

Our Service Together

January 15th 2023

Epiphany 2

An Acclamation for the Season

All: Alleluia, alleluia, Christ was revealed in flesh, proclaimed among the nations and believed in throughout the world. alleluia!

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 40.1-11

I waited patiently for the Lord; he inclined to me and heard my cry.
He brought me out of the roaring pit, out of the mire and clay;
he set my feet upon a rock and made my footing sure.
He has put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God;
many shall see and fear and put their trust in the Lord.
Blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, who does not turn to the proud that follow a lie.
Great are the wonders you have done, O Lord my God.
How great your designs for us!
There is none that can be compared with you.
If I were to proclaim them and tell of them they would be more than I am able to express.
Sacrifice and offering you do not desire but my ears you have opened;
Burnt offering and sacrifice for sin you have not required; then said I: 'Lo, I come.
'In the scroll of the book it is written of me that I should do your will,
O my God; I delight to do it: your law is within my heart.'
I have declared your righteousness in the great congregation; behold,
I did not restrain my lips, and that, O Lord, you know.
Your righteousness I have not hidden in my heart; I have spoken of your faithfulness and your salvation;
I have not concealed your loving-kindness and truth from the great congregation.
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 1.1-9

Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and our brother Sosthenes,
²To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints,
together with all those who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours:
³Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
⁴I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ
Jesus, ⁵for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind— ⁶just as the
testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you— ⁷so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you
wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁸He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be
blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of
his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

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 John 1.29-42

²⁹The next day he saw Jesus coming towards him and declared, 'Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the
sin of the world! ³⁰This is he of whom I said, "After me comes a man who ranks ahead of me because he was
before me." ³¹I myself did not know him; but I came baptizing with water for this reason, that he might be
revealed to Israel.' ³²And John testified, 'I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained

on him. ³³ I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water said to me, “He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.” ³⁴ And I myself have seen and have testified that this is the Son of God.’

³⁵ The next day John again was standing with two of his disciples, ³⁶ and as he watched Jesus walk by, he exclaimed, ‘Look, here is the Lamb of God!’ ³⁷ The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. ³⁸ When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, ‘What are you looking for?’ They said to him, ‘Rabbi’ (which translated means Teacher), ‘where are you staying?’ ³⁹ He said to them, ‘Come and see.’ They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day. It was about four o’clock in the afternoon. ⁴⁰ One of the two who heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. ⁴¹ He first found his brother Simon and said to him, ‘We have found the Messiah’ (which is translated Anointed). ⁴² He brought Simon to Jesus, who looked at him and said, ‘You are Simon son of John. You are to be called Cephas’ (which is translated Peter).

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

There are a lot of names and titles offered us in calling in the gospel today. Messiah, Lamb of God, Baptizer, Son of God, Rabbi. So many labels for Jesus for folks to come to terms with – we could spend hours addressing each one!

Each of the names given to Jesus talks of his nature, his actions, and the relationship people could have with him.

As humans we like to give things names, according to the bible we have been doing this right from the start of everything – for Adam is asked to join the creative work of God by naming all the animals.

It is no surprise then we find each one of us with labels, names, with words that describe us, that suggest to those we meet something about us. Man, woman, young, old, white, black, brother, sister, John, Susan – we could look at each for hours to see what the words might mean and the power they have to build up, or to cause division or destroy.

When it comes to names, to their power and potential we would find these short few sentences of our gospel today illuminating:

‘Andrew first found his brother Simon and said to him, ‘We have found the Messiah’ (which is translated Anointed). He brought Simon to Jesus, who looked at him and said, ‘You are Simon son of John. You are to be called Cephas’ (which is translated Peter).’

These are extraordinary words from Jesus. In one breath he acknowledges the name Simon has received from family and society and then, in essence, declares, ‘I, your God know you as Cephas’ which means both Peter and *Rock*.

Is it that God looks to the heart of this man and see who he really is, what he really could become if he takes up what his brother Andrew hopes for in bringing him to Jesus – that he would follow him?

Is it in this moment that Jesus says, I am indeed Messiah, I have come to restore you to a full relationship and life with your God, if you would follow me? And if you would follow me then see you will become who you truly are gifted to be – a rock.

The answer is of course, yes!

I suspect that the first reflection, the first sight glimpsed of self and identity for humans came when they looked into still waters. Today we have mirrors or even to photos in which to look and see ourselves. But I wonder if

our true self is revealed even now when we come to the water of baptism. As names are given and received in the earthly realms might it be a true name for each of us is declared in the heavens?

Might it be that in our baptism we find a calling to receive the name God has for each of us, as followers of Jesus to allow that name to be what defines us instead of the labels society may give?

Might it be we find our true identity in Christ, and identity we can grow to full stature in through the Spirit come to us who baptises not with water but with fire and Spirit?

The answer is, of course, yes!

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*

We pray for the church and all God's people. We pray especially for all whose faith is being tested and all who may be approaching Jesus for the first time.
Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.

We pray for the queen, for our politicians and all in public office that, through God's grace they may lead us with compassion, remain sensitive to the needs of others and be free from false judgement and condemnation.
Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.

We pray that God will remind us about what is important and what is not, and will help us to overcome our own temptation. *Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.*

We pray for all who suffer through the sin of others: all victims of abuse, oppression or neglect; we pray for all who need God's help. *Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.*

Almighty God, who hast given us grace at this time with one accord to our common supplications unto thee; and dost promise that when two or three are gathered together in thy name thou will grant their requests: fulfil now, O Lord, the desires and petitions of thy servants, as may be most expedient for them; granting us in this world knowledge of thy truth, and in the world to come life everlasting. Amen

The Collect

All: 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 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.