

*(Do remember to keep it in a holder away from curtains and never leave a flame unattended.)*

God of our days and years  
we set this time apart for you.  
Form us in the likeness of Christ  
so that our lives may glorify you.

***Amen.***

## Prayers of Penitence

Hear the words of the angel to Joseph:  
'You shall call his name Jesus,  
for he will save his people from their sins.'  
Therefore let us seek the forgiveness of God  
through Jesus the Saviour of the world.  
Come, let us return to the Lord and say:  
***Lord our God,  
in our sin we have avoided your call.  
Our love for you is like a morning cloud,  
like the dew that goes away early.  
Have mercy on us;  
deliver us from judgement;  
bind up our wounds and revive us;  
in Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.***

## Absolution

May the God of love bring us back to himself,  
forgive us our sins, and assure us of his eternal love  
in Jesus Christ our Lord.  
***Amen.***

## Bible Readings

### 1 Samuel 3:1-10

#### The Lord calls Samuel

The boy Samuel ministered before the Lord under Eli. In those days the word of the Lord was rare; there were not many visions.

One night Eli, whose eyes were becoming so weak that he could barely see, was lying down in his usual place. The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the house of the Lord, where the ark of God was.

Then the Lord called Samuel.

Samuel answered, 'Here I am.' And he ran to Eli and said, 'Here I am; you called me.'

But Eli said, 'I did not call; go back and lie down.' So he went and lay down.

Again the Lord called, 'Samuel!' And Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, 'Here I am; you called me.'

'My son,' Eli said, 'I did not call; go back and lie down.'

Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord: the word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him.

A third time the Lord called, 'Samuel!' And Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, 'Here I am; you called me.'

Then Eli realised that the Lord was calling the boy. So Eli told Samuel, 'Go and lie down, and if he calls you, say, "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening."' So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

The Lord came and stood there, calling as at the other times, 'Samuel! Samuel!' Then Samuel said, 'Speak, for your servant is listening.'

## **John 1:43-51**

### **Jesus calls Philip and Nathanael**

The next day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. Finding Philip, he said to him, 'Follow me.'

Philip, like Andrew and Peter, was from the town of Bethsaida. Philip found Nathanael and told him, 'We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote – Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.'

'Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?' Nathanael asked.

'Come and see,' said Philip.

When Jesus saw Nathanael approaching, he said of him, 'Here truly is an Israelite in whom there is no deceit.'

'How do you know me?' Nathanael asked.

Jesus answered, 'I saw you while you were still under the fig-tree before Philip called you.'

Then Nathanael declared, 'Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the king of Israel.'

Jesus said, 'You believe because I told you I saw you under the fig-tree. You will see greater things than that.'<sup>51</sup> He then added, 'Very truly I tell you, you will see "heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on" the Son of Man.'

### **Reflection: Who's Calling?**

We settle down to pray with good intentions, but there are so many calls upon us, so many distractions and obstacles!

Calls to say hello, calls for help, calls to ask for something, to pay for something, calls upon our time and attention which drain and overwhelm.

These obstacles are not new or unique to us in our modern, multi-media, 24-hour on-call world. Look at what happened with the call of Samuel, who would become one of the great priests of God.

In the time of the chief priest Eli (the name, which, ironically, reflects the name of God), worship in the temple had become corrupt. Eli's sons, Hophni and Phinehas, "were treating the Lord's offering with contempt" (I Samuel 2:17) and Eli himself was frail and almost blind. This poor eyesight is a symbol of his poor insight: insight into his sons' appalling behaviour and, more importantly, into God's word. Eli struggles to see and also to hear God: "the word of the Lord was rare; there were not many visions."

In our Gospel reading, Nathanael is cynical about Philip's excited call that "we have found the one Moses wrote about". How can anything good come out of some little village in the middle of nowhere?

Thank God for persistence!

For God's insistent call which will not be silenced by our own failings and failures, that continues to call even when we might be cynical and full of doubt.

God calls into lives in all kinds of ways. The young Samuel, who "did not yet know the Lord", was sensitive to the voice which called him. He didn't know at first who it was, but he was eager and ready to follow. Eli, even in his weakened state, was able to guide Samuel to the threshold of a new relationship with God.

Philip is not deterred by Nathanael's cynicism, but simply says, "Come and see." God's desire works in partnership with humanity in order to share the exciting, life-changing, world-changing news of his love.

Nathanael is amazed that Jesus saw him before he saw Jesus. His question, "How do you know me?" is one which we could reflect on for ages. It is a knowledge which goes beyond our human understanding. It is a knowledge which recognises, loves and gives life to things in ourselves which we do not know.

It is a knowledge which calls out to us in the very depths of our being, and also which calls out in us that which we cannot know for ourselves. In hearing and accepting that call, we are transformed.

