

Sunday 28th January 2024: Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

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



StF 56 H&P 499 'King of glory, King of peace' by George Herbert (1593 – 1633)

Opening Prayer

Think of the past week and say both 'thank you' and 'sorry' to our loving God.

Psalm set for today: Psalm 111

To think about

Note which of these verses are couplets and which lines stand on their own. Which couplet appeals to you the most?

StF 79 H&P 439 'I'll praise my maker while I've breath' by Isaac Watts (1674 – 1748)

Gospel reading set for today: Mark 1 v 21 – 28

Message from a Circuit Friend

Here we have an account of the very start of Jesus' ministry. He begins teaching in the synagogue, which would be the natural place to start. The people are astonished by what they hear, not just impressed by a good talk, but absolutely astonished by the way Jesus speaks with an authority not heard before. People were accustomed to the scribes teaching and interpreting God's word, but this was different. They were hearing God's word from the source (or the horses mouth as we say). The authority with which Jesus taught was the word itself, the words of God. So this went way beyond a 'good sermon'. Jesus was not just a talented and charismatic speaker, he was the word and his authority was the authority of God, one and the same. It was therefore not a surprise when the 'evil spirits' in the man recognized Jesus and were afraid. He banished them with the authority over which they had no power or control. Mark uses this passage to impress upon the reader the power and authority of Jesus Christ who came to heal as well as teach.

Perhaps we, the Church, need to speak and act with the same authority. Are we too timid to stand up and speak out when we are called to do so as Christians? We may find that the forces of darkness will oppose us, although not necessarily in the same form as described in the passage. They may shout against us but since Calvary they no longer have any power over us. To believe this is the key to our Christian testimony. Our saving action in a world, which despite its travails, has already been claimed by the love of God through Jesus Christ.

Steve Jones (Local Preacher and member of Holt Methodist Church)

StF 338 MP 673 'There is a Redeemer' by Melody Green (b 1946) & Keith Green (1953 – 1982)

Prayers of Intercession

We pray for our world... for the church... for our communities... for our families & friends...

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

StF 415 H&P 804 'The Church of Christ, in every age' by Fred Pratt Green (1903 – 2000)

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: Details have been announced of the **Farewell Service for our Chair of District**, Rev Julian Pursehouse. This will be at Thetford Methodist Church on Sunday 14th July at 3 pm.

The following week, **we say goodbye to our Circuit Superintendent, Rev Jacqui, along with Deacon Jen.**

Jacqui and Jen's Farewell Service will be at Swaffham Methodist Church on Sunday 21st July at 3 o'clock. Everyone will be welcome to either service.