



Chet Valley Churches



Service of the Word

Third Sunday before Advent

7th November 2021

Welcome & Introduction

We come to worship God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

This is the day that the Lord has made.

We will rejoice and be glad in it!

Hymn: *Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound*

**Amazing grace (how sweet the sound) that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found, was blind, but now I see.**

**'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed!**

**Through many dangers, toils and snares I have already come:
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.**

**The Lord has promised good to me, his word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be as long as life endures.**

**Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail, and mortal life shall cease:
I shall possess, within the veil, a life of joy and peace.**

**When I've been there ten thousand years, bright shining as the sun,
I've no less days to sing God's praise than when I'd first begun.**

Prayer of Approach

Lord, direct our thoughts and teach us to pray. Lift up our hearts to worship you in spirit and in truth, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Silence

**Loving God, we have come to worship you. Help us to remember
that you are here with us. May we pray to you in faith and listen
to your word with eagerness; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Psalm 65:5-12

For God alone my soul waits in silence, for my hope is from him.

**He alone is my rock and my salvation,
my fortress; I shall not be shaken.**

On God rests my deliverance and my honour;
my mighty rock, my refuge is in God.

Trust in him at all times, O people;

pour out your heart before him; God is a refuge for us.

Those of low estate are but a breath, those of high estate are a delusion; in the balances they go up; they are together lighter than a breath.

Put no confidence in extortion, and set no vain hopes on robbery; if riches increase, do not set your heart on them.

Once God has spoken; twice have I heard this:
that power belongs to God, and steadfast love belongs to you, O Lord.
For you repay to all according to their work.

Silence

To you, loving God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, belong
all glory, honour and praise now and for ever. **Amen.**

Confession & Declaration of Forgiveness

Let us confess our sins.

Silence

Loving God,
**we have sinned against you
in what we have thought, said and done.
We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and turn away from what is wrong.
Forgive us for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Silence

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

The Collect, the Prayer of the Day

Heavenly Lord, you long for the world's salvation: stir us from apathy,
restrain us from excess and revive in us new hope that all creation will one
day be healed in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Old Testament Reading: Jonah 3:1-5, 10

The word of the LORD came to Jonah a second time, saying, 'Get up, go to
Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim to it the message that I tell you.' So Jonah



set out and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly large city, a three days' walk across. Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's walk. And he cried out, 'Forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!' And the people of Nineveh believed God; they proclaimed a fast, and everyone, great and small, put on sackcloth. When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it.

For the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Hymn: God Forgave My Sin in Jesus' Name

**God forgave my sin in Jesus' name, I've been born again in Jesus' name;
And in Jesus' name I come to you to share His love as He told me to.**

**He said, "Freely, freely, you have received, freely, freely give;
Go in My name, and because you believe others will know that I live."**

**All power is given in Jesus' name, in earth and heaven in Jesus' name;
And in Jesus' name I come to you to share His power as He told me to.**

He said, "Freely, freely..."

Gospel Reading: Mark 1:14-20

After John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.'

As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake—for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, 'Follow me and I will make you fish for people.' And immediately they left their nets and followed him. As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him.

For the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon [Rev David]

We are living through tumultuous times. As I share these thoughts leaders of many of the world's nations are gathering in Glasgow for the 26th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (so much easier to say COP26). Many have said that this meeting needs to result in definite and agreed action to combat climate change and come up with a workable solution for the planet's and humanity's sake. There is challenge; there is urgency; there is catastrophe looming. How the

leaders of nations and the peoples of the world respond will have an immense effect for future generations.

The readings we've heard today also have an urgency within them. Many will be aware of the story of Jonah. How God instructed him to go to Nineveh and seek the people there to repent for their ways; how he didn't want to go, so instead he catches a boat to take him in the opposite direction, to get as far away as possible; only for there to be such a storm that he owes up that to his fellow shipmates that the storm is probably because of his disobedience. He gets thrown into the sea and is swallowed by a "big fish". After three days he is spewed out onto the shore. Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time... So now he decides to go and do what he's been asked. I'm not sure that he goes with any sense of real purpose mind. Yes, he proclaims the message—one of judgement. It's too late, you're going to pay for your wickedness, you and your city will be destroyed. He seems to say it with relish. Contrast that with the urgency of Jesus's call in our reading from Mark's gospel. "The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe the good news." Jonah wishes for the people of Nineveh to suffer for their sins, Jesus on the other hand wants people to recognise their sins, to repent and hear the good news. Good news which is both general—the Kingdom of God is here—and personal when addressed to those first disciples—come and follow me and make the kingdom come near for others.

