



Heacham Parish Church



Sunday Service 17th January 2021 - Epiphany 2

Adrian - "As we are all probably feeling a bit down I thought for once we could use a toe-tapping happy little tune 'Penguins' Playtime' by Nigel Ogden."

Grace mercy and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you; **and also with you.**

As we gather in our homes, together yet apart, we meet in the presence of God, the God who is the same, today, yesterday, and tomorrow. The God who is with us today, during this lockdown and always, the God who loves us.

Almighty God, you speak to us in so many ways.
Help us, in our worship today, to hear your voice and know it is you.
Speak to us in the silence, through Scripture and by the Spirit.
Speak through others and through your creation,
through images, experiences, music and encounters.
Speak in ways that we can understand.
So, speak, Lord – and help us to listen.
Amen.

Prayer of Preparation

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden, cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayers of Penitence

God be gracious to us and bless us,
and make His face to shine upon us:
Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**
May your ways be known on the earth,
your saving power among the nations:
Christ, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**

You, Lord, have made known your salvation,
and reveal your justice in the sight of the nations:
Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

May God, who loved the world so much that he sent his Son to be our
Saviour, forgive you your sins and make you holy to serve Him in the
world; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Hymn: The Church's one foundation

sung & played by Hilary, Lesley, Richard C, Judith, Sue , Val, and Lynda

The Church's one foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord;
She is His new creation by water and the Word:
From heaven He came and sought her to be His holy bride;
With His own blood He bought her, and for her life He died.

Elect from every nation, yet one o'er all the earth,
Her charter of salvation, one Lord, one faith, one birth;
One holy Name she blesses, partakes one holy food,
And to one hope she presses, with every grace endued.

Yet she on earth hath union with God the Three in One,
And mystic sweet communion with those whose rest is won:
O happy ones and holy! Lord, give us grace that we,
Like them, the meek and lowly, in love may dwell with Thee.

Bible Reading: John 1: 43-51 read by Barbara Jennings

A Reflection *from Penny Sutton*

Our passage today comes from the first chapter of John's gospel, the beginning of which we looked at on Christmas Day. In this chapter John introduces some of the important themes of his gospel, which are based upon the names of Jesus. At Christmas we looked at 'The Word' and 'The Light' from the early verses of the chapter. John then goes on to look at 'Son of God', 'Lamb of God', and 'Messiah' before coming, in our passage today, to 'King of Israel' and 'Son of Man'. All this is neatly woven into John's account of Jesus's earthly ministry.

We read how Jesus began to call his disciples. Andrew called his brother Simon Peter, but Philip was called personally by Jesus. He proved his faith by wanting to share with his friend Nathanael, but Nathanael started out a doubter. He hesitated and argued using the gentle banter of a bit of inter-village rivalry. Nothing wrong with sincere questioning. Saul of Tarsus had to be disabled to prevent him persecuting Jesus, while from our own culture and era, CS Lewis recounted that he was 'dragged into the kingdom kicking and screaming'. Once they had been convinced that Jesus is Lord both these scholarly men worked tirelessly to further the spread of the gospel. Philip, meanwhile, undeterred, adopted Jesus's own words and invited Nathanael to 'come and see'. 'Come' is the great invitation to so many facets of God's grace.

When Nathanael did come, he discovered that Jesus already knew all about him. Enough for him to acknowledge Jesus as 'Son of God' and 'King of Israel'. Perhaps he had been present at the baptism of Christ or maybe he had heard the testimony of John the Baptist that Jesus is the 'Son of God'. Now he realises that Jesus is also the 'Messiah', the anointed one, 'King of Israel'.

Jesus promises much greater experiences to come. Addressing **all** present, because 'you' in verse 51 is plural, Jesus says: "you shall see heaven open and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man". Now, a picture of angels going up and down between

heaven and earth brings to mind Jacob's ladder and that is also the clue to making sense of verse 47. When Jesus sees Nathanael coming, he says "Here is a true Israelite in whom there is nothing false". Why refer to him as an Israelite and not a Jew? Because this brings to mind Jacob, the man whom God renamed Israel, father of the twelve tribes of Israel. A man who, in his youth, had tricked his brother, his father, and his father-in-law by falsehood; yet ultimately had his name changed by God to Israel which means 'a prince with God'. While he was a fugitive, on the run from his irate brother, Jacob had a dream. He saw a ladder with its foot on earth and its top in heaven where God the Father stood beside it. The angels of God were going up and down on that ladder, messengers between heaven and earth. God promised Jacob his on-going permanent presence so Jacob called that place Bethel which means God's house. It became one of the sanctuaries of Israel, an early place of worship.

