

Sunday Worship at Home, 13th February 2022, 3rd Sunday Before Lent.



Opening Prayers:

God in Christ has revealed his glory. **Come let us worship.**

From the rising of the sun to its setting, **the Lord's name is greatly to be praised.**

Give him praise, you servants of the Lord. **O praise the name of the Lord! Amen.**

A Prayer of Confession:

God shows his love for us in that, while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Let us then show our love for him by confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

We are often slow to follow the example of Christ. **Lord, have mercy.**

We often fail to be known as Christ's disciples. **Christ, have mercy.**

We often fail to walk the way of the cross. **Lord, have mercy.**

May the God of love and power forgive us and free us from our sins, heal and strengthen us by his Spirit, and raise us to new life in Christ our Lord. **Amen**

The Collect

Almighty God, who alone can bring order to the unruly wills and passions of sinful humanity: give your people grace so to love what you command and to desire what you promise, that, among the many changes of this world, our hearts may surely there be fixed where true joys are to be found; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord. **Amen**

Reading: Luke 6:17-26

¹⁷ He came down with them and stood on a level place, with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea, Jerusalem, and the coast of Tyre and Sidon. ¹⁸ They had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases; and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. ¹⁹ And all in the crowd were trying to touch him, for power came out from him and healed all of them.

²⁰ Then he looked up at his disciples and said:

'Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.

²¹ 'Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you will be filled.

'Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh.

²² 'Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you^[a] on account of the Son of Man. ²³ Rejoice on that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets.

²⁴ 'But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation.

²⁵ 'Woe to you who are full now, for you will be hungry.

'Woe to you who are laughing now, for you will mourn and weep.

²⁶ 'Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is what their ancestors did to the false prophets.

Reflection on the reading:

The Beatitudes, from Jesus' epic Sermon on the Mount, recorded over 3 chapters in Matthew's Gospel, are some of the best-known verses in the Bible. 9 different groups of suffering people are assured of God's blessing. In today's reading we see Luke's version, in which 4 pairs of people are identified. In essence, Matthew says that those who in this world and by this world are hard done by, will in the end receive their reward, both in God's blessing now and in everlasting life hereafter. Luke goes a little further by also saying that those who are treated well in and by this world have received their reward already from this world and as result will not receive God's blessing. We could look at the Blessings and the Woes alongside Mary's song a few chapters earlier. *"He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty."* It is not that the poor, hungry and oppressed will automatically receive the good rewards of eternal life and that those who are rich, well fed and enjoy high status automatically find eternal life denied them. It is that wealth status and a comfortable life, make it much more difficult to place our trust and gratitude in God, especially if we have worked hard for it. There also is an element of Ecclesiastes here. Life in all its seasons includes times of plenty and times of hardship, times of joy and times of sorrow. So, if God has blessed you good things in this life recently, then remember to whom the thanks is due. And if life has dealt you a poor hand recently, then trust in the Lord to see you through the hard times even as you give thanks for what you do have, and look forward to better times to come and the even greater blessings of eternal life. **Amen**

The Creed

We believe in God the Father, from whom every family in heaven and earth is named.
We believe in God the Son, who lives in our hearts through faith, and fills us with his love.
We believe in God the Holy Spirit, who strengthens us with power from on high.
We believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen

Be still and pray:

Please pray for the church, the needs of the world and our local community. Particularly pray for: Areas of the world affected by War, natural disasters and man-made disasters; for peace to prevail in areas of rising international tension; for healing and peace for those who are ill; for the souls of those who have recently died, and comfort for those who are mourning their loss; and finally for ourselves, that we may be ready and willing to respond to listen to God's calling and obedient to his will. ***Finish with The Lord's Prayer:***

Conclusion

God of power, may the boldness of your Spirit transform us, may the gentleness of your Spirit lead us, may the gifts of your Spirit equip us to serve and worship you now and always. **To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.**

Reverend Eddie