



Sunday 17th January 2021

Epiphany 2 - All-age worship

Welcome

Hymn **564 Praise to the Lord Almighty**

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty,
the King of creation!

O my soul, praise Him, for He is
thy health and salvation!

All ye who hear, now to His
temple draw near,
Join me in glad adoration.

Praise to the Lord, who o'er all
things so wondrously reigneth,
Shelters thee under His wings,
yea, so gently sustaineth!

Hast thou not seen
how thy desires e'er have been
Granted in what He ordaineth?

Praise to the Lord, who doth
prosper thy work and defend
thee!

Surely His goodness and mercy
here daily attend thee;
Ponder anew what the Almighty
can do

If with His love He befriend thee.

Praise to the Lord, O let all that is
in me adore Him!

All that hath life and breath,
come now with praises before
Him!

Let the amen sound from His
people again;
Gladly forever adore Him.

Opening activity ~ 'Come and see'

Confession

Leader Wise Men from the east worshipped Jesus and brought their gifts. We, too, have seen your glory, but turned away. We, too, have gifts but have not offered them to you or used them for you. We, too, have said you are a King, but have not served you as we should. And so we confess our sins:

All **Lord Jesus forgive us and help us**

When our trust is less than certain

All **Lord Jesus forgive us and help us**

All When our love is less than bright
Lord Jesus forgive us and help us

All When our prayer is less than frequent
Lord Jesus forgive us and help us

Absolution (*we are reminded that God forgives all who repent*)

Leader May we, like the Wise men, who were once far away from Jesus, be brought nearer to him, who gives us forgiveness and peace. May God forgive us, and help us to overcome our faults. Amen.
All **Amen.**

Collect (*Prayer for the day*)

Leader 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 forever.
All **Amen**

This time @Connect Groups ~ *Monday Night Men's Connect group*

Hymn **My God is so big, so strong**

My God is so big! So strong and so mighty.
There's nothing my God cannot do (*Repeat*)

The mountains are his, the valleys are his,
The stars are his handiwork too.

My God is so big! So strong and so mighty.
There's nothing my God cannot do for you.

Bible readings

John 1:43-end -video

⁴³The next day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. Finding Philip, he said to him, "Follow me."

⁴⁴Philip, like Andrew and Peter, was from the town of Bethsaida.

⁴⁵Philip 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."

⁴⁶"Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?" Nathanael asked. "Come and see," said Philip.

⁴⁷When Jesus saw Nathanael approaching, he said of him, "Here is a true Israelite, in whom there is nothing false."

⁴⁸"How do you know me?" Nathanael asked.

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

⁴⁹Then Nathanael declared, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel."

⁵⁰Jesus said, "You believe because I told you I saw you under the fig tree. You shall see greater things than that." ⁵¹He then added, "I tell you the truth, you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."

Revelations 5:1-10 - Jenny Carter, St Peter's

¹Then I saw in the right hand of him who sat on the throne a scroll with writing on both sides and sealed with seven seals. ²And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming in a loud voice, "Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?" ³But no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth could open the scroll or even look inside it. ⁴I wept and wept because no one was found who was worthy to open the scroll or look inside. ⁵Then one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals."

⁶Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the centre of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. ⁷He came and took the scroll from the right hand of him who sat on the throne. ⁸And when he had taken it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. ⁹And they sang a new song:

"You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.

¹⁰You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth."

Sermon – Rachel

Who do you say I am? Matthew, Mark and Luke all record Jesus asking his disciples this question. If only they could have borrowed the Tardis they could have jumped forward 60 years or so, taken a peek at John 1 and Revelation 5 and found an embarrassment of answers: Word, Light of mankind, Lord, one and only Son, Lamb of God, Rabbi, God's Chosen One, Messiah, Lion of Judah, Root of David, Son of God, King of Israel, Son of Man.

Epiphany is a season of revelation and these names for Jesus reveal so much about him – his divine nature and his presence from the beginning to the end of time, his death and its foreshadowing in the Old Testament, his fulfilment of prophecy, his role as Saviour and his triumphant reign as king. But we have the benefit of the gospel accounts of his life and 2000 years of scholars from St Paul to Tom Wright to help us draw out the meaning of these titles. Looking at our gospel reading, I wonder what Nathanael means when he declares Jesus to be Son of God and king of Israel, and what it is about their brief encounter that reveals this to him?

