



Sunday 31 January 2021

- All the Bible readings come from the *New Revised Standard Version*.
- The liturgy assumes the service is Eucharistic. The prayers of consecration have been included at the end rather than in situ because many following the service will be in isolation and unable to celebrate the sacrament.
- The hymns are YouTube links. To hear the hymns please hover the mouse over each link, press Ctrl and then return.
- To see service transcripts from previous weeks, please visit the page, <http://www.medlockhead.co.uk/resources/index.htm>

Introduction and welcome

HYMN 1 O God of earth and altar (please click on this link to hear the hymn)

The Welcome

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

All Amen.

The Lord be with you

All And also with you.

The Preparation

**All 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.**

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.’

And 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.

All Amen. Lord, have mercy.

By the mercies of God,

let us confess our sins and present our bodies as a living sacrifice,
holy and acceptable to him,
which is our spiritual worship:

All 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.

All Amen.

The Gloria

This Gloria is sung to the tune of 'Cwm Rhondda'. Click [here](#) for the tune.

All Glory be to God in Heaven,
Songs of joy and peace we bring,
Thankful hearts and voices raising,
To creation's Lord we sing.
Lord we thank you, Lord we praise you,
Glory be to God our King:
Glory be to God our King.

Lamb of God, who on our shoulders,
Bore the load of this world's sin;
Only Son of God the Father,
You have brought us peace within.

**Lord, have mercy, Christ have mercy,
Now your glorious reign begin:
Now your glorious reign begin.**

**You O Son of God are Holy,
You we praise with one accord.
None in heav'n or earth is like you,
Only you are Christ the Lord.
With the Father and the Spirit,
Ever worshipped and adored:
Ever worshipped and adored.**

The Collect for the Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

God of heaven,
you send the gospel to the ends of the earth
and your messengers to every nation:
send your Holy Spirit to transform us
by the good news of everlasting life
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

First reading

A reading from the Fifth Book of Moses called Deuteronomy

The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you shall heed such a prophet. This is what you requested of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said: 'If I hear the voice of the Lord my God any more, or ever again see this great fire, I will die.' Then the Lord replied to me: 'They are right in what they have said. I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their own people; I will put my words in the mouth of the prophet, who shall speak to them everything that I command. Anyone who does not heed the words that the prophet shall speak in my name, I myself will hold accountable. But any prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, or who presumes to speak in my name a word that I have not commanded the prophet to speak—that prophet shall die.' *Deuteronomy 18:15–20*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

Second reading

A reading from the Revelation of St John the Divine

A great portent appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. She was pregnant and was crying out in birth pangs, in the agony of giving birth. Then another portent appeared in heaven: a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. Then the dragon stood before the woman who was about to bear a child, so that he might devour her child as soon as it was born.

And she gave birth to a son, a male child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron. *Revelation 12:1-5a*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

HYMN 2 Father in Heaven (Enya) [\(click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)
Father in Heaven [\(a different version\)](#)
Father in Heaven [\(another version\)](#)

Gospel reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark

All Glory to you O Lord.

They went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, and he cried out, 'What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God.' But Jesus rebuked him, saying, 'Be silent, and come out of him!' And the unclean spirit, throwing him into convulsions and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, 'What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.'

At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee. *Mark 1:21-28*

This is the Gospel of the Lord

All Praise to you O Christ.

Sermon

Today's Gospel reading presents a series of events in the life of the Lord Jesus that occurred on one particular Sabbath day. On this day of rest, He would teach the Scriptures as no one else had ever done, show that He had power and authority over the demons, and the power to bring healing to the sick. What He demonstrates in these passages of Scripture shows His mercy, love, and grace. If Jesus is guilty of anything, it is His love for us, and He gives us more reasons to glorify and praise God.

Jesus shows His authority on this Sabbath by specific events. The first is the testimony from the people in how He taught the Scriptures to them. As a rabbi, He was given the honour of reading the Holy Word and to teach what the verses meant through careful exposition.

