

Our Service Together

4th Sunday before Lent

February 6th 2022

An Acclamation for the Season

All: There is one body and one spirit. There is one hope to which we were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all.

Preparation

All: This is the day that the Lord has made.
Let us rejoice and be glad in it.
Through the brokenness of Christ, we become one body
as one body we now gather in the name of Christ to offer our praise and thanksgiving, to receive God's holy word, to pray for the needs of the world,
and to seek the forgiveness of our sins, that by the power of the Holy Spirit
we may give ourselves to the service of God.

Our Confession

The sun of righteousness has dawned with healing in his wings. Let us come to the light of Christ, confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

All: Jesus Christ, risen Master and triumphant Lord, we come to you in sorrow for our sins, and confess to you our weakness and unbelief.

We have lived by our own strength, and not by the power of your resurrection.
In your mercy, forgive us, hear us and help us.

We have lived by the light of our own eyes, as faithless and not believing.
In your mercy, forgive us, hear us and help us.

We have lived for this world alone, and doubted our home in heaven.
In your mercy, forgive us, hear us and help us.

Be still for a moment in confession and in receiving God's Grace in Christ

All: May Almighty God, who in Jesus Christ has given us a kingdom that cannot be destroyed, forgive us our sins, open our eyes to God's truth, strengthen us to do God's will and give us the joy of his kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Risen Lord. **Amen.**

The opening prayer

All: The night has passed, and the day lies open before us; let us pray with one heart and mind.

Silence is kept.

All: As we rejoice in the gift of this new day, so may the light of your presence, O God, set our hearts on fire with love for you; now and for ever. Amen.

The Psalms Psalm 138 *We say the psalm aloud*

I will give thanks to you, O Lord, with my whole heart; before the gods will I sing praise to you.
I will bow down towards your holy temple and praise your name,
because of your love and faithfulness; for you have glorified your name and your word above all things.
In the day that I called to you, you answered me; you put new strength in my soul.
All the kings of the earth shall praise you, O Lord, for they have heard the words of your mouth.
They shall sing of the ways of the Lord, that great is the glory of the Lord.
Though the Lord be high, he watches over the lowly;
as for the proud, he regards them from afar.
Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you will preserve me;
you will stretch forth your hand against the fury of my enemies; your right hand will save me.
The Lord shall make good his purpose for me; your loving-kindness, O Lord, endures for ever;
forsake not the work of your hands.
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen

Scripture Reading 1 Corinthians 15.1-11

Now I should remind you, brothers and sisters, of the good news that I proclaimed to you, which you in turn received, in which also you stand, ²through which also you are being saved, if you hold firmly to the message that I proclaimed to you—unless you have come to believe in vain.

³For I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, ⁴and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, ⁵and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. ⁶Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. ⁷Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. ⁸Last of all, as to someone untimely born, he appeared also to me. ⁹For I am the least of the apostles, unfit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. ¹⁰But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace towards me has not been in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them—though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. ¹¹Whether then it was I or they, so we proclaim and so you have come to believe.

At the end of the reading we say:

All: This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Gloria

All: Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

The Gospel

Luke 5.1-11

Once while Jesus was standing beside the lake of Gennesaret, and the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, ²he saw two boats there at the shore of the lake; the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. ³He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little way from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat. ⁴When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, 'Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch.' ⁵Simon answered, 'Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing. Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets.' ⁶When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to break. ⁷So they signalled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both boats, so that they began to sink. ⁸But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, 'Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!' ⁹For he and all who were with him were amazed at the catch of fish that they had taken; ¹⁰and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. Then Jesus said to Simon, 'Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people.' ¹¹When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him.

At the end of the reading we say:

All: This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

A Reflection for the day

Revd J Webb writes;

I remember the shock seventy years ago when the death of the King, George VI, was announced on this day, the sixth February 1952. We knew he wasn't well but didn't expect him to die. Princess Elizabeth was on an African tour so the first pictures of her as queen were on the flickering black and white newsreel as a lonely young lady of only 25 coming down the steps from the plane to receive the homage of the great and good led by the Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, who had been an MP since before she was born and was old enough to be her grandfather. There was great concern if she would be able to cope with such an enormous role. When she was born there was no expectation that she might become Queen and it was only when her uncle abdicated and her father became king that she was in line for the throne. He had been unprepared and ill-suited for the role, but with the support of his wife Queen Elizabeth, had been an inspiration to the country during the very difficult years of WW II.

