

**Sunday 15 January 2023**

# The Second Sunday after Epiphany



**Sermon** © the Revd Robin Wilding.

**Liturgy and prayers of intercession** © 2000 The Archbishops' Council.

**Bible readings** © the publishers of the NRSV translation.

The liturgy assumes the service is Eucharistic. The prayers of consecration appear at the end.

The hymns are YouTube links. To hear the hymns please click on the links.

To see service transcripts from previous weeks, please visit the page,  
<http://www.medlockhead.co.uk/resources/index.htm>

## Introduction and welcome

HYMN 1 [Lord of the dance](#)

(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.**

The grace of God has dawned upon the world  
through our Saviour Jesus Christ,  
who sacrificed himself for us to purify a people as his own.  
Let us confess our sins.

**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 Second Sunday after the Epiphany**

Almighty God,  
in Christ you make all things new:  
transform the poverty of our nature by the riches of your grace,  
and in the renewal of our lives  
make known your heavenly glory;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

**All Amen.**

### **First reading**

A reading from the book of the Prophet Isaiah

Listen to me, O coastlands, pay attention, you peoples from far away! The Lord called me before I was born, while I was in my mother's womb he named me. He made my mouth like a sharp sword, in the shadow of his hand he hid me; he made me a polished arrow, in his quiver he hid me away. And he said to me, 'You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified.' But I said, 'I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity; yet surely my cause is with the Lord, and my reward with my God.' And now the Lord says, who formed me in the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob back to him, and that Israel might be gathered to him, for I am honoured in the sight of the Lord, and my God has become my strength—he says, 'It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the survivors of Israel; I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.'

Thus says the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One, to one deeply despised, abhorred by the nations, the slave of rulers, 'Kings shall see and stand

up, princes, and they shall prostrate themselves, because of the Lord, who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you.' *Isaiah 49:1-7*

This is the Word of the Lord

**All Thanks be to God.**

## Second reading

A reading from St Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians

Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and our brother Sosthenes, To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, together with all those who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind—just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you—so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Corinthians 1:1-9*

This is the Word of the Lord

**All Thanks be to God.**

**HYMN 2 King of kings, Majesty**

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

## Gospel reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John

**All Glory to you O Lord.**

The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him and declared, 'Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, "After me comes a man who ranks ahead of me because he was before me." I myself did not know him; but I came baptising with water for this reason, that he might be revealed to Israel.' And John testified, 'I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptise with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain is the one who baptises with the Holy Spirit.' And I myself have seen and have testified that this is the Son of God.' The next day John again was standing

with two of his disciples, and as he watched Jesus walk by, he exclaimed, 'Look, here is the Lamb of God!'

The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, 'What are you looking for?' They said to him, 'Rabbi' (which translated means Teacher), 'where are you staying?' He said to them, 'Come and see.' They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon. One of the two who heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first found his brother Simon and said to him, 'We have found the Messiah' (which is translated Anointed). He brought Simon to Jesus, who looked at him and said, 'You are Simon son of John. You are to be called Cephas' (which is translated Peter). *John 1:29-42*

This is the Gospel of the Lord

**All Praise to you O Christ.**

## Sermon

Epiphany is a surprising realisation of truth or reality often resulting in a re-appraisal of attitude and understanding. It's an 'aha moment'.

John points out to Andrew the extraordinary nature of Jesus and Andrew explores it and from that meeting and excitement he passes it on to his brother Simon Peter. What is this revelation of John? 'Behold the Lamb of God'. Let's explore together what that means.

### 1. The sentimental?

First thought for most townies if you say lamb is 'ahh, how adorable, how fluffy' (that's when they don't think mint sauce!)

Is John thinking of Jesus as this comforting, nice, meek and mild character? What's life changing, challenging about that—quite the reverse. This meek and mild, sentimental view of both Jesus and God is found often in Victorian hymns and poems and is quite the opposite of the gritty challenging God of the scriptures. God is **not** nice! He is challenging, demanding, pure and holy, terrifyingly glorious, not some cosmic teddy bear to tell us everything is alright—because it ain't!

### 2. The sacrificial

To the Jewish ear of the time of Jesus the lamb is a central part of the sacrificial system (not the only one) and so the immediate echo of the declaration of John is to think of sacrifice for sin. (NB the sacrificial system is often reduced in our thinking to this alone—in reality most sacrifices were thanksgiving and so part of

the animal went to God (think of Leviticus 3:16!) and his service the rest is used as a meal, a feast, for the family who celebrate with God his goodness.

But also vital is that there has to be an answer to my failures and failings else how can mortal man approach the living God. A reminder—God is NOT nice—he's a tough challenging person to deal with. So if Jesus is proclaimed 'the Lamb of God' then he is God's provision for our sins, the sacrifice that works. Note the echo for the educated Jew of the provision of God to Abraham at Mount Moriah.

### 3. The bringer of Salvation

There is another echo—that of the Passover Lamb. Remember that Jesus died at the Passover—why did God choose that time for it to happen? Because he is the Lamb given.

At the heart of the Passover celebrations is the eating of the lamb prepared for the people. And Passover is about 2 things (at least!)

Firstly the rescue of the people from slavery, from the terrible conditions and the failure of any future hope. Freedom if they will but follow God's instructions and follow where he leads them. A freedom that extends to freedom from the fear of recapture as the power of Egypt is crushed.

But secondly they are rescued into a new position—once they were not a people but now they become the people of God. They never had a secure nation, a place of their own, but now they are promised and eventually obtain a land to be theirs, a place of their own, home, identity, belonging.

So when Jesus dies on the cross (at a time when the lambs are being killed and prepared for the feast, and because of the numbers in Jerusalem at this time the streets are running red) he dies not merely to deal with our sins but to gain for us a place in the new people of God, the Kingdom come, the table laid for the feast and we are invited, we belong because Jesus is our Passover Lamb who saves us from slavery to sin and the world and frees us into God's people, God's family, God's plan.

## 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**

Let us worship the Saviour with joy  
and make our prayer to our heavenly Father.

The magi came from the east to worship your Son:  
Father, grant to Christians everywhere  
the spirit of adoration ...

Lord of glory,

**hear our prayer.**

The infant Christ received gifts of gold, incense and myrrh:  
Father, accept the offering of our hearts and minds  
Lord of glory,

**All hear our prayer.**

The kingdoms of this world have become  
the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ:  
Father, grant an abundance of peace to your world ...

Lord of glory,

**All hear our prayer.**

The Holy Family lived in exile and in the shadow of death:  
Father, look in mercy on all who are poor and powerless, those forced to flee  
their homes; and all who suffer ...

Lord of glory,

**All hear our prayer.**

Your Son shared the life of his home and family at Nazareth:  
Father, protect in your love our neighbours,



our families and this community of which we are a part ...

Lord of glory,

**All** hear our prayer.

Father, we rejoice in our fellowship  
with the shepherds, the angels, the magi,  
the Virgin Mary, Saint Joseph  
and all the faithful departed.

In your unfailing love for us and for all people,  
hear and answer our prayers through your Son,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ.

**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** [With a prayer \(love incarnate\)](#) (click on this link to hear the hymn)

The liturgy of the Communion Service appears below

## The Dismissal

Christ the Son of God perfect in you the image of his glory  
and gladden your hearts with the good news of his kingdom;  
and the blessing of God almighty,  
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,  
be with you now and remain with you always.

**All Amen.**

**HYMN 4 I am the bread of life** [\(please click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

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**

God of glory,  
you nourish us with your Word  
who is the bread of life:  
fill us with your Holy Spirit  
that through us the light of your glory  
may shine in all the world.  
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

**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.**