

The Cotteridge Church

Epiphany 4 Sunday 30th January



Bible Readings

Jeremiah 1:4-10

Psalm 71:1-6

1 Corinthians 13:1-13

Luke 4:21-30

Collect for Epiphany 4

God of heaven,
you send the gospel to the ends of the earth
and your messengers to every nation:
send your Holy Spirit to transform us
by the good news of everlasting life
in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Hymn

Heaven shall not wait
for the poor to lose their patience,
the scorned to smile, the despised to find a friend:
Jesus is Lord;
he has championed the unwanted;
in him injustice confronts its timely end.

Heaven shall not wait
for the rich to share their fortunes,
the proud to fall, the elite to tend the least:
Jesus is Lord;
he has shown the master's privilege -
to kneel and wash servants' feet before they
feast.

Heaven shall not wait
for the dawn of great ideas,
thoughts of compassion divorced from cries of
pain:
Jesus is Lord;
he has married word and action;
his cross and company make his purpose plain.

Heaven shall not wait
for triumphant hallelujahs,
when earth has passed and we reach another
shore:
Jesus is Lord;
in our present imperfection:
his power and love are for now and then for
evermore.

Epiphany 4

Jesus lived on the margins and moved the margins to include all people, and hence invited hostile crowds to want to edge him out of existence. Today the church wants to edge Jesus out of our worship anytime the margins are made too wide and include too many who are not like us. Recently I was sitting at my computer, contemplating the way Jesus offended so many people so quickly in his ministry. I asked, "Why?" The answer was at the top of my screen. My word processing instructions at the top read: "Drag the margin boundaries on the rulers." That is why he upset people so much: in his life he dragged the margin boundaries of race, creed, and colour to include all people. He dragged the margin boundaries when he gave a common meal, which we have made a holy meal symbolic of his inclusive love for all people. Jesus is dragged to the edge of a cliff to be put out of the lives of his townspeople because no one wants the margins of daily living to be inclusive of strangers.