

Materials for Virtual Worship
Twentieth Sunday after Trinity, 17 October 2021

Please use this material with the order of Virtual Service for the Linton Team of Churches
Ordinary Time

Collects

God, the giver of life,
whose Holy Spirit wells up within your Church:
by the Spirit's gifts equip us to live the gospel of Christ
and make us eager to do your will,
that we may share with the whole creation
the joys of eternal life;
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. Amen.

God, our light and our salvation:
illuminate our lives,
that we may see your goodness in the land of the living,
and looking on your beauty
may be changed into the likeness of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Readings

Isaiah 53:4-12

Surely he has borne our infirmities
and carried our diseases;
yet we accounted him stricken,
struck down by God, and afflicted.
But he was wounded for our transgressions,
crushed for our iniquities;
upon him was the punishment that made us whole,
and by his bruises we are healed.
All we like sheep have gone astray;
we have all turned to our own way,
and the Lord has laid on him
the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,
yet he did not open his mouth;

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like a lamb that is led to the slaughter,
and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent,
so he did not open his mouth.

By a perversion of justice he was taken away.

Who could have imagined his future?

For he was cut off from the land of the living,
stricken for the transgression of my people.

They made his grave with the wicked

and his tomb with the rich,

although he had done no violence,

and there was no deceit in his mouth.

Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him with pain.

When you make his life an offering for sin,

he shall see his offspring, and shall prolong his days;
through him the will of the Lord shall prosper.

Out of his anguish he shall see light;

he shall find satisfaction through his knowledge.

The righteous one, my servant, shall make many righteous,
and he shall bear their iniquities.

Therefore I will allot him a portion with the great,

and he shall divide the spoil with the strong;

because he poured out himself to death,

and was numbered with the transgressors;

yet he bore the sin of many,

and made intercession for the transgressors.

Mark 10:35-45

The Request of James and John

James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came forward to him and said to him, 'Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.' And he said to them, 'What is it you want me to do for you?' And they said to him, 'Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory.' But Jesus said to them, 'You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?' They replied, 'We are able.' Then Jesus said to them, 'The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the

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baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared.'

When the ten heard this, they began to be angry with James and John. So Jesus called them and said to them, 'You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.'

Reflection

'Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one of your left, in your glory' (Mark 10:37)

I don't know how many of you have seen the film *The Graduate* (1967) starring a very young Dustin Hoffman as the protagonist Benjamin who becomes embroiled with Mrs Robinson *and* her daughter – but that's another story and sermon for another day! The film opens with a party given by Benjamin's parents to celebrate his graduation. The question on everyone's lips is – 'So Benjamin, what are you going to do now?' One well-meaning business friend of his father takes Benjamin aside to say, 'Plastics, Benjamin, there's a great future in plastics.' But Benjamin has no idea what he wants to be; what he wants is to be left alone and to spend the summer relaxing in the family swimming pool under the Californian sun, doing nothing very much.

What Benjamin lacks is ambition.

By contrast there are those whose ambition is all consuming. When I was at school, I was fortunate enough to have an English master who guided us through a literature course on the great 'over-reachers', those people whose all-consuming desire for power proved to be the source of their undoing. It made a deep impression on me and ever since I have been haunted by the question of whether what I am doing

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and aiming to achieve is just for self-glory and status or genuinely what is within my capabilities. Think of the ill-fated Macbeth who driven on by ambition for power and egged on by Lady Macbeth plots and murders his way to the top, only to be toppled from power and beheaded by Macduff.

Then, there is misplaced ambition as illustrated by the examples of James and John, the sons of Zebedee in today's Gospel reading. Much to the horror and irritation of the other disciples, James and John are seen to be muscling in on the glorious new kingdom they think Jesus will be bringing and they want to be his right- and left-hand men wielding power and influence in the new social order. Their naivety is in a way touching, but rather than pour scorn on their ambition Jesus' answer spells out to them what it is they are really committing themselves to in this kingdom, namely a life of serving others, of loyalty to God, and eventually as we know from Acts of the Apostles in James' case, of martyrdom (Acts 12:2).

I suspect this was not what the two brothers anticipated when they left their well-to-do life as prosperous fishermen to follow Jesus and graduate to become his disciples.

In Christian terms lack of ambition is just as much a waste of one's God-given talents as the overreaching ambition of Gentile rulers and tyrants whom Jesus refers to no doubt thinking of the Roman emperors of his day. So it is important to note that Jesus is not dismissing ambition. But the kind of ambition he has in mind is always to be grounded - or to use Jesus' word to be 'baptised' - in earthly realities and to be tested by his simple but demanding notion that 'whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant' (Mark 10:43).

