



St NICOLAS' CHURCH
ABINGDON-ON-THAMES

Sunday 17 October 2021
Twentieth Sunday after Trinity

Third Sunday Service

**A Christ-like Church for the sake of
God's World**

Being Contemplative

A Christ-like Church for the sake of God's World:

Being Contemplative

Welcome to today's Third Sunday Service which is the first of three services in which we shall be reflecting on what it is like to be a Christ-like Church for the sake of God's World.

This was the vision of Bishop Steven when he first came to the diocese. His challenge to every congregation and individual follower of Jesus throughout the diocese was to consider how we might be more Christ-like with the core values of core values of being Contemplative, Compassionate and Courageous.

Since then we know we have lived in radically changing times brought upon us by the Covid-19 pandemic. That pandemic is still with us and the world is a different place because of it. Each of us has had cause to re-evaluate our priorities and how we see the world, ourselves, and God.

Over the next three months I am commending these three core values to us as a church here at St Nic's as we reflect on each of them.

So today, we begin with Contemplation. What does it mean to be Contemplative after the pattern of Jesus for the sake of God's world now? With what we have experienced in the last two years, and what we continue to live with, in the context of a pandemic; and not least the continuing urgency of the Climate Change Crisis from which we cannot escape as those who are called to be stewards of the earth, there is much to contemplate. How we become more contemplative has to begin by spending time in the presence of Jesus, by asking him to 'teach us to pray', and by being more attentive to what is around us in the beauty and wonder of creation.

My prayer is that as we consider through our worship, the reading of scripture, learning together, and prayer and song, these three core values of being Contemplative, Compassionate and Courageous that the Spirit of God will lead us to be more Christ-like for the sake of God's world into which we are sent to preach the good news.

21 November: A Christ-like Church: Being Compassionate

19 December: A Christ-like Church: Being Courageous

The Revd Paul Smith

Team Vicar

Notices

Welcome

Please remain seated

This is the day the Lord has made

Let us rejoice and be glad in it

Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving

And worship him with joyful song

Please stand to sing:

Be still for the presence of the Lord

Be still for the presence of the Lord

The Holy One is here

Come bow before him now

With reverence and fear

In him no sin is found

We stand on holy ground

Be still for the presence of the Lord

The Holy One is here

Be still for the glory of the Lord

Is shining all around

He burns with holy fire

With splendour he is crowned

How awesome is the sight

Our radiant King of light

Be still for the glory of the Lord

Is shining all around

Be still for the power of the Lord

Is moving in this place

He comes to cleanse and heal

To minister his grace

No work too hard for him

In faith receive from him

Be still for the power of the Lord

Is moving in this place

David J Evans (b 1957)

Please sit or kneel for

The Confession

Let us call to mind and confess our sins:

Your righteousness, Lord, is like the strong mountains,
and your judgements are like the great deep.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

With you is the well of life,
and in your light shall we see light. Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Save us, Lord.

Continue your steadfast love to those who love you,
and your salvation to the upright of heart.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Promise of Forgiveness

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.

We say together

The Prayer for today

God our light and our salvation:

Illuminate our lives,

that we may see your goodness in the land of the living,

and looking on your beauty may be changed

into the likeness of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

THE WORD OF GOD

First Reading:

Perseverance in Prayer

Luke 11.1-13

Jesus was praying in a certain place, and after he had finished, one of his
disciples said to him, 'Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his
disciples.' He said to them, 'When you pray, say:
Father, hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come.

Give us each day our daily bread.
And forgive us our sins,
for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us.
And do not bring us to the time of trial.'

And he said to them, 'Suppose one of you has a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say to him, "Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; for a friend of mine has arrived, and I have nothing to set before him." And he answers from within, "Do not bother me; the door has already been locked, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything." I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, at least because of his persistence he will get up and give him whatever he needs.

'So I say to you, Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. Is there anyone among you who, if your child asks for a fish, will give a snake instead of a fish? Or if the child asks for an egg, will give a scorpion? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!'

At the end the reader says: For the gift of the word

All: **Thanks be to God**

We stand to sing:

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
"Come unto me and rest.
Lay down, thou weary one, lay down
Thy head upon my breast."
I came to Jesus as I was,
Weary and worn, and sad.
I found in him a resting place,
and he has made me glad.

I heard the voice of Jesus say

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
"Behold, I freely give
The living water, thirsty one;
Stoop down and drink and live."
I came to Jesus, and I drank
Of that life-giving stream.
My thirst was quenched, my soul revived,
And now I live in him.

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
"I am this dark world's light.
Look unto me, your morn shall rise,
and all thy day be bright."
I looked to Jesus, and I found
In him my star, my sun,
And in that light of life I'll walk
Till trav'ling days are done.

