

Morning Service 7th March 2021- zoom/whypay! -

(ppt as people arrive, then no ppt)

*J: Welcome to today's worship from Cudham and Downe, today on Zoom or whypay – thanks for those who have dialled in. I'm here with Helen who will help me lead our worship today. The words you are invited to join in with will appear on your screen in **bold**. Please mute yourself now, and only unmute when invited. Later on Kevin will be helping us with a worship song – thanks Kevin. Towards the end of our service I'll be taking this bread and wine, and saying the words that St Paul reminds us Jesus said at that Last Supper the night before he died. You are invited, if you wish, to have bread and wine in front of you – or maybe just bread if you can't get any wine ready, and to share in eating and drinking as we remember all that Jesus did for us.*

J: Today's the 3rd Sunday in Lent and we continue using Psalm 23 in parts of our service. Our bible reading today sees Jesus in the temple, overturning the tables of the moneychangers and that famous line 'my house shall be a house of prayer'. From next Sunday, Mothering Sunday, onwards, we return to God's house, yet we know as Christians we don't need a physical building to worship God – he is here with us now, wherever we are – We begin our worship with a responsive prayer.... Please make the responses wherever you are – even though we can't hear each other.... (ppt)

Wherever we are we have come to worship God.

Have we come ready to grow? **We have!**

Have we come willing to change? **We have!**

Are we prepared to put our faith into action,
to worship God in all we do? **We are!**

In Psalm 23 David writes 'surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life.' Let's invite the Lord in his goodness to be with us today.

Holy God, as we meet together today,
we ask that you renew our love for you.
Open our eyes to see fresh things,
open our ears to hear with more clarity,
open our minds to recognise new ideas –
that we may be willing to grow and change
and to become more like your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

(ppt pic) In Psalm 23 we have a peaceful scene of the Shepherd taking the sheep to good pasture, a calm scene, a peaceful scene of the Lord's presence with us. Let's watch this worship video 'be still for the presence of the Lord' and either reflect on the words, or sing along to them. Let's be still before the Lord.

(ppt video be still and mute self)

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.

J: Here's The prayer for today, the 3rd Sunday of Lent
Merciful Lord, grant your people grace to withstand the temptations of
the world, the flesh and the devil, and with pure hearts and minds to
follow you, the only God; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

(PPT off)

Have you got any craft things ready? Don't worry – if you've got a paper
and pen nearby instead, that will be great. Ready? What I'd like you to do
in a couple of minutes now is make a model of the best church. Either cut,
stick make, or just draw it now.... Go.... How did you get on? Hold them
up? Great – we'll be thinking about what we've made soon, but for now
we spend time saying sorry to God; let's pause to reflect about what the
Holy Spirit might be asking us to bring to our Father God this morning,
knowing that because of Jesus we are forgiven.

Lord God, our ancestors turned the Temple into a marketplace;
where are the marketplaces in our lives, O Lord?

**We confess that we are driven by the need to possess.
In our greed, we plunder the earth of resources and
fail to share the good things you have provided for our needs.
We are obsessed with the work of human hands,
making idols of our houses – and yours.**

Forgive us, and help us to see that your Church is eternally under construction – in us. Amen.

It's hard, O Lord, when the message hits home;
when we see, in the sins of our forebears, our own;
when getting real has toppled our self-styled crowns
and the weight of guilt drags us down.

But you, dear Lord, always forgive,
when in the Holy Spirit we choose to live.

And so, we lift our heads bare and humbled,
casting aside thinking that was dark and jumbled.

In your forgiveness we find the light
to walk again in the path that is right. **Amen.**

J: Today's bible reading is John 2:13-22 which Mike is going to read to us. Before he does, imagine you're in the most wonderful place for you to pray. Where would that be? Perhaps in the countryside, or a chair at home, or a special chapel or church – what does it feel like to be there? What can you hear? What can you smell? What can you see? What might you want to pray there? Now, to get into the feel of our reading, imagine yourself, if you can, in a noisy, smelly place -a cattle market complete with cows, sheep, birds of all kinds. Lots of different people are shouting – come and buy! What can you hear, smell and see now? Mike's now going to read, and as he does, there will be a video playing of this scene.

¹³When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁴In the temple courts he found people selling cattle, sheep and doves, and others sitting at tables exchanging money. ¹⁵So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple courts, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. ¹⁶To those who sold doves he said, 'Get these out of here! Stop turning my Father's house into a market!' ¹⁷His disciples remembered that it is written: 'Zeal for your house will consume me.'^l

¹⁸The Jews then responded to him, 'What sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?'

