



Chet Valley Churches



Liturgy for Holy Communion

3rd January 2021

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Welcome

Good morning and welcome to the Chet Valley for our Sunday Worship. It is the first Sunday of a new year. There is much that we hope for this year and there is much that we might hope to leave behind in the old year. But our worship is something that is common to both, sustaining us and our faith in the God we praise and celebrate.

♫ *Carol: Of the Father's Love Begotten*

**Of the Father's love begotten,
Ere the worlds began to be,
He is Alpha and Omega;
He the source, the ending he,
Of the things that are, that have been,
And that future years shall see,
Evermore and evermore.**

**By his word was all created;
He commanded; it was done:
Heaven and earth and depth of ocean,
Universe of three in one,
All that grows beneath the shining
Of the light of moon and sun,
Evermore and evermore.**

**Blessed was that day for ever
When the virgin, full of grace,
By the Holy Ghost conceiving,
Bore the Saviour of our race,
And the child, the world's redeemer,
First revealed his sacred face,
Evermore and evermore.**

**Glory be to God the Father,
Glory be to God the Son,
Glory to the Holy Spirit,
Persons three, yet Godhead one.
Glory be from all creation
While eternal ages run,
Evermore and evermore.**



Opening Sentences

As if this were the only time, and this were the only place, and we the only people, Jesus Christ will meet us.

As if this were the only time, and this were the only place, and we the only people, let us worship God.

Prayer

You found out what we were doing and you intervened. 'Come and do it together, come and do it with me', you said.

So, thank you Lord, for intervening in our private lives.

You promised us nothing by way of success, recognition, possessions or reward. 'These things will come at the right time when you walk with me,' you said.

So, thank you Lord, for promising us nothing.

You gave us no resources apart from ourselves – hands meant for caring, lips meant for praising, hearts meant for loving – and the Holy Spirit to make us restless until we change.

So, thank you Lord, for the essential gifts.

Then just when we think we've got it right as to where we should go and what we should do; just when we're ready to take on the world, you come, like a beggar, to our back door; saying, 'this is the way. I am the way.' And offering us bread and wine.

So, thank you Lord, for coming again and keeping your word, and showing your care for us and all people. Amen.

Reading: *John 1:10-18*

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes

after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.”) From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father’s heart, who has made him known.

Meditation

I’d like to offer a brief reflection in which some of the questions I have might become your questions also.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth.

Having ended a year when ‘fake news’ became an expression and when lying seemed to be OK to those in power, a year of grace and truth might not be a bad thing.

Truth is often hard to speak and maybe even harder to receive. It demands courage and honesty and trust. It needs an open heart and an open mind.

What important truth do I need to hear from God?

[Pause]

Do I have the courage to listen honestly, to seek God’s voice in the depths of prayer, or in the voices of those who love me, or—even harder—in the voices of those who do not love me?

[Pause]

What inconvenient truth do I *not* want to hear God speak to me?

[Pause]

Do I have the honesty to listen without prejudice, to receive God’s word, no matter how challenging?

[Pause]

Am I willing to open myself to God’s grace and love?

[Pause]

Where in my life do I need to seek God’s grace and forgiveness?

[Pause]

Can I trust God to pour out his love on me, freely and without any strings?
Can I trust myself to receive this unconditional love and accept it without saying, “Yes, but...”?

[Pause]

When are the times when I need to speak God’s truth to those who might not want to receive it?

[Pause]

How can I overcome my fears: fear of upsetting people, fear of getting it wrong, fear of not finding the right words?

[Pause]

How do I let God’s power work through me?

[Pause]

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth.

Thanks be to God who has met us in Jesus. **Amen.**

Invitation

This is the table, not of the Church, but of the Lord. It is to be made ready for those who love him and who want to love him more.

So come, you who have much faith and you who have little,
you who have been here often and you who have not been for a long time,
you who have tried to follow and you who have failed.
Come, not because it is I who invite you: it is our Lord.
It is his will that those who want him should meet him here.

The table is set with bread and wine

Now let us hear the story of how this sacrament began.