The biblical record of monarchy has not been a happy one and the only two Kings mentioned in any detail in the Gospels were monsters. Both called Herod, related but not the same. One was responsible for the slaughter of the innocents in Bethlehem and the other for the murder of John the Baptist! In spite of this it is clear in the gospels that after events such as the feeding of the multitude or on Palm Sunday there was an attempt by the crowd to make Jesus king. He always resisted this and at the Last Supper Jesus warned the apostles against seeking worldly power 'Among the gentiles, Kings lord it over their subjects..... not so with you: on the contrary, the greatest among you must bear himself like the youngest, the one who rules like one who serves..... I am among you like a servant.' That is a reversal of the usual pattern and a warning to all who would exercise power.

The heart of the Gospel is expressed in the Lord's Prayer when we are invited to pray 'Your Kingdom come, your will be done.' Jesus calls us all to accept God as the king. His rule is above worldly kingdoms. Everyone is invited to join, high and low, kings, prelates, popes, presidents and paupers. Nobody is excluded. The Queen understood this and in the broadcast on her twenty-first birthday dedicated her life to serving our country. She knew that her role as queen was not so much of privilege but of service, so as we come to her platinum celebration let us give thanks for a life dedicated to our country at considerable personal cost. I hope that other leaders will have the humility to learn from her example.

The Creed

All: I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers *We make our intercessions*

O God of peace, who has taught us that in quietness and confidence shall be our strength; help us, as we come into your presence, to be still and know that you are God.

In the power of the Spirit and in union with Christ let us pray to the Father.

As we prepare for the season of Lent let us pray for the coming of the Kingdom of God in our troubled world.
Lord in your mercy hear our prayer

Strengthen Bishop Ruth and those who seek to serve you in this diocese May they be filled with the Spirit and serve you as the first disciples.
Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.

On this anniversary of the Queen's accession let us give thanks for her life of dedication and service.
Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.

We pray for our Prime Minister, Members of Parliament and all World leaders, that they may always seek to serve the best interests of those they represent.
Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.

We pray for the homeless, hungry and starving in this country and abroad.
Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.

Let us pray for our families, friends, and neighbours that we may bring light and hope in the darkest places.
Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.

We give thanks for all those combatting Covid throughout the world.
Lord in your mercy hear our prayer

We pray for the sick, suffering and dying and we give thanks and pray for those who use their skill and risk their lives to care for them.
Lord in your mercy hear our prayer

Hear us as we remember those who have died..... According to your promises grant them joy in your eternal kingdom.
Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.

Rejoicing in the fellowship of all your saints, we commend ourselves and the whole creation to your unfailing love. Amen.

A Collect to mark the anniversary of the Accession to the throne of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

O God, who providest for thy people by thy power, and rulest over them in love: Vouchsafe so to bless thy Servant our Queen, that under her this nation may be wisely governed, and thy Church may serve thee in all godly quietness; and grant that she being devoted to thee with her whole heart, and persevering in good works unto the end, may, by thy guidance, come to thine everlasting kingdom; through Jesus Christ thy Son our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen

A Prayer for all mourning loved ones during the Pandemic

All: Gracious God, as we remember before you the thousands who have died, surround us and all who mourn with your strong compassion. Be gentle with us in our grief, protect us from despair, and give us grace to persevere and face the future with hope in Jesus Christ our risen Lord. **Amen.**

The Collect

All: O God, you know us to be set in the midst of so many and great dangers, that by reason of the frailty of our nature we cannot always stand upright: grant to us such strength and protection as may support us in all dangers and carry us through all temptations; 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 for ever. **Amen.**

Gathering our prayers and praises into one, let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

The Conclusion

All: Christ, as a light illumine and guide me this day.
Christ, as a shield overshadow me.
Christ under me, Christ over me;
Christ beside me on my left and my right.
This day be within and without me. Amen.