

Church of St Chad
Hopwas



Morning Worship
28th February 2021



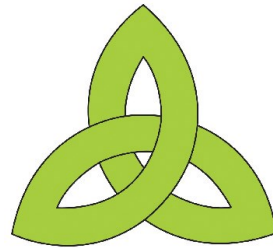
*Following Christ in the footsteps
of St Chad*

Welcome

HYMN New Every Morning is the Love

In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.



THE GREETING

The Lord be with you
and also with you.

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

Summary of the Law

Our Lord Jesus Christ said:

"The first commandment is this: Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is the only Lord. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.

The second is this: Love your neighbour as yourself.'

There is no other commandment greater than these.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets".

Amen. Lord, have mercy

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. Let us confess our sins remembering before God the times when we have fallen from temptation into sin.

Silence

Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness
and cleanse me from my sin.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Make in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.

Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Cast me not away from your presence
and take not your holy spirit from me.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.



Almighty God,
who forgives
all who truly repent,
have mercy upon *you*,
pardon and deliver *you*
from all *your* sins,
confirm and strengthen *you*
in all goodness,
and keep *you* in life eternal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen



THE COLLECT

Almighty God,
by the prayer and discipline of Lent
may we enter into the mystery
of Christ's sufferings,
and by following in his Way
come to share in his glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen



FIRST READING

Romans 4:13-25

For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith.

If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham

For he is the father of all of us, as it is written, 'I have made you the father of many nations'; in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

This is the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

HYMN

Breathe on me, Breath of God

**Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to **MARK** (8:31-38)**

Glory to you O Lord

Then Jesus began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him.

But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, 'Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.'

He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, 'If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it.

For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life?

Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.'

This is the gospel of the Lord

Praise to you O Christ

SERMON

In his book "Hymn of the Universe", French Priest and Scientist *Teilhard de Chardin* wrote this:

*To understand the world knowledge is not enough,
you must see it, touch it, live in its presence*

Jesus shared his knowledge, his wisdom if you like, with those who wanted to learn from him. He teaches his disciples through who he is and the lifestyle he leads. His original followers learn about his life by watching how he lives. Jesus moves from prayer and solitude, to teaching and service in the community. Jesus wanted his original followers to experience his freedom. He wanted them to enjoy his union with the Source of Being whom he calls Father.

This means that the rest of his followers (including YOU and ME) are also to have this kind of experience. Whatever is of Jesus therefore, is to be embraced by us and in us.

In our gospel reading Jesus says this:

*If any want to become my followers
let them deny themselves
and take up their cross
and follow me*

When making a point in his teachings Jesus would use everyday things and examples that people understood and that people experienced in their lives to make his point. It can be very difficult for us 21st century folk to get to grips with what Jesus is trying to get at here. We have no experience of the life and we have no experience of the context that Jesus and his followers lived. We have no experience of the nature of crucifixion. It's brutal and barbaric and was used as a tool of political power by the Romans

They maintained their power because of the fear of death on the cross. But Jesus is not trying to scare his followers here. He is talking about the choices we have to make if we (YOU and I) want to be his followers; want to be his disciples; want to follow him.

*Let them deny themselves
and take up their cross
and follow me*

Jesus here is talking about giving up our preferences, our desires and our wants. To learn from him and to be directed by HIS lifestyle and HIS choices.

This was the real reason that Jesus got annoyed with Peter. Jesus had told his disciples that he would be rejected and killed, and on the third day he would rise again. Well, Peter wasn't having any of it. But Jesus said to Peter: *It's NOT about what you want. It's about what God wants.* Taking up our cross involves offering ourselves to God and to our neighbours, in complete and total love and obedience to God. No matter where that love and obedience may take us. Our motives will be; NOT – how will this help me, BUT How will this serve Christ? How will this serve his kingdom values.

And here is another thing that we ought to think about. Denying ourselves means refusing to judge others, but importantly it also means: refusing to judge ourselves. It means leaving all judgement in the hands of God.

One of the struggles that we all have is with our own sense of worth. It's easy to listen to those voices in our own heads telling us that we are a failure, we are a fraud, we should do better. Jesus invites us to deny ourselves. To give up our own evaluation of ourselves (and others). HE invites us to accept the special relationship he had with God and that we now have through Jesus at face value.