Horatius Bonar 1808-1889

Second Reading:

Jesus meets Zacchaeus Luke 19:1-10

Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through it. A man was there named Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax-collector and was rich. He was trying to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was short in stature. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree to see him, because he was going to pass that way. When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, 'Zacchaeus, hurry and come down; for I must stay at your house today.' So he hurried down and was happy to welcome him. All who saw it began to grumble and said, 'He has gone to be the guest of one who is a sinner.' Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, 'Look, half of my possessions, Lord, I will give to the poor; and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will pay back four times as much.' Then Jesus said to him, 'Today salvation has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost.'

At the end the reader says: For the gift of the word
All: Thanks be to God

TALK

Please standing for

Affirmation of Faith

**We believe in God the Father,
from whom every family
in heaven and on earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son,
who sets us free to serve,
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.**

Please sit or kneel for

The Prayers

*Between each bidding, after the response below,
we sing a verse from the hymn*

Be Still and Know that I am God

please respond: Lord in your mercy,
Hear our prayer

and we then sing:

Be still and know that I am God.
Be still and know that I am God.
Be still and know that I am God

Bidding

please respond: Lord in your mercy,
Hear our prayer

and we then sing:

In thee O Lord I put my trust
In thee O Lord I put my trust
In thee O Lord I put my trust

Bidding

Lord in your mercy,
please respond: **Hear our prayer**

and we then sing:

I am the Lord that healeth thee
I am the Lord that healeth thee
I am the Lord that healeth thee

Bidding

Lord in your mercy,
please respond: **Hear our prayer**

and we then sing:

Be still and know that I am God.
Be still and know that I am God.
Be still and know that I am God

We say together the prayer that Jesus taught his disciples

**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.**

Response and Commitment:

If you wish to do so you can bring forward the response and commitment you have made to be more Christ-like and Contemplative for the Sake of God's World, by placing your card in the basket on the Altar during which we hear a recording of

Look at the World, by John Rutter

We stand to sing:

O Jesus, I have promised

O Jesus, I have promised to serve thee to the end;
Be thou forever near me, my Master and my Friend;
I shall not fear the battle if thou art by my side,
Nor wander from the pathway if thou wilt be my Guide.

O let me feel thee near me: the world is ever near;
I see the sights that dazzle, the tempting sounds I hear;
My foes are ever near me, around me and within;
But, Jesus draw thou nearer, and shield my soul from sin.

Oh, let me hear thee speaking in accents clear and still,
Above the storms of passion, the murmurs of self-will;
Oh, speak to reassure me, to hasten or control;
Oh, speak, and make me listen, thou Guardian of my soul.

O Jesus, thou hast promised to all who follow thee
That where thou art in glory there shall thy servant be;
And Jesus, I have promised to serve thee to the end—
Oh, give me grace to follow, my Master and my Friend.

Oh, let me see thy foot-marks, and in them plant mine own;
My hope to follow duly is in thy strength alone;
Oh, guide me, call me, draw me, uphold me to the end;
And then in heaven receive me, my Saviour and my Friend.

Remain standing for

The Blessing

May God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
who is the source of all goodness and growth,
pour his blessing upon all things created,
and upon you his children,
that you may persevere in prayer,
be attentive to all he has given and use his gifts to his glory,
and the blessing of God almighty
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
rest upon you and remain with you always

Amen

Common Worship: Times and Seasons Blessing P1 [adapted] p604

The Dismissal

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

Some Questions for Reflection and Response after the Talk:

[you are welcome to consider these with those around you or on your own]

Being Contemplative: Praying

‘Lord teach us to pray.....’ [Luke 11.1]

One obvious way of being contemplative is through our prayer life of prayer.

What regular time are you able to spend in the presence of Christ: in prayer and in bible study?

Does this need reviewing and if so how can that happen?

How, if at all, has the experience of the pandemic impacted on your life of prayer?

If after considering these questions you feel you would like to make a commitment to do something new or different write it on the card you have been given and if you wish bring it to the altar and place it in the basket later in the service as indicated in this order of service. These will not be seen by anyone, but simply offered in prayer at the end of the service.

Being Contemplative: Noticing and Attentiveness

When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, ‘Zacchaeus, hurry and come down; for I must stay at your house today.’ [Luke 19.5]

During his earthly ministry, Jesus was attentive to that which was around him, not least people who were in need or marginalised. We saw this in today’s second reading in his meeting with Zacchaeus.

How much more do you notice things around you? In what ways has God’s whole creation, both in nature and through helped you notice the wonder of creation and/or the needs of others during the pandemic?

Is there one way in which you might notice or be more attentive in order to be more contemplative at this time?

You may like to write one thing down and bring it to the altar and place it in the basket.

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