So much around us may feel very debilitating, throwing us into disarray, doubt and even cynicism. Yet these accounts of the call of Samuel and Nathanael remind us that whoever we are, however we are feeling, God calls us. Be patient. Just follow that encouragement to "Come and see", without any expectations or provisos.

And even if we are feeling weak, or perhaps full of bounce and joy, we too have a place in encouraging others to hear God's call. What an amazing privilege to be participating with God in this way! Remember that your interactions with others matter. We live in relationships with others. You may be the first step in

helping someone grow in their faith. So do keep in touch – both with our loving Father God, and with one another.

### **Affirmation of Faith**

Let us declare our faith in God.

***We believe in God the Father,  
from whom every family  
in heaven and on earth is named.***

***We believe in God the Son,  
who lives in our hearts through faith,  
and fills us with his love.***

***We believe in God the Holy Spirit,  
who strengthens us  
with power from on high.***

***We believe in one God;  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.***

***Amen.***

### **Prayers**

#### **The Collect for the Second Sunday of Epiphany**

Almighty God, in Christ you make all things new;  
transform the poverty of our nature  
by the riches of your grace,  
and in the renewal of our lives make known your heavenly glory;  
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.***

Seeking the salvation of the world,  
let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us:

***Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;***

***thy kingdom come;***

***thy will be done;***

***on earth as it is in heaven.***

***Give us this day our daily bread.***

***And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.***

***And lead us not into temptation;***

***but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
the power and the glory,  
for ever and ever.  
Amen.***

**Hymn: Longing for light we wait in darkness**

- 1 Longing for light, we wait in darkness.  
Longing for truth, we turn to you.  
Make us your own, your holy people,  
light for the world to see.  
*Christ, be our light!*  
*Shine in our hearts. Shine through the darkness.*  
*Christ, be our light!*  
*Shine in your church gathered today.*
- 2 Longing for peace, our world is troubled.  
Longing for hope, many despair.  
Your word alone has power to save us.  
Make us your living voice.
- 3 Longing for food, many are hungry.  
Longing for water, many still thirst.  
Make us your bread, broken for others,  
shared until all are fed.
- 4 Longing for shelter, many are homeless.  
Longing for warmth, many are cold.  
Make us your building, sheltering others,  
walls made of living stone.
- 5 Many the gifts, many the people,  
many the hearts that yearn to belong.  
Let us be servants to one another,  
making your kingdom come.

Bernadette Farrell (*b.* 1957)

Reproduced from *Ancient & Modern* Electronic Words Edition, number 42

Words and Music: © 1993 Bernadette Farrell. Published by OCP, 5536 NE Hassalo, Portland, OR 97213, USA. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

**Closing Prayer**

***In darkness and in light,  
in trouble and in joy,  
help us, heavenly Father,  
to trust your love,***

***to serve your purpose,  
and to praise your name;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.***

## **The Blessing**

Christ the Son of God perfect in you the image of his glory  
and gladden your hearts with the good news of his kingdom,  
and the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always.  
***Amen.***

Bible reading from New International Version - UK (NIVUK) Holy Bible, New International Version® Anglicized, NIV®  
Copyright © 1979, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.  
Material in this service is drawn from *New Patterns for Worship* ©Archbishops' Council 2002 Church House Publishing  
Words of the hymns are reproduced under the CCLI licences 874163 & 874170

## **Contact information**

<b>Vicar</b>	Revd. Vicky Barrett	336 2766 vicar@allsaintsth.org.uk <i>The Vicar's normal day off is Friday.</i>
<b>Churchwardens</b>	Alice Jones Pam Machin	alice@allsaintsth.org.uk 625 5820 pam@allsaintsth.org.uk
<b>Parish Office</b>		336 1654 office@allsaintsth.org.uk
<b>Verger</b>	Margaret Gamble	336 7540
<b>PCC Secretary</b>	Sue Stinson	342 4800 sue@allsaintsth.org.uk
<b>PCC Treasurer</b>	Iain Stinson	342 4800 iain@stinson.org.uk
<b>Planned Giving Secretary</b>	Sydney Deakin	334 6111
<b>Prayer Link Coordinator</b>	Rhona Mayhew	334 5637 rhona@allsaintsth.org.uk
<b>Events Coordinator</b>	Rachel Brothwell	07903 275375
<b>Safeguarding Officer</b>	Linda Arch	safeguarding@allsaintsth.org.uk
<b>Health &amp; Safety Officer</b>	Graham Seagrave	health&safety@allsaintsth.org.uk
<b>Parish Hall Caretaker and Bookings</b>	Margaret Gamble	336 7540
<b>Director of Music</b>	Iain Stinson	342 4800 iain@stinson.org.uk
<b>Magazine Contributions</b>		editor@allsaintsth.org.uk
<b>Fabric, Health &amp; Safety</b>		buildings@allsaintsth.org.uk

**[www.allsaintsth.org.uk](http://www.allsaintsth.org.uk)**