¹⁹ Jesus answered them, 'Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.'

²⁰ They replied, 'It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?' ²¹ But the temple he had spoken of was his body. ²² After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the Scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken.

J: (ppt off) Let's have a look at your creations or drawings again now. Anyone want to describe what they've done. Hands up and I'll ask you to unmute yourself. Here's mine – (did anyone else do similar) – was it a trick question? No, not according to our reading.

(ppt on) (ppt temple) Those around Jesus were confused too – it was true, that the amazing temple in Jerusalem built by Herod the great and finished about 20 years before Jesus was born was destroyed by the romans in 70 AD, and some of John's first hearers of the gospel had lived through that event; yet John's emphasis is that Jesus is talking about himself – that even though he will die on the cross, in 3 days he will rise again, as we will be celebrating in just a few weeks now at Easter.

Yet that's getting ahead of ourselves. Do you remember what I asked you to reflect on before our bible reading -that quiet place where we enjoy praying, and then the cattle market with its noise and smells? (ppt lego cattle market) That's the scene that faced Jesus – in some ways it wasn't unusual, the problem was that traders were exploiting the people by fixing exchange rates especially during the holiday season – nothing new – and they were doing it in a place that Jesus knew well, the outer courtyards of the place of worship where he and his friends would come for the Jewish Festivals, this one being Passover, that celebration of God rescuing his people all those years ago through Moses. What was meant to be a holy place was far from it!

(ppt cartoon Jesus clears temple) It seems a violent act on the part of Jesus, turning over the tables, and it certainly is, but how often do we simply move on if we see injustice and exploitation? Let someone else deal with it? It's no good helping, they'll only do the same thing again?

Here we see the Lord Jesus acting out his mother's words in the song we know as the Magnificat – he has cast down the mighty and lifted up the lowly.

This event happens quite early in John's gospels, and is the first encounter between Jesus and the Jewish leaders; they ask him for a sign to prove his authority to do this – and we hear Jesus words (ppt text/pic) 'destroy this temple and I will raise it again in three days' hmm – what a strange thing to say, of course they would think he means all the sights and scenes around them?

It's worth noting that the 'explanation' of what Jesus meant is not something that was said at the time, but something the disciples reflected on after Jesus rose from the dead. This is a major new testament theme. Some people say their body is a temple - mine's more like a bouncy castle! (ppt bouncy castle) Temple, bouncy castle, no matter, it's the place where God lives by his Spirit, in you and me. It's why we are called during lent to reflect on how we live our lives, not our church buildings!

I've been enjoying reading the bible from the beginning during lent, and I've noticed that the way that God speaks to his people is not in the temple, but through a personal relationship with God- and that's what Jesus still offer us today. Often our lives are more like the cattle market than the quiet place, the green pasture being fed by the good shepherd. Keeping close to God when all around us is chaos has been a challenge, a challenge of recent weeks when many have been home schooling, for instance. Yet the risen Lord Jesus, the one whose 'temple' of his body was destroyed, the one who rose again reminds us, as an important Christian truth that we don't need a special place to be in touch with God. We can all be temples (or bouncy castles!) where God is worshipped. We can be church wherever we are.

J: Now let's declare our faith in God.

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

We believe in God the Son, who lives in our hearts through faith, 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.

J: Helen is now going to lead our prayers of intercession where we bring the concerns of our heart into the throne of God. You might like to unmute now as there will be times during these prayers to name situations and people who need our prayers. The response to 'Lord of the world and the church' is '**hear our prayer**'

Lord of the universe,
we pray for our world broken by persecution, warfare and strife.
We commend to you the Uighur people in China,
the people of Myanmar, the people of Yemen.
You desire harmony within and between nations;
you yearn for everyone to know security and safety. (individual intercessions)
Lord of the world and the church:
bring healing and peace.

Lord of the poor and the rich,
we pray for those who live and labour in developing countries
paid less than the amount they need to survive.
We commend to your tender love those who are exploited,
children who are paid pennies, those who work in sweatshops.
We pray for schools as children return to school tomorrow.
You desire justice for all people;
you yearn for all people to be treated fairly and equitably.
(individual intercessions)

Lord of the world and the church:
bring healing and peace.

Lord of the doctor and the patient,
we pray for our world at this time of pandemic.
We commend to you those who are suffering as a result of Covid-19;
those who are working to combat the Brazilian mutation;
those who are frightened and stressed out.
You desire wholeness and health for all people;
you yearn for an end to the pandemic.
(individual intercessions)

Lord of the world and the church:
bring healing and peace.