What did Jesus mean by these oblique references? What did the new disciples make of it? What does John want us, his readers, to make of it? This is obviously important to his gospel as it ends chapter one where he introduces his main themes. This gospel explains how Jesus fulfils Old Testament prophecy and promises concerning the Temple, and shows the new way in which God is with us. Notice the precise wording of verse 51. 'the angels ascending and descending **on** the 'Son of Man'. As 'Son of Man' Jesus is the living link between heaven and earth, portrayed here, as a ladder.

In this new covenant age heaven and earth are open to each other. With Jesus we are in the house of God. The presence of God is here. The angels come and go. We may not see them but we do sometimes see their activities. **Amen.**

Song: As Jacob with travel was weary one day

sung & played by Hilary, Lesley, Terry, Karen, and Richard G

As Jacob with travel was weary one day,
at night on a stone for a pillow he lay;
he saw in a vision a ladder so high
that its foot was on earth and its top in the sky:

*Alleluia to Jesus who died on the tree,
and has raised up a ladder of mercy for me!*

This ladder is long, it is strong and well-made,
has stood hundreds of years and is not yet decayed;
many millions have climbed it and reached Zion's hill;
and thousands, by faith, are climbing it still:

*Alleluia to Jesus who died on the tree,
and has raised up a ladder of mercy for me!*

Come let us ascend! All may climb it who will;
for the angels of Jacob are guarding it still:
and remember, each step that by faith we pass o'er,
some prophet or martyr has trod it before:

*Alleluia to Jesus who died on the tree,
and has raised up a ladder of mercy for me!*

And when we arrive at the haven of rest
we shall hear the glad words: 'Come up hither, ye blest,
here are regions of light, here are mansions of bliss'.
O who would not climb such a ladder as this?

*Alleluia to Jesus who died on the tree,
and has raised up a ladder of mercy for me!*

Prayers of Intercession, led by Penny Taylor

Dear Heavenly Father, we come to you in faith at this time. Sovereign God you have made the heaven and the earth by your outstretched arms, nothing is too hard for you. (Jeremiah 32: 7).

We bring our world before you now. Those places where there is upheaval, war, and natural disasters. We pray for the United States of America as a new president is inaugurated, we pray for peace in that nation. We pray too for Uganda where elections have also taken place. Also Indonesia where another plane crash has caused many deaths. We bring before you those places which do not hit the headlines but where many are in great difficulty...we pray especially for those who are on hand to support and help the needy; give them resources, stamina, and trust in You.

Lord in Your mercy --- **Hear our prayer.**

In our country we pray for the ongoing issues associated with Brexit, our relationship with Europe, and the many businesses and organisations who need to change working practices in this new era. We pray for politicians and civil servants, and those who work in the negotiations and logistics.

Lord in Your mercy --- **Hear our prayer.**

As a church we remember our Tithe Partners - Andrew and Shona Goodman working for OMF in North Thailand and Myanmar. The Tansen Mission Hospital in Nepal; for all who will grieve for Rev Dr Herbert Karach. The Church Army and James Hawksworth in King's Lynn. The King's Lynn Winter Night Shelter - the staff, guests, and volunteers. Water Aid, and Nelson's Journey.

We pray too for Veronica, our Ministry team, and the PCC as they make decisions regarding the future months within our church building and community.

For the Community Support Network in Heacham, the volunteers delivering prescriptions, and those who are now about to begin vaccinations in our area.

Lord in Your mercy --- **Hear our prayer.**

As Covid-19 cases continue to rise we pray for all medical professionals dealing daily with the intense pressure of this crisis. Grant them resilience in weariness, discernment in diagnosis, and compassion upon compassion as they care. We pray for all leaders in health organisations and schools. We ask you, Lord, to give them wisdom beyond their own wisdom, faith beyond their own faith to fight this fear, and strength beyond their own strength to sustain vital work at this time. We remember the words of Psalm 46 v 1-2: "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear."

Lord in Your mercy --- **Hear our prayer.**

Finally, God of all comfort and counsel we pray for those who are suffering from any illness at this time. We pray too for those who are isolating and feeling lonely and afraid. We pray for those who are grieving and reeling from the sudden loss of loved ones. May they find your comfort in their loss and your hope in their despair. We name before you those known to us who are vulnerable and scared, the frail, the sick, and elderly...*A moment of silence*...God of comfort, be with them we pray. (parts taken from Pete Greig 24/7 Prayer: 'A Prayer for Deliverance from the Coronavirus').

Merciful Father, Accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. **Amen**

We pray together the Lord's Prayer, led by Margaret Hyde

Closing prayers:

Lord Jesus, you call us to follow you.
Go with us into the world.
Go before us in all we do.

