



Personal Service for Sunday 27th February 2022

Call to Worship.

2 Corinthians chapter 3 verse 18: “All of us then, reflect the glory of the Lord with uncovered faces; and that same glory, coming from the Lord, who is the Spirit, transforms us into his likeness in an ever greater degree of glory.” – From the Good News Bible.

H & P. 56. Praise to the living God.

Prayers of praise, thanksgiving and repentance.

From the darkness of our own world we dare to enter into the presence of your incandescent light, Father of all. From the noise of an aching world we come into the blessed silence of your sanctuary. From all that would distract us we turn away and look at your beautiful welcoming face, O Christ.

Separately, but together in union with you, Lord Jesus, and all your saints, heavenly and earthly, we bow our heads in prayer.

We thank you for being with us all the time, but, right now, we thank you for the closeness that we feel when we come in penitence and praise. You are our awesome God, Father, Son and Spirit. Your grace is unending and your joy extends to all who would seek you. You illuminate our world, making it a better place and you surround us with such love that we should never be fearful of the world and its trials. Thank you, Lord, for seeking each one of us and guiding us to your feet. Thank you for honouring your promise never to leave us or forsake us. Thank you for nourishing us in body, mind and spirit. Thank you for being our Saviour.

In to your dazzling light we come and we praise and honour you, through the freedom that Jesus gives. Amen.

Silence – for personal prayers of thanks.

In approaching God's presence we bring ourselves and our need for forgiveness and redemption. We bring ourselves to the foot of Christ's bloodied cross and accept that our sins are nailed to it alongside his broken body. We see ourselves as the weak humans that we are. Our faults, weaknesses, cares and temptations are brought in to your light, Lord Jesus. We acknowledge our sinful nature and repent of all that helps to separate us from you.

Silence.

The cross, once a symbol of condemnation and guilt, stands empty to the sky. Christ has taken all the sin of those, who would call on Him, and left it in the depths of hell. As Christ is risen so too are we assured of his gift of heaven. We are free, because his blood has washed us clean. Praise be to God!

Amen.

The readings for today.

Psalm 99.

Luke : chapter 9 verses 28 – 36.

H & P. 158: Stay, Master, stay upon this heavenly hill.

The Address.

Perhaps the most famous mountain top speech was that of Martin Luther King Junior. One sentence "I have seen the Promised Land; I may not get there with you." He didn't, the following day he was gunned down. He knew he was a condemned man because he knew that people didn't like what he was saying.

When our Lord, Jesus Christ, went up the mountain he too received a foretaste of his future. Moses and Elijah had been sent, by God, to prepare him for what would befall him in Jerusalem, the Promised Land becoming his place of condemnation and death. With him, he took Peter,

James and John. Pre-empting what would happen on the Mount of Olives, when Jesus was praying before his arrest, his companions fell asleep. So how did they know what Moses and Elijah had said. Place yourself in to that place of slumber, or any time you nap or sleep. You can still hear, more recently we have been lulled or tormented by the winds of storms Dudley, Eunice and Franklyn. Even in our deepest subconscious we will have been aware of them, just as we are aware of birdsong or music or traffic even when we are not really paying attention. So the disciples may well have heard the words even if they were not party to who was saying them. Then it happened –the dazzling brilliance of the Transfiguration light. It woke them up and they saw Jesus undergo a complete change of appearance into a much more beautiful and spiritual state. For that is what transfiguration is. The brilliance of His appearance may well have frightened them, it seems to have left them dumbfounded, as they took in the scene, because it was a while before they reacted. When they did, it was Peter; of course it was Peter, who spoke first. Wanting to be of use, the practical man coming in with a practical idea. Wanting to extend the time that the holy patriots stayed. Wanting to make them welcome. Wanting to be of use to Moses, Elijah and God. Wanting them to stay. A holy experience that needed to be encountered to understand its magnitude. Then the mist descended, obscuring the view. Even in this county of ours, with its gentle rolling hills, it is possible to be surrounded by very low cloud. The mist blankets everything. Sounds are muffled and the rest of the world seemingly disappears. In to the silence, of that created fog, came the voice of God; “This is my Son, whom I have chosen, listen to him!” A mountain top experience like no other. They did listen to him, They followed him, sometimes they made mistakes, but I doubt if they ever forgot that amazing mountain top vista. Not the surrounding hills and countryside but the sight of Moses and Elijah. The Transfiguration of Jesus. The sound of God’s voice. We can all have them. God hasn’t stopped speaking, we just need to discern his voice. Just as the Psalmist did when he declared the kingship of God. Just as Paul did when he found the right words to write to the Church in Corinth. Just as our Lord, Jesus the Christ, always did. Waiting in prayer is good. Reading the stories of others, in faith, also helps us to understand and discern. Being faithful to God’s words and ways is a demonstration of our own mountain top experiences. A light that shines out in to a, sometimes, seemingly, dark world. Remember those special times and thank God for them. For we have all been, or can, be transformed by the love of God the Father,

God the Son and God the Spirit. No one is outside the reach of his light.
Amen.

H & P.280: **Breathe on me, Breath of God.**

Prayers of Intercession.

Silence.

In the light of God's presence we bring our prayers for the world.

We pray for the church often persecuted but undefeated. For our witness, personal and collective, to shine through the darkness. Then all will come and sit in the presence of God.

Silence.

We pray for all who have authority. For all who take on leadership roles. For all who seek out the lost and the needy. May they listen for God's voice in all that they do.

Silence.

We pray for all who are going through the mists of illness and trials. May they feel the presence of God surrounding them with love and hope.

Silence

We thank God for all his faithful witnesses throughout all ages. All who have made paths for us to follow. May we be inspired by them, and seek to lead others to Christ.

In our Saviour's name we pray. Amen

The Lord's Prayer

H & P. 745. O Thou who camest from above.

We join, separately but together as the body of Christ, in the words of
The Grace.