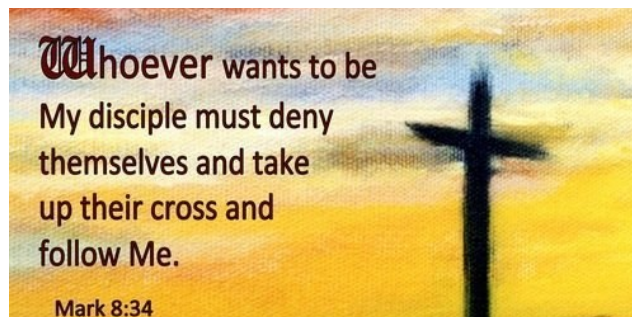
Jesus invites us to accept God's evaluation of us. God finds me worthwhile, EVEN me. This means that there are no more insiders and no more outsiders. This means that we are all one in Jesus. What a different church and what a different world it would be if we ever truly believed it. It's NEVER about us, about what we do or don't do. Its ALWAYS about God and what God can do, and what God will do if we let God in.

Finally *let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me*; means being willing to let go. To let go of the familiar things, the familiar thoughts, the familiar ways and JUST let God lead us. Christ calls us beyond our known borders; encouraging us, urging us to come where he already is. To open our hearts and minds to unexpected possibilities, GOD'S POSSIBILITIES. GOD guides us, God walks with us into this land of endless possibilities; AND, if God is calling us then he will equip us.

Yes it is difficult, this stuff about the cross. This stuff about denying ourselves. But if we can begin to see with the eyes of God, we begin to experience a part of what God has promised to those who live by faith. And that not only includes the cross but also resurrection.

*If any want to become my followers
let them deny themselves
and take up their cross
and follow me*

Amen



HYMN Jesus calls us o'er the tumult

CREED

We say together in faith

**Holy, holy, holy
is the Lord God almighty,
who was, and is, and is to come.**

We believe in God the Father,
who created all things:
**for by his will they were created
and have their being.**

We believe in God the Son,
who was slain:
**for with his blood,
he purchased us for God,
from every tribe and language,
from every people and nation.**

We believe in God the Holy Spirit:
**the Spirit and the Bride say,
'Come!'
Even so come, Lord Jesus!
Amen.**



PRAYERS FOR OTHERS

This response is used throughout these prayers

Lord, in your mercy **Hear our prayer.**

And at the end **Merciful Father,
accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.**

PRAYERS FOR OTHERS

Lord, you asked your followers *to take up their cross, deny themselves and follow you*. Lord this is a difficult request that we can only do with your help. Give us strength and perseverance to always be guided and led by you in all that we do, in all that we say and in all that we truly are.

Lord, in your mercy - **Hear our prayer**

Lord we ask you to bless and guide *Elizabeth our Queen*; and pour your blessing on Prince Philip as he continues to recuperate in hospital. Give wisdom to all in authority and direct our nation in the ways of justice and peace; that we may honour one another, and seek the common good.

Lord, in your mercy - **Hear our prayer**

We give thanks for the enormously successful vaccine rollout in the UK and for all those who contribute to its success. Guide us as we continue this process enabling us to be ever mindful of those many places throughout the world who will undoubtedly struggle to vaccinate their people. Give us the strength of purpose to not only contribute vaccine but our knowledge and resources to help those throughout the world in their need. We take a moment to remember that throughout the world 2.5 million people have now died after being diagnosed with Covid.

Lord, in your mercy - **Hear our prayer**

As we begin to navigate the long and winding road to recovery from this Pandemic, help us to continue to be vigilant and aware of how fragile this recovery may be. We pray for all teachers and pupils as they return to their learning environments, that adequate processes may be in place to enable them to continue their learning, protect them and all the staff, and to curb any resurgence of this virus.

Lord, in your mercy - **Hear our prayer**

We pray for our Bishops, Michael and Clive, our Archdeacon Sue and our Rural Dean Gary and for the life of all of our churches especially here at St Chad's. We pray for our Church Wardens Sue and Keith, for Roger our Verger and all who are involved and committed to the life and work of this church here in Hopwas.

Lord, in your mercy - **Hear our prayer**

Comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit, give them courage and hope in their troubles; and bring them the joy of your salvation. We pray for the vulnerable and suffering among us as we remember them by name.

**Beryl and Roger, Audrey, Jack, Melanie Lees
Lesley Fox, Jim, Barbara and Edwin Bott, Norma,
Catherine and Eric, Dave Atkinson,
Ann Thurgood, Michael Dalton, and Finn Collyer**

Lord, in your mercy - **Hear our prayer**

We pray that the dying may know your comfort and peace and we remember those who have died recently.

We pray for those whose anniversary of loss occurs at this time and for those whose loss is ever before them

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.

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



LORDS PRAYER

**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**



HYMN Lord of the Dance

THE GRACE *(Shared with each other)*

**The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all
this day and forever more. Amen**

BLESSING

Christ give you grace to grow in holiness,
to deny yourselves, take up your cross, and follow him;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.
Amen

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
**In the name of Christ.
Amen.**

If you are able to access our church website
you can find us on:

www.stchadhopwas.co.uk



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