He concentrated solely on the Word and did not rely on or refer to any previous rabbinical interpretations. He did what any preacher should do—preach the Word with a command of its knowledge and message of redemption to those attending. He taught with a genuine love and compassion for the Scriptures that the scribes and religious officials could not touch.

Now, in the midst of the message, there came a man who had what Mark called 'an unclean spirit' dwelling within him. This poor soul was possessed by a demon, a fallen angel who, with a third of the other angelic beings, rebelled against God along with the prideful Lucifer. These wicked, malevolent creatures feared no one or empty ritual designed to cast them away. However, when the unclean spirit encountered the Lord Jesus, they did so with fear and terror. He was Lord over them as well as the devil, and had the absolute authority at that time to throw the whole lot of them into the eternal fire if He so desired, and they knew it.

The demon shrieked at Jesus, calling out that he knew Jesus was the 'Holy One of God', doing so with fear and a vain attempt to disrupt His teaching. Jesus did not converse with nor have a long, drawn out 'deliverance' session. A simple but firm rebuke drove the evil spirit out of the man. No demon stayed in any place when it was told to go by the Lord. They are deviant, malicious, powerful beings to be sure, but when compared to the Divine power, majesty, glory, and authority that Jesus has now and forever, these beings are really nothing more than loudmouth school yard bullies who talk and threaten, but cower in the presence of the Lord Jesus when cornered. The people in the synagogue were understandably amazed. Not only did Jesus teach with the Divine Authority that was His as God in the flesh, but had proven authority over the evil forces of the world. He is both the victor,

conqueror, and has all things under His control and operating within His will and direction, and for that we should rejoice and give thanks.

So I would like to ask you, friends. When we read of these wondrous works and powerful teaching from our Lord, do we do so as if we are engaged in a great work of literature with which we may have become too comfortable? Do we study our Lord's life and work as a mere rotational collection of historical and theological events and not stop to think about the supernatural wonder and life-altering situations and really see that God is indeed with us, and not a far away, ethereal figure that we sometimes worship as if going through a collection of exercises? We say the proper words, sing the appropriate hymns, and preach a message that is doctrinally sound but lacks the heart and soul behind what our Lord has said and done? Has Jesus become a means to an end, the centrepiece of a religious epic, or someone that you know is God and the Truth, but have lost the wonder and awe that comes with that declaration? Then we should realise that when we read our Bibles we are reading the account of men and women who had been touched by the hand of God Incarnate, who heard Him, walked with Him, loved Him, followed Him, and embraced Him as Messiah and Master, and with their final breath, declared Him Lord and Saviour as they died the deaths of martyrs, assured that they were disciples not of a mere man, but of Almighty God who came to dwell with us, and Whom we will see one day. This should thrill us, convict us, and draw us closer to Him. This should make us see sin as unbecoming of a child of God, and to live in the light as He is in the light. Every page of this Sacred volume is the testimony of people like you and I who tell us, 'Wow! You have got to know this great God whom we serve! I've got to tell you what He has done for me and for you, if you will but kneel before Him as Lord and Saviour.' Have you lost that sense of wonder and joy that men such as Paul wrote about, and to know Christ and His presence.

Because of what I read in this gospel passage, I am assured of forgiveness, redemption, eternal life, a new body and soul that will be designed to work perfectly and worship Him in spirit and truth. This should excite us and get our minds off the things of this world that will soon perish in flames and judgment. Let's reclaim the joy of our salvation, rejoice at the great things God has done for us, get excited about serving Him, and get ready to see Him face to face. He will welcome us home with open arms and nail-pierced hands to show us that His love is so great that He will forever bears those marks as a testimony of the love, grace, and mercy we do not deserve. Renew the wonder. Return to your First Love, and

wait for the day when He comes in great power and glory to bring all things to an end and to make all things new.

Amen.

The Creed

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

All 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?

All 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?

All We believe and trust in him.

This is the faith of the Church.

All This is our faith.

