

# 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2021

## The paper-version Service



**To Begin:** Find a Bible and a comfortable place. If safe, light a candle and read prayerfully through the service. If you have access to worship music, choose a song and listen to it as you begin or read, or even sing, the song from this Sunday's Service set out below.

**Opening Prayer:** Almighty and Holy King, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **Song:**

In the darkness we were waiting  
Without hope, without light  
'Til from Heaven You came running  
There was mercy in Your eyes  
To fulfil the law and prophets  
To a virgin came the Word  
From a throne of endless glory  
To a cradle in the dirt

*Praise the Father, praise the Son  
Praise the Spirit, three in one  
God of glory, Majesty  
Praise forever to the King of Kings*

To reveal the kingdom coming  
And to reconcile the lost  
To redeem the whole creation  
You did not despise the cross  
For even in your suffering  
You saw to the other side  
Knowing this was our salvation  
Jesus for our sake you died

*Praise the Father, praise the Son...*

And the morning that You rose  
All of Heaven held its breath  
'Til that stone was moved for good  
For the Lamb had conquered death  
And the dead rose from their tombs  
And the angels stood in awe  
For the souls of all who'd come  
To the Father are restored

And the church of Christ was born  
Then the Spirit lit the flame  
Now this gospel truth of old  
Shall not kneel, shall not faint  
By His blood and in His name  
In His freedom I am free  
For the love of Jesus Christ  
Who has resurrected me

*Praise the Father, praise the Son...*

**Read: John 12:1-19 – God is King.** *A summary of the talk given by Howard Wright.*

John has been revealing Jesus to us as God, Messiah and King and challenging us to believe. Jesus is clearly God among us, as evidenced by so many signs and is now revealed as *THE KING*.

Mary pours perfume on Jesus. This anointing is a sign of his kingship, his significance and importance. And of Mary's love and service, and, as Jesus points out, a preparation for his death.

Though Jesus has previously turned down chances to be acclaimed as king, here at the Triumphal Entry he accepts the welcome and declaration. In this he is fulfilling history – the Maccabean heroes and kings, the origination of Hanukkah, had previously been welcomed with Palm branches and Hosanna – now Jesus picks up this mantle as the Saviour King of the Jewish nation, and indeed, of all people.

Moreover, he is fulfilling prophecy – See Zechariah 9:9.

And now everybody knows who Jesus is, or they at least know, who he is claiming to be.

How will we respond?

The crowd are exuberant, but fickle. Jesus is not enough for them, he is not here to entertain, he's not here to make them comfortable – reduce taxes and increase public spending.

He's here to invite belief and obedience.

What kind of God do we hope for? What kind of King will we believe in? Will we believe and live?

For the Chief Priests, Teachers of the Law, and Pharisees, Jesus doesn't fit their plans, their lifestyle, or their box. Jesus is not enough for them, he has his own agenda, he's not a person or power they can manipulate or command, he's the King, they must either bow to him, or they are lost. The tragic irony is Jesus brought life; they sought his death.

So, again, what kind of God do we hope for? What kind of King will we believe in? Will we believe and live?

Jesus is not a magic or power we can command, he's God, the King, he won't obey us – but he will, as we will see, love and serve – and invite us to, likewise, love and serve each other in obedience to him.

What about the disciples? A few are mentioned by name.

Judas was one of the leading disciples, but he was sadly looking out for number one. Jesus is not enough for him, he didn't want a donkey, and suffering, he wanted money, power and glory – and he ends up losing it all.

Martha has already declared whom she thinks Jesus is, (See John 11:27)

and she is willing to lovingly serve.

And Mary is all in. She is not worried about what others would think or say. To let her hair down in her society was a truly shocking act. And in the village of Bethany, which means the house of the poor, she pours out on Jesus perfume worth a year's salary!

As Judas, selfishly and judgmentally points out, it could have been given to the poor. Jesus' response, which includes a quote from the Old Testament, is not to put Judas in his place, but to remind them to be openhanded to all, especially the poor. Mary's love and worship is received as an act of generous worship – giving God his rightful place as King and Lord.

The other disciples are not mentioned directly, but even in uncertainty we see them believing and following their King.

So, again, what about us? What kind of God do we hope for? What kind of King will we believe in? Will we believe and live?



How do we feel when Jesus doesn't do stuff our way, doesn't fix our lives the way we want, and when we face

pandemics, and other life challenging issues?

Do we want a Jesus that makes us happy, as the crowd wanted?

Will we love and serve God and others, or like Judas, simply look out for ourselves and our interests? Might we even demand that Jesus bows to us, or we'll hound him out, like the Pharisees and Teachers of the Law?

Or will we believe in Jesus, the Messiah, the Saviour King, God among us, and in believing will we live, serving and loving in obedience to the King?

If we want to assess how well you're doing making God King, prayerfully look at your diary and how you spend your time, and at your bank statement and how you spend your money!

There are opportunities for us over the coming months to make this very practical – as we restart and launch various events and activities, we will need everyone of us to step-up and pitch in with prayer, time, money, and skill that together we might serve the King, growing deeper in him and larger in mission.

Mary, Martha, most of the disciples and some of the crowd and even, a few of the Pharisees believed and lived – they saw the church launched and played their part in being and bringing Good News, starting locally, to the whole world.

**Prayers:** *Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.* (Philippians 4:4-6)



- Pray for this day, and the coming week.
- Pray for justice, mercy, peace, and hope.
- Pray for individuals, for neighbours, for family and friends.
- Pray for the Church.

**Collect: 12<sup>th</sup> after Trinity:** *Almighty and everlasting God, you are always more ready to hear than we to pray and to give more than either we desire or deserve: pour down upon us the abundance of your mercy, forgiving us those things of which our conscience is afraid and giving us those good things which we are not worthy to ask but through the merits and mediation of 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.*



**The Lord's Prayer:** Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. **Amen.**

**Blessing** to be declared over yourselves, COGS, the communities around us and our whole nation. 'The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face towards you and give you peace.' (Numbers 6:24-26 NIV).

**The Notices:** We are now holding services in the building on Sundays at 8am. and 9.30am. Further information is on our website or by ringing our vicar, Howard. 01420 563344.

