

Sunday 14 January 2024

The Second Sunday after Epiphany



Sermon © Dean Stott.

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.

All the hymns are hosted on YouTube. Please click on the links to hear them.

To see service transcripts from previous weeks, please visit the page,

<http://www.medlockhead.co.uk/resources/index.htm>

Introduction and welcome

HYMN 1 [Father in heaven](#)

(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

All Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.

**For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.**

The Collect for the Second Sunday after 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 First Book of Samuel

The boy Samuel was ministering to the Lord under Eli.

The word of the Lord was rare in those days; visions were not widespread. At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his room; the lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was. Then the Lord called, 'Samuel! Samuel!' and he said, 'Here I am!' and ran to Eli, and said, 'Here I am, for you called me.' But he said, 'I did not call; lie down again.' So he went and lay down. The Lord called again, 'Samuel!' Samuel got up and went to Eli, and said, 'Here I am, for you called me.' But he said, 'I did not call, my son; lie down again.' Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord, and the Word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him. The Lord called Samuel again, a third time. And he got up and went to Eli, and said, 'Here I am, for you called me.'

Eli perceived that the Lord was calling the boy. Therefore Eli said to Samuel, 'Go, lie down; and if he calls you, you shall say, "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening".'

So Samuel went and lay down in his place. Now the Lord came and stood there, calling as before, 'Samuel! Samuel!' And Samuel said, 'Speak, for your servant is listening.'

Then the Lord said to Samuel, 'See, I am about to do something in Israel that will make both ears of anyone who hears of it tingle. On that day I will fulfill against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. For I have told him that I am about to punish his house forever, for the iniquity that he knew, because his sons were blaspheming God, and he did not restrain them. Therefore I swear to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be expiated by sacrifice or offering forever.' Samuel lay there until morning; then he opened the doors of the house of the Lord. Samuel was afraid to tell the vision to Eli. But Eli called Samuel and said, 'Samuel, my son.' He said, 'Here I am.' Eli said, 'What was it that he told you? Do not hide it from me. May God do so to you and more also, if you hide anything from me of all that he told you.' So Samuel told him everything and hid nothing from him. Then he said, 'It is the Lord; let him do what seems good to him.'

As Samuel grew up, the Lord was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground. And all Israel from Dan to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was a trustworthy prophet of the Lord.

1 Samuel 3:1-20

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

Second reading

A reading from the Revelation of St John the Divine

I saw in the right hand of the one seated on the throne a scroll written on the inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals; and I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, 'Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?' And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it. And I began to weep bitterly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it. Then one of the elders said to me, 'Do not weep. See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals.'

Then I saw between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders a Lamb standing as if it had been slaughtered, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. He went and

took the scroll from the right hand of the one who was seated on the throne. When he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell before the Lamb, each holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. They sing a new song:

'You are worthy to take the scroll
and to open its seals,
for you were slaughtered and by your blood you ransomed for God
saints from every tribe and language and people and nation;
you have made them to be a kingdom and priests serving our God,
and they will reign on earth.'

Revelation 5:1-10

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

HYMN 2 [I have decided to follow Jesus](#) ([click on the link to hear the hymn](#))
[I have decided to follow Jesus \(instrumental\)](#) ([click on this link](#))
[I have decided to follow Jesus \(instrumental\)](#) ([different version](#))

Gospel reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John

All Glory to you O Lord.

Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, 'Follow me.' Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, 'We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth.' Nathanael said to him, 'Can anything good come out of Nazareth?' Philip said to him, 'Come and see.'

When Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him, he said of him, 'Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!' Nathanael asked him, 'Where did you get to know me?' Jesus answered, 'I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you.' Nathanael replied, 'Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!' Jesus answered, 'Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than these.' And he said to him, 'Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.'

John 1:43-51

This is the Gospel of the Lord

All Praise to you O Christ.

Sermon

May I speak in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The words, “Come and see”, really jumped off the page for me in our Gospel reading today.

I must admit that it did remind me of when my mother and father-in-law were looking after my children who were quite young at the time. My Children enjoyed painting and on a wet autumn day they had managed to convince my mother and father-in-law that it was a good idea to let them paint in their house.

Brave people! Brave people! If you’ve ever painted with young children, you will no doubt, remember how far a paint brush can flick paint. How despite your best efforts to confine the painting to the paper laid out for all their wonderful artistic creations, that some sort of mess is going to develop.

Well, I arrived to pick up the children and was met by my mother-in-law covered in paint. Curious, I asked for an explanation and was told, Come and see. Well despite my experience of painting nothing could have prepared me for what I would see.

I found two little children chuckling away, happily painting my father-in-law’s glasses. Not on any paper but while he was still wearing them. Well, it wasn’t a nice look. They weren’t even the same colour or shade. The colours had run into each other, and his lenses were a kind of red and blue and yellow mess congealing onto his nose as it dripped down his face. I couldn’t believe the situation but they were all quite happy.

