



Chet Valley Churches



Morning Worship for Second Sunday of Lent
21st February 2021

Welcome

Welcome to the Chet Valley for our service of Morning Worship on this the second Sunday of Lent.

Greeting

O Lord, open our lips
and our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Hear our voice, O Lord, according to your faithful love,
according to your judgement give us life.

Opening Prayer

Blessed are you, God of compassion and mercy,
to you be praise and glory for ever.

In the darkness of our sin,
your light breaks forth like the dawn
and your healing springs up for deliverance.

As we rejoice in the gift of your saving help,
sustain us with your bountiful Spirit
and open our lips to sing your praise.

Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Blessed be God for ever.

The night has passed, and the day lies open before us;
let us pray with one heart and mind.

Silence is kept.

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.**

Candle Liturgy

We have these Lenten candles to remind us of Christ, the light of the World, whose light was taken from the world on the cross.

We extinguish this candle, O Lord.

For whenever we do wrong, whenever we ignore Christ, whenever we turn from your teaching, we spoil and lessen the presence of Christ's light in the world.

Help us to further Christ's kingdom here on the earth, to show us the way to Christ's eternal kingdom in heaven.

Lord in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

♪ Hymn: *The God of Abraham Praise*

**The God of Abraham praise
Who reigns enthroned above,
Ancient of everlasting days,
And God of love:
To him uplift your voice,
At whose supreme command
From earth we rise, and seek the joys
At his right hand.**



**There dwells the Lord our King,
The Lord our righteousness,
Triumphant o'er the world and sin,
The Prince of Peace:
On Sion's sacred height
His kingdom he maintains,
And glorious with his saints in light
For ever reigns.**

**Before the great Three-One
They all exulting stand,
And tell the wonders he has done
Throughout the land:
The listening spheres attend,
And swell the growing fame,
And sing in songs which never end
The wondrous name.**

**The whole triumphant host
Give thanks to God on high:
'Hail, Father, Son and Holy Ghost'
They ever cry:
Hail, Abraham's God and mine!
(I join the heavenly lays)
All might and majesty are thine,
And endless praise.**

Confession

The sacrifice of God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart God will not despise. Let us come to the Lord, who is full of compassion, and acknowledge our transgressions in penitence and faith.

We confess to you our selfishness and lack of love:
fill us with your Spirit.

Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

We confess to you our fear and failure in sharing our faith:
fill us with your Spirit.

Christ, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**

We confess to you our stubbornness and lack of trust:
fill us with your Spirit.

Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy**

Absolution

May almighty God, who sent his Son into the world to save sinners, bring you his pardon and peace, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Old Testament Reading: Genesis 17:1-7; 15-16

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous." Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, "As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of

nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.

God said to Abraham, “As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her.”

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Epistle: Romans 4:13-end

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. Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become “the father of many nations,” according to what was said, “So numerous shall your descendants be.” He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah’s womb. No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. Therefore his faith “was reckoned to him as righteousness.” Now the words, “it was reckoned to him,” were written not for his sake alone, but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

♪ Hymn: *Be Thou My Guardian and My Guide*

Be thou my guardian and my guide,
And hear me when I call;
Let not my slippery footsteps slide,
And hold me lest I fall.

The world, the flesh, and Satan dwell
Around the path I tread;
O save me from the snares of hell,
Thou quickener of the dead.

And if I tempted am to sin,
And outward things are strong,
Do thou, O Lord, keep watch within,
And save my soul from wrong.

Still let me ever watch and pray,
And feel that I am frail;
That if the tempter cross my way,
Yet he may not prevail.



📖 Gospel Reading: *Mark 8:31-end*

Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.

The Lord is a great God, O that today you would listen to his voice.
Harden not your hearts.

Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Then he 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 [Rev Alison]

If you were to pick someone to lead you on a journey, I wonder who you would choose.

Possibly it depends on the nature of the journey.

I remember a trip that my family made when we were in the Lake District. My father proposed that we should ‘do’ the Fairfield Horseshoe. It is an absolute classic Lake District walk, very popular, and with amazing views over much of Lakeland. It’s a little over 10 miles in length. It’s quite steep on the way up, whichever way you choose, but once on the ridge it is relatively easy going. The guidebooks say that, “navigation is a largely a case of keeping left, though the summit area of Fairfield can be confusing in mist. This is where a compass can be useful to ensure the correct way off is taken.”

We had faith that we could trust my dad to read the map, use a compass if necessary, and navigate us successfully. He had been that way long before as a scout. We knew that we would need walking boots. Dad had proposed a day trip so we had our packed lunches. And we knew from experience that the Lakeland weather is unpredictable so we had our waterproofs.

Our faith in my father wasn’t entirely mis-placed: we did get up onto Fairfield by the chosen route and descend again, though in the mist we ended up in Grasmere rather than Ambleside! However, we got home safely and it has been a good family story ever since.

In our Old Testament reading this morning we heard some of Abraham’s story. He was called by God to leave his home and travel. He must have believed in God in order to set out when it wasn’t at all clear where he was going. It led him on a long journey from Ur to Canaan via Egypt. A great distance! It wasn’t easy. God promised him land and descendants and blessings.

Just how likely were those?