We first meet Nathanael sitting under a fig tree, a popular spot to shelter from the sun and study the scriptures. Perhaps that's just what he's doing when his friend Philip charges in – “We have found the one Moses and the prophets wrote about”. Maybe Philip knows that this appeal to scripture is the way to capture his friend's attention. But then he almost ruins things with his next words – “Jesus of Nazareth”. You see, Nathanael comes from Cana, just a few miles from Nazareth. It's as if Philip had told a Yorkshireman “we've found the new king - and he's from Lancaster!” or told an Arsenal fan “we've found the best footballer in the world - she's down at White Hart Lane”. Local rivalries existed 2000 years ago just as they do now. What good thing could possibly come from Nazareth?

Philip doesn't stop to explain which prophecies and scriptures he has in mind. He simply says, “come and see”. Because you can describe someone all you want but nothing beats meeting them for yourself. And Nathanael the scholar, Nathanael the sceptic, Nathanael the curious comes. Because what if? What if this Jesus really is the one they've been waiting for? Surely it's worth a look. So he goes with Philip to meet Jesus. And in just a few moments his scepticism is blasted out of the water. Jesus clearly has supernatural knowledge of Nathanael, but I wonder if there's also just something about Jesus, something about being in his presence that shows Nathanael this is someone special: “Son of God; king of Israel.” Which brings us back to my question earlier – what does Nathanael mean by this declaration?

Well, probably not the same as us. In Nathaniel's day the title Son of God doesn't mean the bearer is divine, it simply means they have a special relationship with God or they've been chosen by God for a special purpose or mission. King of Israel suggests that this chosen one is expected to lead Israel in a new golden age, like she enjoyed under David and Solomon. So Nathanael's not declaring he believes Jesus to be God but it's still a hugely significant thing for him to say. Israel has been waiting hundreds of years for God to send his chosen one to free Israel from foreign oppression and restore her to her former glory. Nathanael's spent a lifetime longing for

the Messiah to come. Son of God, king of Israel – these aren't just honorary titles, in the way that Prince Charles is designated Knight of the Garter and Earl of Chester. These are titles that speak into Nathanael's deepest hopes and dreams as a faithful Israelite. These are names that have real, practical meaning for his life. When Nathanael meets Jesus he sees someone who could change everything.

Of course, Nathanael doesn't yet understand what Jesus is going to do but Jesus gives him an enigmatic hint: "Very truly I tell you, you will see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man." Let's unpack that a bit. Son of Man is a title found in the book of Daniel. Once he's finished with lions and furnaces, Daniel has a vision in which he sees one like a son of man coming with the clouds of heaven, and this son of man is given an everlasting kingdom. He's worshipped by people from all nations. You might notice some similarities with our 2nd reading from Revelation 5. John has a vision of the Lamb who has purchased people from all nations with his blood and is worshiped by heavenly beings. So Son of Man is a name Jesus often uses for himself that points to his coming reign as king of all nations. Jesus' words also look back to another well-known vision recorded in Genesis 28; Jacob has a dream where he sees the angels of God going up and down a ladder stretching between earth and heaven. But here Jesus declares *himself* to be the ladder joining earth to Heaven. Jesus will open the way between mankind and God. We hope for so many things, just like Nathanael – tangible thing like good friends, homes, jobs, health, an end to this pandemic, the restoration of normal life. But Jesus, Son of Man, promises something far greater – he promises to restore the relationship between us and God, he promises all the riches Jonathan and Sam have been exploring over the last couple of weeks, that flow from that restored relationship, and he promises us a new home in his everlasting kingdom.