**We believe and trust in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**

Amen.

Prayers of intercession

We pray for the coming of God's kingdom.
You sent your Son to bring good news to the poor,
sight to the blind,
freedom to the captives
and salvation to your people:
anoint us with your Spirit;
rouse us to work in his name.
Father, by your Spirit

All bring in your kingdom.

Send us to bring help to the poor
and freedom to the oppressed.

Father, by your Spirit
bring in your kingdom.

Send us to tell the world
the good news of your healing love.

Father, by your Spirit

All bring in your kingdom.

Send us to those who mourn,
to bring joy and gladness instead of grief.

Father, by your Spirit

All bring in your kingdom.

Send us to proclaim that the time is here
for you to save your people.

Father, by your Spirit

All bring in your kingdom.

Father, use us, unworthy as we are,
to bring in your kingdom of mercy, justice, love and peace.
Empower us by your Spirit and unite us in your Son,
that all our joy and delight may be to serve you,
now and for ever.

All Amen.

Merciful Father,

**All accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

The peace

Christ is our peace.

If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation.

The old has passed away: behold, everything has become new.

The peace of the Lord be always with you,

All And also with you.

HYMN 3 O thou who at thy Eucharist didst pray (click on this link for the hymn)

The liturgy of the Communion Service appears below

The Dismissal

May God the Father,
who led the wise men by the shining of a star
to find the Christ, the Light from light,
lead you also in your pilgrimage to find the Lord.

All Amen.

May God the Son,
who turned water into wine at the wedding feast at Cana,
transform your lives and make glad your hearts.

All Amen.

May God the Holy Spirit,
who came upon the beloved Son
at his baptism in the river Jordan,
pour out his gifts on you
who have come to the waters of new birth.

All Amen.

And the blessing of God the Almighty,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
be with you now and remain with you always.

All Amen.

HYMN 4 Lift high the cross

[\(please click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All In the name of Christ. Amen.

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

Eucharistic Prayer (prayer E)

The Lord be with you

All and also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

All We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All It is right to give thanks and praise.

Father, you made the world and love your creation.
You gave your Son Jesus Christ to be our Saviour.
His dying and rising have set us free from sin and death.
And so we gladly thank you,
with saints and angels praising you, and saying,

**All Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

We praise and bless you, loving Father,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord;
and as we obey his command,
send your Holy Spirit,
that broken bread and wine outpoured
may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his friends
and, taking bread, he praised you.
He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

When supper was ended he took the cup of wine.
Again he praised you, gave it to them and said:
Drink this, all of you;
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.

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did,
in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice made once for all upon the cross.

Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation,
we proclaim his death and resurrection
until he comes in glory.

Great is the mystery of faith:

All Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

Lord of all life,
help us to work together for that day
when your kingdom comes
and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.

Look with favour on your people,
gather us in your loving arms
and bring us with all the saints
to feast at your table in heaven.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father,
for ever and ever.

All Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**All 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.**

Breaking of the Bread

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

**All Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.**

**All Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
grant us peace.**

Draw near with faith.

Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ
which he gave for you,
and his blood which he shed for you.

Eat and drink in remembrance that he died for you,
and feed on him in your hearts
by faith with thanksgiving.

All We do not presume
to come to this your table, merciful Lord,
trusting in our own righteousness,
but in your manifold and great mercies.
We are not worthy
so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table.
But you are the same Lord
whose nature is always to have mercy.
Grant us therefore, gracious Lord,
so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ
and to drink his blood,
that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body
and our souls washed through his most precious blood,
and that we may evermore dwell in him,
and he in us.
Amen.

Communion is distributed.

Prayer after Communion

Generous Lord,
in word and Eucharist we have proclaimed the mystery of your love:
help us so to live out our days
that we may be signs of your wonders in the world;
through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

All Amen

All Almighty God,
we thank you for feeding us
with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies
to be a living sacrifice.
Send us out in the power of your Spirit
to live and work
to your praise and glory.
Amen.