**Lord Jesus, you call us to follow you.
We go in your name to love you and those we encounter ,
and to be your light in the world. Amen.**

The Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God,
teach us to walk in His way more trustfully,
to accept his truth more faithfully,
and to share his life more lovingly;
that by the power of the Holy Spirit
we may come as one family to the kingdom of the Father.

And the blessing of Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be with
you and those you love now and always. **Amen.**

Closing music from Adrian - Mindful of the pandemic, but also dedicated
to the amazing faith and example of Dr Herbert Karach who died last
week, Jean sings the first few lines and then is played a rather jazzy
setting by Matthias Nagel called 'The Strong Tower Postlude'.....'A safe
stronghold our God is still' (Ein' Feste Burg) Martin Luther's Hymn –
based on Psalm 46; words at Mission Praise 2 or HON 220.

Notices

**Heacham Parish Church on Zoom - Sunday 10th January
at 10am** (access from 9.50am)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88284288324?pwd=K2UzeUpncIRDN1ozSUdJY25vWnVBZz09>

Meeting ID: 882 8428 8324 Passcode: 131974

Or by telephone: call 0203 901 7895

Meeting ID: 882 8428 8324 Passcode: 131974

**Morning Prayer will be available Monday to Friday, at 9am via
Zoom.** Different hosts this week; if you want to join please email Richard
Chipps – chipps@hyford123.plus.com – who will invite you.

Caring for Creation

Why not join us for a York Course Study over 5 weeks (fortnightly), discussing our Christian response. Sessions are: The Environment, Global Warming and Climate Change, Crisis, The Age of Humans, and Faith Hope and Love. John Whitbread and Gordon Taylor will host via Zoom starting on Thursday 21st Jan at 7pm. If enough interest we will also have a daytime session.

Why not use this time to consider our Christian response to these issues? Materials to follow are available at www.yorkcourses.org.uk We will be hosting fortnightly so pop-in for one session if you wish, you will be very welcome. Contact gordonsmithtaylor50@gmail.com for the Zoom link.

Podcast 'Sunday Hope'

The Diocese of Norwich has a weekly audio podcast called 'Sunday Hope'. It is available on [Apple Podcasts](#), [Google Podcasts](#), [Spotify](#), [Overcast](#), and more.

The podcast can also be listened to from any landline telephone: call **01603 537577** (local rate) to hear the latest edition.

Daily Hope offers music, prayers, and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England; at the end of a telephone line.

The line – which is available 24 hours a day on **0800 804 8044** – has been set-up particularly to help those unable to join online church services during the period of restrictions.

Thank you from The Children's Society to everyone who contributed, via the collecting-box system and other donations, during 2020. The village total was £776.20.

If you would like to become a new supporter, by having a coin-collecting box at home or giving a one-off donation, please contact Alison or Bryan Hoyle. Tel.570215. If you would like to know more about the work of the Children's Society, or make an online donation, their website is

www.childrenssociety.org.uk or telephone 0300 303 7000.

Church building to open for prayer – update from Veronica

After much discussion, prayer and debate, guidance from Bishop Graham, and in the context of the rising number of Covid-19 cases locally, the pressure our QEH is under, and the need for each of us to stay at home and reduce our social contacts, this is the plan -- We hope that from next week (Wednesday 20th January) we can open again for private prayer on Wednesdays and Saturdays; from 10am-2pm. We plan that the church will be open, with no-one there to welcome, but with clear, well-placed notices asking for visitors to follow Covid-19 guidelines whilst in the building.

At all other times the church building will be closed - no public worship, nor filming, nor live streaming, etc. Liz (churchwarden) will need to be contacted if anyone, including me and other key-holders, need access to the church. We hope to be able to hold small funerals if we can, as well as offering graveside burials.

Our worship will continue with 'Heacham Parish Church online' plus paper copies delivered to those who request them; and our new 'Heacham Parish Church on Zoom' at 10am on Sundays will continue while we are not able to worship in the church building.

We will review the situation at the end of January, and regularly from then on, so that we can re-open for services as soon as possible.

Liz came across this which you might find helpful: *'We continue to think coming to church is safe - however for now, clearly it is even safer not to. Stopping in-church services will only make a small difference to the overall picture, but right now we need all the small differences we can.'*

Psalm 33: We wait in hope for the LORD; he is our help and our shield.

with my love and prayers for this tough time, Veronica.

This is the chorus of a song often sung in a Welsh Baptist churches -

My lighthouse, My lighthouse

Shining in the darkness, I will follow You;

My lighthouse, My lighthouse

I will trust the promise, You will carry me safe to shore.

To sing and act along (yes, we can do some of the gentle Joe Wicks' moves) go to https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OaW_4MWSE6I