A reader:

On the night on which Jesus was betrayed, he sat at supper with his disciples. While they were eating, he took a piece of bread, said a blessing, broke it and gave it to them with the words, ‘This is my body. It is broken for you. Do this to remember me.’

Later, he took a cup of wine, saying, ‘This cup is God’s new covenant, sealed with my blood. Drink from it all of you to remember me.’

So now, following Jesus example and command, we take this bread and this wine, the ordinary things of the world which Christ will make special. And as he said a prayer before sharing, let us do so too.

Gratitude, praise, hearts lifted high, voices full and joyful... These you deserve:

For when we were nothing, you made us something.

When we had no name and no faith and no future,
you called us your children.

When we lost our way or turned away, you did not abandon us.

When we came back to you, your arms opened wide in welcome.

And look, you prepare a table for us offering not just bread, not just wine, but your very self so that we may be filled, forgiven, healed, blessed and made new again. You are worth all our pain and all our praise. So now in gratitude, we join our voices to those of the Church on earth and in heaven:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**



**Blessèd is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Lord God, as we come to share the richness of your table, we cannot forget the rawness of the earth. We cannot take bread and forget those who are hungry. Your world is one world
and we are stewards of its nourishment.

Lord, put our prosperity at the service of the poor. We cannot take wine and forget those who are thirsty. The ground and the rootless, the earth and its weary people cry out for justice.
Lord put our fullness at the service of the empty.

We cannot hear your words of peace and forget the world at war or, if not at war, then preparing for it.

**Show us quickly, Lord, how to turn weapons into welcome signs
and the lust for power into a desire for peace.**

We cannot celebrate the feast of your family and forget our divisions. We are one in spirit, but not in fact. History and hurt still dismember us.
Lord, heal your church in every brokenness.

♪ Carol: Lord Jesus Christ, You Have Come to Us

**Lord Jesus Christ you have come to us,
You are one with us, Mary's Son.
Cleansing our souls from all their sin;
Pouring your love and goodness in.
Jesus our love for you we sing, Living Lord.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, now and every day
Teach us how to pray, Son of God.
You have commanded us to do
This in remembrance, Lord, of you.
Into our lives your power breaks through, Living Lord.**

**Lord Jesus Christ you have come to us
Born as one with us, Mary's Son.
Led out to die on Calvary,
Risen from death to set us free,
Living Lord Jesus help us see you are Lord.**

**Lord Jesus Christ I would come to you;
Live my life for you, Son of God.
All your commands I know are true,
Your many gifts will make me new,
Into my life your power breaks through, Living Lord**

Prayer of Consecration

For us you were born, for us you healed, preached, taught and showed the way to heaven; for us you were crucified, and for us, after death, you rose again. Lord Jesus Christ, present with us now, for all that you have one and all that you have promised, what have we to offer?

Our hands are empty, our hearts are sometimes full of wrong things. We are not fit to gather up the crumbs from under your table. But with you is mercy and the power to change us.

So as we do in this place what you did in an upstairs room, send down your Holy Spirit on us and on these gifts of bread and wine that they may become for us your body, healing and forgiving and making us whole;

And that we may become, for you, your body, loving and caring in the world until your kingdom comes. **Amen.**

Taking and breaking bread

Among friends, gathered round a table, Jesus took bread, broke it and said, 'This is my body, it is broken for you.'

Taking the cup of wine

And later he took a cup of wine and said, 'This is the new relationship with God, made possible because of my death. Take this—all of you—to remember me.'

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world, grant us your peace.**

Look, here is your Lord coming to you in bread and wine. These are the gifts of God for the people of God.

Bread and wine are shared

The Peace

Not an easy peace, not an insignificant peace, not a half-hearted peace, but the peace of the Lord Jesus Christ is with us now.

The Peace may be shared

Concluding Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, you have put your life into our hands; now we put our lives into yours. Take us, renew us. What we have been is past; what we shall be, through you, still awaits us. Lead us on. Take us with you. **Amen.**

The cross, **we shall take it;**
The bread, **we shall break it;**
The pain, **we shall bear it;**
The joy, **we shall share it;**
The Gospel, **we shall live it;**
The love, **we shall give it;**
The light, **we shall cherish it;**
The darkness, **God shall perish it.**