Lord of the chapel and the cathedral,
we pray for all places of worship throughout the world.
We commend to you caretakers and cleaners, treasurers and stewards.
You desire holiness in your children
and in the places in which they worship.
(individual intercessions)

Lord of the world and the church:
bring healing and peace.

Lord of all in need,
we bring to you the prayers of our hearts.
We commend to you those about whom we are especially concerned,
praying for... (individual intercessions)

Lord of the world and the church:
bring healing and peace. Amen.

J: Bringing our prayer and praises into one, we pray as Jesus taught us to pray...

**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.**

Even though we are not together physically, by God's Spirit we are one body in Jesus Christ. So we share words of peace:-

**Christ, King of Tenderness,
Bind us with a bond that cannot be broken.
Bind us with a bond of love that cannot be broken.**

My brothers and sisters,
The peace of Our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

**And also with you.
(all exchange the sign of peace)**

(end PPT) In a few moments, I'm going to invite you, if you wish, to join with me and Helen in taking the bread and wine you have ready at home. Don't feel you need to, just enjoy these moments of being together in Jesus.

Blessed are you, Lord God of the universe,
our Father for ever and ever.
For through your goodness we have these gifts of bread and wine
which earth has given and human hands have made.
May they become for us the food a drink of eternal life.

Communion prayer

O God, you are always thinking about your people.
You never forget us.
You sent your Son, Jesus,
Who gave His life for us
And who came to forgive us and taught us
how to forgive each other.

On the very night He was betrayed,
Jesus took bread and gave You thanks,
He broke it and gave it to His disciples, saying,
'Take, eat, this is My body which is given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.'

In the same way, after supper, He took the cup,
and gave You thanks.
He gave it to them saying, 'This is My blood
of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for many,
for the forgiveness of sins. Do this as often as you drink it,
in remembrance of Me.'

SHARING OF THE BREAD AND WINE

If you are thirsty,
drink the Fount of Life.
If you are hungry,
eat the bread of life
Blessed are all who hunger for this bread
and thirst for this Fount.

You are invited now to take your bread and drink your wine. If you have others there with you, you might like to pass it to each other.

We conclude our thinking and reflecting on Psalm 23 as we've been doing in these first 3 Sundays in Lent by singing along as Kevin plays Stuart Townend's version of 'The Lord's my shepherd' (ppt words and mute self)

The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want;
He makes me lie in pastures green.
He leads me by the still, still waters,
His goodness restores my soul.

And I will trust in You alone,
And I will trust in You alone,
For Your endless mercy follows me,
Your goodness will lead me home.

He guides my ways in righteousness,
And He anoints my head with oil,
And my cup, it overflows with joy,
I feast on His pure delights.

And though I walk the darkest path,
I will not fear the evil one,
For You are with me, and Your rod and staff
Are the comfort I need to know.

(end ppt)

J: Next Sunday we're back in church for Mothering Sunday – all age worship services 10am St Mary's Downe and 11am Cudham church where we will be celebrating our fellowship together, with a time to reflect on our absence from church, and mothers no longer with us too – please book in via Barbara – have a look at the notice sheet to find out more. We'll still be continuing to live stream for those who are not able to join us in church. We've learned today the Lord is with us, just as David reflected in Psalm 23 like a good shepherd, wherever we are. Straight after today's service I'll be leaving zoom on so we can have a chat, there should be time to make a coffee first, though!

Did you remember your stone and felt tip pen? As a reminder of all we've explored – that we don't need to be in church to be church; that Jesus by his Spirit is with us wherever we are; as we've been thinking about these last 3 weeks that Jesus is our loving shepherd, spend a moment drawing a heart onto your stone to remind you that God loves you. Put it somewhere special to remind you this week.

We meet for prayer on zoom 9.15am and 5pm Monday to Friday – why not join us – even if you've not done so before, why not give it a try one day this week as we continue Lent. You won't be made to say anything unless you want to!

Here's a closing prayer I invite you to join in with: (ppt)

We came together to worship God.

We have read God's Word.

We have prayed and sung songs.

Now we go into God's world:

to be God's people wherever we are called to go.

Let us go in Christ's name. Amen.

(end ppt)

J: Thank you for joining us in worship today.

Please also contact me, Rev John Musson or Rev Rach Archer if you need any help or just for a chat! vicar@pcd.org.uk 01959540012

H: Our worship ends with a closing prayer of Blessing:

Jesus, you said you would build the Temple again in three days.

This week, inspire us to build your kingdom here where we live in the power of the Spirit and to the Father's glory.

Amen.