These are the challenging cries to the world today. Yes, the Kingdom of God is here—and is complete in the death and resurrection of Jesus yet the cry still needs to go out as we are still very much in need of repentance. Humanity is a work in progress. The very fact that we are emphasising COP26 reminds us that there is a need to repent for the ways we have been and still are abusing creation and the planet's resources. We still need to repent for the ways we maltreat each other especially those who are different to us. We still need to repent for our lack of understanding of the immense love God has for us to share with others.

Jonah clearly wished for God to judge the people of Nineveh according to his human standards of judgement. The difficulty for Jonah is that he can't grasp that God's standards of honour and greatness are beyond "the power of human telling". As Dr Jane Williams has commented Jonah would have been horrified at the idea of God in Jesus dying on the cross—yet it is this very fact which constantly reminds us that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself. To enable this to happen it isn't God who has to change, it us—we need to repent until we can joyfully hear the Good News. And, wonder of wonders, we too are called to share that fact with others.

Affirmation of Faith

Do you believe and trust in God the Father,
source of all being and life, the one for whom we exist?

We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Son,
who took our human nature, died for us and rose again?

We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,
who gives life to the people of God and makes Christ known in the world?

We believe and trust in him.

This is the faith of the Church.

**This is our faith. We believe and trust in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

Hymn: Lord Enthroned in Heavenly Splendour

Lord, enthroned in heavenly splendour, first-begotten from the dead,
Thou alone, our strong defender, liftest up thy people's head.
Alleluia, Alleluia, Jesu, true and living bread!

Here our humblest homage pay we; here in loving reverence bow;
Here for faith's discernment pray we, lest we fail to know thee now.
Alleluia, Alleluia, thou art here, we ask not how.

Though the lowliest form doth veil thee as of old in Bethlehem,
Here as there thine angels hail thee, branch and flower of Jesse's stem.
Alleluia, Alleluia, we in worship join with them.

Paschal Lamb, thine offering, finished once for all when thou wast slain,
In its fullness undiminished shall for evermore remain,
Alleluia, Alleluia, cleansing souls from every stain.

Life-imparting heavenly manna, stricken rock with streaming side,
Heaven and earth with loud hosanna worship thee, the Lamb who died,
Alleluia, Alleluia, Risen, ascended, glorified!

Prayers of Intercession

O God our creator, whose good earth is entrusted to our care and delight
and tenderness, we pray:

May those who sow in tears **reap with shouts of joy.**



For all who are in captivity to debt, whose lives are cramped by fear from which there is no turning except through abundant harvest.

May those who sow in tears **reap with shouts of joy.**

For all who depend on the earth for their daily food and fuel, whose forests are destroyed for the profits of the few.

May those who sow in tears **reap with shouts of joy.**

For all who labour in poverty, who are oppressed by unjust laws, who are banned for speaking the truth, who long for a harvest of justice.

May those who sow in tears **reap with shouts of joy.**

For all who are in captivity to greed and waste and boredom, whose harvest joy is choked with things they do not need.

May those who sow in tears **reap with shouts of joy.**

Turn us again from our captivity and restore our vision, that our mouth may be filled with laughter and our tongue with singing.

God of compassion and mercy, listen to our prayer.

May what we ask in Jesus Christ

**your Son be done according to his word,
who said, 'Ask, and you will receive,
seek, and you will find,
knock, and the door will be opened to you.'**

**To you, merciful God, through your Son,
in the power of the life-giving Spirit,
be glory and praise for ever. Amen.**



The Lord's Prayer

Jesus taught us to call God our Father, and so in faith and trust we say:

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

**For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.**

🎵 **Hymn: Will You Come and Follow Me**

**Will you come and follow me if I but call your name?
Will you go where you don't know and never be the same?
Will you let my love be shown, will you let my name be known,
Will you let my life be grown in you and you in me?
Will you leave yourself behind if I but call your name?
Will you care for cruel and kind and never be the same?
Will you risk the hostile stare should your life attract or scare?
Will you let me answer prayer in you and you in me?
Will you let the blinded see if I but call your name?
Will you set the prisoners free and never be the same?
Will you kiss the leper clean and do such as this unseen,
And admit to what I mean in you and you in me?
Will you love the 'you' you hide if I but call your name?
Will you quell the fear inside and never be the same?
Will you use the faith you've found to reshape the world around
Through my sight and touch and sound in you and you in me?
Lord, your summons echoes true when you but call my name.
Let me turn and follow you and never be the same.
In your company I'll go where your love and footsteps show.
Thus I'll move and live and grow in you and you in me.**

🙏 **Prayer of Dedication & Dismissal**

God of all goodness and grace, receive all that we offer;
and grant that our whole life may give you glory and praise;
through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The blessing of God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit
be among us and remain with us
and those whom we love,
now and always. **Amen.**

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

