

Sunday April 3rd 2022: Fifth Sunday in Lent

For use by the Central Norfolk Circuit at 10.30 am or other suitable time.



Hymn StF 516 H&P 47

What shall I do my God to love / my Saviour, and the world's to praise?
Whose tenderest compassions move / to me and all the fallen race,
whose mercy is divinely free / for all the fallen race, and me!

I long to know, and to make known / the heights and depths of love divine,
the kindness thou to me hast shown / whose every sin was counted thine;
my God for me resigned his breath/ he died to save my soul from death.

How shall I thank thee for the grace / on my and all the world bestowed?
O that my every breath were praise! O that my heart were filled with God!
My heart would then with love o'erflow / and all my life thy glory show.

Charles Wesley (1707 – 1788)

Prayer

Bring to God your prayer of Confession and then use this prayer:

Look upon us, O Lord,
and let all the darkness of our souls vanish before the beams of thy brightness.
Fill us with holy love, and open to us the treasures of thy wisdom.
All our desire is known unto thee, therefore perfect what thou hast begun,
and what thy Spirit has awakened us to ask in prayer.

We seek thy face, turn thy face unto us and show us thy glory.
Then shall our longing be satisfied, and our peace shall be perfect.

Augustine (354 – 430 AD)

Psalm set for today: Psalm 126

To think about

There are various images and 'word pictures' in this Psalm. See how many you can identify.
N.B. Find out what you can about the Negev in order to understand this particular reference.

Gospel Reading set for today: John 12 v 1 – 8

Hymn StF 446 SOF 851

I will offer up my life / in spirit and truth / pouring out the oil of love / as my worship to you.
In surrender I must give my every part / Lord, receive the sacrifice / of a broken heart.

Jesus, what can I give, what can I bring / to so faithful a friend, to so loving a King?

*Saviour, what can be said, what can be sung / as a praise of your name for the things you have done?
O, my words could not tell, not even in part / of the debt of love that is owed by this thankful heart.*

You deserve my every breath / for you've paid the great cost / giving up your life to death,
even death on a cross.

You took all my shame away / there defeated my sin / opened up the gates of heaven
and have beckoned me in. *Jesus, what can I give...*

Matt Redman (b 1974) CCL no. 5365402

Message from a Circuit friend

Jesus is at the home of Lazarus whom he raised from the dead. At dinner, Martha Lazarus' sister is waiting on them. Her sister Mary enters and coming up to Jesus opens a box of nard ointment and begins to anoint his feet with it. (Nard is a costly ointment made from the Valerian plant). After she has done this she wipes

his feet with her hair, the perfume filling the house. This act annoys Judas Iscariot (the disciple who will shortly betray Jesus) he complains that the perfume could have been sold and the money given to the poor. Jesus reply is not to condemn Mary, who's behaviour is quite scandalous for the times. Instead Jesus tells them that she has bought it so that she would have it for his burial and comments that they will always have the poor with them, but they will not always have Him. There are all sorts of things we can read into this especially as the crucifixion follows, but it's the gift itself I want to focus on. How many times have we felt helpless at some act that has happened, or someone has died unexpectedly and we feel at a loss to show how we feel? When a national or indeed any sudden tragedy happens, people rush to lay flowers at the scene. I used to think a bit like Judas that all the money that the flowers cost could have been put together to do something good in memory of the event or person. But I am beginning to understand the need deep within us to do something and to show love and respect in our helplessness, and flowers do seem to convey that message. I also think there is also a warning for us to show love and concern to others, and not to wait until it may be too late to do it in person. Mary wasn't then to know that Jesus was to be crucified, but she felt impelled do something extravagant for him, and it must have been so soothing to his feet. Perhaps we need to be a bit more like Mary and make the sudden gesture that could brighten the day for someone. Perhaps picking up the phone or sending a card to someone, and it doesn't have to be costly in terms of money or always for a special occasion.

Aileen Fox (Local Preacher and Senior Circuit Steward in the Central Norfolk Circuit)

Prayers of Intercession

We pray for all Christians, and all churches, as Holy Week approaches.

We pray for people throughout the world, especially for those who are caught up in war, suffering from starvation, or finding their homes or livelihoods destroyed because of climate change. We pray for all refugees and for all those seeking to help them.

We pray for our own families, friends and neighbours. And we pray for ourselves, bringing our own joys, sorrows and needs before God.

Offer to God your offertory for the week, and say the Lord's Prayer...

Hymn StF 556 H&P 697

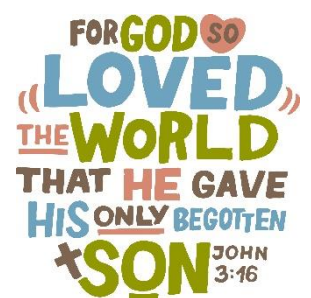
Just as I am, without one plea / but you died to set me free,
and at your bidding, 'Come to me!' / O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am, though tossed about / with many a conflict, many a doubt,
fightings within and fears without / O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am – your love unknown / has broken every barrier down –
now to be your, yes, yours alone / O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am, of that free love / the breadth, length, depth and height to prove,
here for a time and then above / O Lamb of God, I come!

Charlotte Elliott (1789 – 1871) adapted by Jubilate Hymns



May the blessing of God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with us, and all those we love, this day and always, Amen.

Circuit News: The recent Circuit Meeting gave support to a partnership with the District Methodist Historical Society in a 2 year trial to use our closed Chapel at Wighton as a small Methodist Museum for East Anglia. If you have items that would be suitable for the collection, let Mandy or Rev Jacqui know and they will put you in touch with Sarah Friswell who will be managing the (informal) Museum in the first instance. It will also be good to have a list of people who might be able to volunteer occasionally for a weekly opening to the public.

STOP PRESS: Christian Aid is organising a special day of prayer for Ukraine for April 3rd. Pray at 2 pm in community with others throughout the UK. More details at www.christianaid.org.uk/news/pray-for-ukraine.