Who are you in this story? Are you Philip, bursting to share good news with your friend, inviting them to come and see? Are you Nathanael under the fig tree, searching, hoping but sceptical that Jesus can offer you what you need? Perhaps looking in the wrong places? Are you an onlooker watching from across the hillside, wondering where these two friends are hurrying off to? Will you forget about them under the weight of your own hopes and fears? Or will curiosity pull you after them to come and see, to discover more of who Jesus is each day you spend with him? Will you let go of your hopes and dreams to take hold of the promises of Jesus? It was worth it for Philip and Nathanael. It will be worth it for us too.

Hymn **Worth it all**

All I am, Lord, here before You
Reaching out for more

You're the promise
Never failing

You are my reward
You are my reward

*I let go of all I have
Just to have all of You
And no matter what the cost
I will follow You
Jesus, everything I've lost
I have found in You
When I finally reach the end I'll
say
You are worth it all*

There's no riches
Earthly treasure
That will satisfy

Every longing for You, Jesus
Set this heart on fire
Set this heart on fire

I let go . . .

When I'm there in Your glorious
presence
Every knee is bowed before You
Hear the sound of heaven singing
You are worth it all
All the saints cry Holy Holy
Angels singing worthy worthy
Forever I will shout Your praises
You are worth it all
(Repeat)

I let go . . .

(Repeat)

You are worth it all
You are worth it all

Ben Cantelon

Creed *(We stand to declare our faith)*

Leader Do you believe and trust in God the Father,
source of all being and life, the one for whom we exist?

All We believe and trust in him.

Leader Do you believe and trust in God the Son,
who took our human nature, died for us and rose again?

All We believe and trust in him.

Leader Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,
who gives life to the people of God and makes Christ known in
the world?

All We believe and trust in him.

Leader This is the faith of the Church

**All This is our faith. We believe and trust in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Amen.**

Prayers – Angus Family, St Peter's

In response to God of Love, please respond **Hear our Prayer.**

God of Love,

All Hear our Prayer

In these difficult times, we remember your amazing love for us and we bring before you all our worries and fears.

We pray for the leaders of the country as they seek to legislate in the ever-changing situation. Grant them the wisdom and courage to do what is right.

God of Love,

All Hear our Prayer

We pray for the NHS workers, and also for the Royal Surrey Hospital as it offers mutual aid to other South East Hospitals. Staff are being drafted from other hospitals to help them. Also for stock supply chains to keep being fulfilled. They fear they are still heading towards the peak. Grant them strength and resource.

God of Love,

All Hear our Prayer

We pray for the young people in the parish who are struggling with homeschooling and missing their friends, especially for those entitled to free school meals. Also for the teachers and school leaders and for the parents. Grant them patience and resilience.

God of Love,

All Hear our Prayer

We pray for all those in the parish who are sick, at home or in hospital. For Pete Lawther who sadly passed away this week and his 2 daughters Angie and Charmaine who are now both in hospital with Covid.

We bring before you Eileen & Peter Bliss, Patrick Chapman, Alison Cole, Enid Hardman, John Hunter, Lynda Kirk, Patricia Lawther, Catherine McCormack, Olive Park, Malcolm Pritchard, Joy Storkey and Barbara Thirst and, in a moment of silence, all those known to you who are sick and suffering.

We also pray for all those we know and love who are on their own and feeling lonely and depressed.

Grant them the peace of your love.

God of Love,

All Hear our Prayer



The Lord's prayer

Leader Finally Gathering our prayers and praises into one,
As our Saviour has taught us so we pray.

All **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.**

Notices

Hymn 179 **Go tell it on the mountain**

*Go, tell it on the mountain,
Over the hills and everywhere
Go, tell it on the mountain,
That Jesus Christ is born.*

While shepherds kept their
watching
o'er silent flocks by night,
Behold, throughout the heavens
There shone a holy light.

Go, tell it . . .

The shepherds feared and
trembled,
When low above the earth,

Blessing

Leader

and the blessing of God Almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

All **Amen.**

Leader Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

Rang out the angels chorus
That hailed our Saviour's birth.

Go, tell it . . .

And lo! When they had heard it,
They all bowed down to pray,
Then travelled on together,
To where the Baby lay.

Go, tell it . . .

Down in a lowly manger
The humble Christ was born
And God sent us salvation
That blessed Christmas morn.