And that leads us to the very heart of the Gospel in the words which have resonated down the ages: 'the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many' (Mark 10:45). Christian theologians have offered numerous interpretations as to whom Jesus' ransom is to be paid – to the devil, to God, for the sins of humankind. But the meaning of ransom is in fact very simple. Jesus' model is Isaiah's anonymous suffering servant whose life of loyalty to God and eventual death because of the iniquities of society eventually

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provoked in those who knew him deep remorse and shame. As Isaiah says, 'the righteous one, my servant, shall make many righteous and he shall bear their iniquities' (Isaiah 53:11). To be a ransom is to be an example of a disciple dedicated to God and his love for humankind. That should be our ambition as well.

Michael Wilcockson

Christ Triumphant Ever Reigning (Guiting Power)

1 Christ triumphant ever reigning
Saviour Master King
Lord of heaven our lives sustaining
Hear us as we sing

Chorus
Yours the glory and the crown
The high renown
The eternal name

2 Word incarnate truth revealing
Son of Man on earth
Power and majesty concealing
By Your humble birth

Chorus

3 Suffering servant scorned ill treated
Victim crucified
Death is through the cross defeated
Sinners justified

Chorus

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4 Priestly king enthroned for ever
High in heaven above
Sin and death and hell shall never
Stifle hymns of love

Chorus

5 So our hearts and voices raising
Through the ages long
Ceaselessly upon You gazing
This shall be our song

Chorus

All people that on earth do dwell

1. All people that on earth do dwell
Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice
Him serve with fear His praise forth tell
Come ye before Him and rejoice

2. The Lord ye know is God indeed
Without our aid He did us make
We are His flock He doth us feed
And for His sheep He doth us take

3. O enter then His gates with praise
Approach with joy His courts unto
Praise laud and bless His name always
For it is seemly so to do

4. For why the Lord our God is good
His mercy is forever sure
His truth at all times firmly stood
And shall from age to age endure

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5. To Father Son and Holy Ghost
The God whom heaven and earth adore
From earth and from the angel host
Be praise and glory evermore

Son of God, eternal Saviour

1 Son of God, eternal Saviour,
source of life and truth and grace,
Son of Man, whose birth incarnate
hallows all our human race,
thou, our Head, who, throned in glory,
for thine own dost ever plead,
fill us with thy love and pity;
heal our wrongs, and help our need.

2 As thou, Lord, hast lived for others,
so may we for others live;
freely have thy gifts been granted,
freely may thy servants give:
thine the gold and thine the silver,
thine the wealth of land and sea,
we but stewards of thy bounty,
held in solemn trust for thee.

3 Come, O Christ, and reign among us,
King of love, and Prince of peace;
hush the storm of strife and passion,
bid its cruel discords cease;
by thy patient years of toiling,
by thy silent hours of pain,
quench our fevered thirst of pleasure,
shame our selfish greed of gain.

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4 Son of God, eternal Saviour,
source of life and truth and grace,
Son of Man, whose birth incarnate
hallows all our human race,
thou who prayedst, thou who willest,
that thy people should be one,
grant, O grant our hope's fruition:
here on earth thy will be done.

The Lord is present here

1 The Lord is present here
The Lord is present here
The Lord is present here
Come worship
The Lord is present here
The Lord is present here
The Lord is present here
Come worship

2 Brought near by Jesus' blood
Brought near by Jesus' blood
Brought near by Jesus' blood
We worship
With angels round Your throne
With angels round Your throne
With angels round Your throne
We worship

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Chorus

*We offer up our lives
A living sacrifice
Pouring out our gifts
Of thanks and praise
This is Your holy hill
You call us higher still
Joining with all heaven
To acclaim
Holy holy holy Lord
God of power and might
Heav'n and earth
Are full of Your glory
Holy holy holy Lord
God of power and might
Heav'n and earth
Are full of Your glory*

3 Let all the nations come
Let all the nations come
Let all the nations come
And worship
Let all creation come
Let all creation come
Let all creation come
And worship

Chorus

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Morning has broken

1 Morning has broken,
like the first morning;
blackbird has spoken
like the first bird.
Praise for the singing!
Praise for the morning!
Praise for them, springing
fresh from the Word!

2 Sweet the rain's new fall,
sunlit from heaven,
like the first dew-fall
on the first grass.
Praise for the sweetness
of the wet garden,
sprung in completeness
where his feet pass.

3 Mine is the sunlight!
Mine is the morning
born of the one light
Eden saw play!
Praise with elation,
praise ev'ry morning,
God's re-creation
of the new day!

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Closing Prayer

God our Father,
whose Son, the light unfailing,
has come from heaven to deliver the world
from the darkness of ignorance:
let these holy mysteries open the eyes of our understanding
that we may know the way of life,
and walk in it without stumbling;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