Abraham was old and his wife, Sarah, barren and old. But he believed. And it came to pass that Abraham had a son, Isaac, by Sarah. And through Abraham there were many descendants, as many as stars in the sky, starting with Isaac, Jacob and Esau and all of Jacob's children... And with Abraham's descendants there was land—the promised land taken by Joshua after the exodus and split between the twelve tribes of Israel.

St Paul tells us of Abraham, 'No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. Therefore his faith "was reckoned to him as righteousness."'

The disciples have faith in Jesus. Just before the passage Margy read to us, we find Peter declaring that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah. The disciples believe in Jesus and he leaves them under no illusion about what the journey with him will be like. There are implications for the disciples of their faith in Jesus. They are to carry a cross, the sign of suffering and shame; they will be in danger of their lives; they will be tempted to deny Jesus: all in all, this doesn't sound like the easiest journey in the world! But at least they set out with open eyes—and they did it; all bar one, Judas, who found the journey too difficult.

So what about us and our faith in Jesus. Is the journey any easier today? Well, of course not and we will make mistakes *en route*.

We are in Lent which is perhaps a good time to stop; to look at the map again; read the guidebook carefully; check the compass and see if we need to change direction.

Abraham, in faith, followed God's call through the wilderness;

Jesus' disciples, in faith, followed him to Jerusalem and the cross;

Can we, in faith, join them and follow the Holy Spirit wherever it leads?

Creed

**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.

♪ Hymn: *Take up Thy Cross, the Saviour Said*

Take up thy cross, the Saviour said,
If thou wouldst my disciple be;
Deny thyself, the world forsake,
And humbly follow after me.

Take up thy cross; let not its weight
Fill thy weak spirit with alarm;
His strength shall bear thy spirit up,
And brace thy heart, and nerve thine arm.

Take up thy cross, nor heed the shame,
Nor let thy foolish pride rebel;
The Lord for thee the Cross endured,
To save thy soul from death and hell.

Take up thy cross then in his strength,
And calmly every danger brave;
'Twill guide thee to a better home,
And lead to victory o'er the grave.

Take up thy cross, and follow Christ,
Nor think till death to lay it down;
For only he who bears the cross
May hope to wear the glorious crown.

To thee, great Lord, the One in Three,
All praise for evermore ascend;
O grant us in our home to see
The heavenly life that knows no end.



Prayers In this Fairtrade Fortnight:

Loving Lord, we ask your blessing on all who are involved with Fair Trade, lifting before you:

Producers as they grow their crops and craft their works. Bless them, we pray, in their endeavours and grant them wisdom and discernment as they make decisions about how to use the benefits of Fair Trade.

People who transport Fair Trade goods to market. Grant, we pray, that they, too, may be fairly treated.

Those who import and retail Fair Trade goods. Grant them, we pray, a genuine commitment to fairer trade for all.

All of us who shop where Fair Trade goods are for sale. Grant us an understanding of the impact of our choices.

Lord, hear us. **Lord, graciously hear us.**

In this time of climate catastrophe with farmers so badly affected, we lift before you:

Those whose land has been flooded or washed away;

Those whose land has been droughted and top soil blown away;

Those where weather patterns have changed so much that there is no longer a recognisable growing season and harvests are precarious.

We give thanks for those working to promote climate friendly farming techniques and the use of drought resistant seeds. We pray that this year those farmers may plant and harvest a good crop. We pray for those meeting at the climate summit in November that there will be a real commitment to measures combatting the unfolding catastrophe.

Lord, hear us. **Lord, graciously hear us.**

Lord, forgive our silence.

Forgive our reluctance to speak up for others.

Forgive our reliance on goods which have been produced unfairly at the expense of the poor.

Forgive our lack our awareness of how our clothes are manufactured, our food produced and our mistaking unneeded goods for essentials.

Lord enter the silence of our hearts and lift them up with fresh understanding derived from the Wisdom contained in your Word.

May we be ambassadors for Christ in bringing reconciliation between producer and consumer, those exploited and those who benefit from their exploitation.

May all our labour be valued and rewarded justly.

May our lifestyles reflect a care for creation and humanity.

May we appreciate the gift of life and in so doing respect the lives of all God's children.

Lord, you reconciled the world to God through your suffering on the cross. May your reconciling power make us one with all who need fairness in their trading and systems which promote justice.

Lord, hear us. **Lord, graciously hear us.**

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
may we come to share in his glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

Trusting in the compassion of God, as our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be your name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done
On earth as in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us our trespasses
As we forgive those that trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation.
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,
Now and forever. Amen.**

♪ Hymn: Lord Jesus, Think on Me

Lord Jesus, think on me,
And purge away my sin;
From earthborn passions set me free,
And make me pure within.

Lord Jesus, think on me,
With care and woe opprest;
Let me thy loving servant be,
And taste thy promised rest.

Lord Jesus, think on me,
Amid the battle's strife;
In all my pain and misery
Be thou my health and life.

Lord Jesus, think on me,
Nor let me go astray;
Through darkness and perplexity
Point thou the heavenly way.

Lord Jesus, think on me,
When flows the tempest high:
When on doth rush the enemy
O Saviour, be thou nigh.

Lord Jesus, think on me,
That, when the flood is past,
I may the eternal brightness see,
And share thy joy at last.

Conclusion

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with us now and forever more.

Amen.

Let us bless the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