Nathaniel expressed disbelief when his friend Phillip said, “We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” Nathaniel exclaimed, ‘Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?’ “Come and see,” said Philip.

A Fig Tree was traditionally known as a place where Rabbis would study the scriptures and Nathaniel’s opinion changed dramatically when Jesus told him that he had seen him under the Fig Tree.

In response Nathaniel made his incredible declaration, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the king of Israel.”

These are huge statements made by Nathaniel. To call someone the Son of God could be viewed as blasphemy and put everyone in serious danger. To call Jesus the King of Israel could risk the wrath of the Roman authorities.

What an immediate change of heart. Come and see! There was nothing that was going to stop Nathaniel from following Jesus now. Imagine coming face to face with Jesus like Nathaniel. The compassion in Jesus’s eyes, the love in his voice, the sheer

aura of his presence, the peace as his spirit connects with yours and you realise; this is the one.

The one written about, the one spoken about, the one whom people were waiting for, the one promised of God. Nazareth ... The Son of God, the King of Israel in humble, simple surroundings grew in Nazareth.

The disciples witnessed the lame made to walk, the blind given sight, the deaf hearing again, all sorts of illnesses and disease cured and the raising of people from the dead. What a journey they had with Jesus. Just like us they had doubts along the way, were probably confused at times especially by the Jewish leadership's response to Jesus, but continued their journey with him.

The disciples were personally invited to follow Jesus. It was a personal invitation from a friend. And it is a deeply personal invitation from a friend to us too. The invitation is free but those that accept it will be changed; transformed even as they respond to the call, to come and see.

To come and see what life in its fullness with Jesus could be like.

To come and see and experience a life of peace and joy in the chaos of a world full of selfishness and greed. To come and see a different way to be. A way of servanthood, self-giving, generosity, faithfulness, forgiveness and love.

We see and find in Jesus the answers to the deepest longings of the human heart. We see justice, equality, generosity, forgiveness and find eternal life in his arms.

The lectionary Psalm for today is Psalm 139. It is a wonderful Psalm that speaks of God knowing us intimately; our inmost thoughts and words before we even speak them. It speaks of God being always with us no matter where we go, no matter where we sometimes try to hide from his presence, he is always there. Always inviting us to come into his presence, always drawing us back to him, always gently guiding us to a place, to come and see. Jesus, God incarnate, already knew Nathaniel's thoughts, saw him under the Fig Tree and invited him to walk an amazing journey with him.

God knows us through and through, all the little, and sometimes big failings; all the suffering, pain, rejection, hurt, anxious thoughts and disappointments. He knows our joys and successes, wants and needs and loves us with a love so strong that he never gives up his gentle, warm call to us to come and see.

Jesus is the light of the world and the healer of the heart, come and see just as you are. All he wants is space in your hearts to follow him and just like Nathaniel and the other disciples he will fill it to overflowing with his generosity of grace and love.

To gain the Kingdom and to follow the Lord is worth everything. Material wealth and possessions are nothing but rubbish compared to what is on offer with Jesus. So, when he says come and see; focus wholeheartedly on him who left Heaven for

you, died on that cross and rose again in glory. Because the gift of eternal life in the Kingdom of God is truly everything. You'll not leave this world with money and possessions in your hands. But what you will hold, is the scarred hand of Jesus as he leads you by the hand into Heaven. As Jesus called those first disciples, he calls you today to come and see.

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

Let us pray to God, who knows us better than we know ourselves, and understands our world.

Lord, we know we are called to be the Body of Christ; make us worthy of that calling, fervent in all our prayer and worship, loving, faithful and honest in our lives, so that the whole church displays what God is like.

Lord, in your mercy

All Hear our prayer.

We pray for the grace and wisdom to care for the world we have been given as our home; for perception in the difficult decisions, and commitment to justice and peace.

Lord, in your mercy

All Hear our prayer.

We pray for the homes of this parish, whose hopes and struggles, sorrows and fears are already known to you. May each household be blessed as we pray, and may your love fill each life.

Lord, in your mercy

All Hear our prayer.

We pray for all who do not yet know you, and all whose hearts are poisoned with hate or weighed down with despair. May your light scatter the darkness and bring them hope and healing.

Lord, in your mercy

All Hear our prayer.

We pray for those who have died to this life and are born into your heaven; comfort those who miss their physical presence, and bring us all to share in the fullness of your life.

Lord, in your mercy

All Hear our prayer.

We give you thanks for all that points us towards the beauty of your love, and draws us closer to you.

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 I will wait

(please click on this link to hear the hymn)

The liturgy of the Communion Service appears below

The Dismissal

Christ our Lord,

to whom kings bowed down in worship and offered gifts,

reveal to you his glory

and pour upon you the riches of his grace;

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 When the saints

(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.