



Heacham Parish Church

7th November 2021 – 3rd Sunday before Advent

This is Heacham Parish Church on-line. You join us for our Service of Worship for the 3rd Sunday before Advent. Although we join at various times, from various places, and in various ways we come together as one body, the Church of Jesus Christ.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

The Lord be with you, **and also with you.**

Hymn: **O Worship the King**

O worship the King, all-glorious above;
O gratefully sing His power and His love;
our shield and defender, the Ancient of Days,
pavilioned in splendour, and girded with praise.

O tell of His might, O sing of His grace,
whose robe is the light, whose canopy, space;
His chariots of wrath the deep thunder-clouds form,
and dark is His path on the wings of the storm.

The earth, with its store of wonders untold,
Almighty, Thy power hath founded of old:
hath stablished it fast by a changeless decree,
and round it hath cast, like a mantle, the sea.

Thy bountiful care what tongue can recite?
It breathes in the air, it shines in the light,
it streams from the hills, it descends to the plain,
and sweetly distils in the dew and the rain.

Frail children of dust, and feeble as frail,
in Thee do we trust, nor find Thee to fail:
Thy mercies, how tender, how firm to the end,
our maker, defender, Redeemer, and friend!

O Lord of all might, how boundless Thy love!
while angels delight to hymn Thee above,
the humbler creation, though feeble their lays,
with true adoration shall sing to Thy praise.

Prayer of Preparation

**Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your
Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Prayers of Penitence

Our Lord Jesus Christ said:

The first commandment is this:

'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is the only Lord.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,
with all your soul, with all your mind,
and with all your strength.'

The second is this: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.'

There is no other commandment greater than these.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Amen. Lord, have mercy.

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son Jesus Christ
to save us from our sins, to be our advocate in heaven,
and to bring us to eternal life.

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith, firmly resolved
to keep God's commandments and to live in love and peace with all.

Confession

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, we have sinned against you and against our neighbour in thought and word and deed, through negligence, through weakness, through our own deliberate fault. We are truly sorry and repent of all our sins. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, who died for us, forgive us all that is past and grant that we may serve you in newness of life to the glory of your name. Amen.

Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and keep you in life eternal; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The Collect (for the 3rd Sunday before Advent)

Blessed Lord,
who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning:
help us so to hear them,
to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them
that, through patience, and the comfort of your holy word,
we may embrace and for ever hold fast
the hope of everlasting life,
which you have given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Hymn: Jesus calls us; o'er the tumult

Jesus calls us; o'er the tumult of our life's wild restless sea,
day by day His voice is sounding, saying, 'Christian, follow me.'

As of old, apostles heard it by the Galilean lake,
turned from home, and toil, and kindred, leaving all for His dear sake.

Jesus calls us from the worship of the vain world's golden store,
from each idol that would keep us, saying, 'Christian, love Me more.'

In our joys and in our sorrows, days of toil and hours of ease,
still He calls, in cares & pleasures 'Christian, love Me more than these.'

Jesus calls us! By Thy mercies, Saviour, may we hear Thy call,
give our hearts to Thine obedience, serve and love Thee best of all.

The Gospel Reading

Mark 1: 14-20 [*New International Version*]

14 After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. 15 "The time has come," He said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!"

16 As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen.

17 "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will send you out to fish for people." 18 At once they left their nets and followed Him.

19 When he had gone a little farther, he saw James, son of Zebedee, and his brother John in a boat, preparing their nets. 20 Without delay He called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed Him.

The Sermon - Penny Sutton

Have you come across the self-help genre of books? There was a series where everything was 'made simple' like 'Chemistry made simple'. Another is 'Essentials of...' like Calculus or Grammar; while, more recently, we have everything 'for Dummies' like 'Productivity' or, I found, 'Computers for seniors for Dummies'.

Mark's gospel fits into this genre as it could be called 'Essentials of the Christian faith for Gentiles'. Mark probably wrote in partnership with Peter using Peter's memories. It is not meant to be a chronological record. It is a summary with tremendous energy and pace designed to inspire the reader with a torrent of stories. Mark is a minimalist. He gives the essential facts which leaves the option of learning more later. There is no genealogy, no birth narrative at the beginning of this gospel, because for Mark's target audience of Gentiles these facts are not essential (as they would be for Jews) and they can be explored later.

Mark starts with the essentials of Jesus' ministry, how He arrived in Galilee and "proclaimed the good news of God". This comes as three messages: -

- (i) The time is now.
- (ii) The Kingdom of God is near.
- (iii) Repent and believe the Good News.

But he does not explain these. He leaves the reader to read on and find out. How will the arrival of this 'Kingdom' show itself in the world? What will we see? This is revealed in a series of stories in the next two chapters.

The first of these stories is about four fishermen behaving oddly, or at least by social norms they behave oddly, as they abandon their fishing tackle, their business, and their families to respond to a strange call – 'Come after me and I will train you to catch people'. Other 'messiahs', and there were several, raised an army and were intent on overthrowing Roman rule but Jesus recruits his army to a very different cause – catching people like fish. The image is enticement not ensnarement or battle. This is 'Kingdom power' in action. The word of Christ has creative power to transform the lives of these four. It captivates them and Jesus promises they will captivate others in the same way BUT there is a cost to this obedience, each needed to leave all he had.

Simon and Andrew, we are told, were casting a net. This reveals their social status. They were working tradesmen. We are told they responded 'at once' to Jesus' call. The word translated here as "at once" and often as "immediately" appears many times in Mark's gospel illustrating the urgency of response required. The same applied to James and John. Here we learn that theirs was a family business big enough to employ others. They each walked away from secure employment to an unknown future, leaving their families. They were called not to a task but to an identity. Jesus said: "I will make you fishers of men" NOT I will make you fish for men. They walked away from much to follow Jesus Christ. They walked into much to gain New Life.

To identify with the 'Way of Christ' we too need to 'leave the nets', which symbolise our safety and security, the social norms which govern our lives, and entangle us. We need to engage in alternative social

practices, a new 'net', a new community thus allowing ourselves to be knit back together by the Holy Spirit. We are not fishermen and probably have more than these four to let go. The call is to immediate action but we are masters and mistresses of prevarication, held captive to the world. Coming to a new identity is a hard, and often long, spiritual path which we need to work on daily.

What is precious to you but may need to go?

What have you walked away from?

What do you need to pick up?

This Gospel story is not about tasks, but about identity in Jesus.

The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth; of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God; begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

**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.

Blessing

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep
your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God,
and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

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 your self 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.

Dismissal

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

In the name of Christ. Amen.

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