

Sunday 7th March, Third of Lent

Notices:

We are planning to hold some short Zoom services this month

- 10am on Sunday 7th March
- 10:30am on 14th March (Mothering Sunday) and
- 10am on 21st March.

We very much hope you will be able to join us. The access links and codes are all available at the end of this document.

We're hoping to put together a montage of photos of people's mothers which will be shown during the Mothering Sunday Zoom service. If you'd like to contribute a photo of your mum/Grandma/special person, please email or text/WhatsApp your photo **by Thursday 11th March** to Laura Seago at laura@seago.co.uk / 07980 881545.

Ideally we need a high resolution digital image. If you only have a printed photo, you could either scan it in or simply take a photo of it with your phone and send that to Laura. If in doubt, get in touch with Laura and she'll sort something out!

We are also planning a Palm Sunday service at 10am on 28th March at St Mark's Church in Flecknoe to which everyone is very welcome.

Further details of other resources for Lent and other church services on line can be found on the Leam Valley Benefice website www.learmvalleychurches.co.uk

Please do ring me anytime if I can provide any support or help; 01788 810372, 07808 137550 or barbaraclutton@gilberthouse.co.uk

With my love and prayers for you all,
Barbara

Set Readings: 1 Corinthians 1 18-25 ; John 2 v 13-22

In the first reading Paul begins "The message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, 'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.' Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?"

In the second reading John writes “The Jews then said to him, ‘What sign can you show us for doing this?’. Jesus answered them ‘Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.’ They then said ‘This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and you will raise it up in three days?’ But he was speaking of the temple of his body.

These passages speak of the resurrection of Jesus. Surely no rational person can believe that someone who has died can live again? Today in our science led World and with our greater understanding even more this must be true. Yet as Christians we believe Jesus did rise. Why?

I draw from our Lent York course of 2018 and the words of Bishop John Pritchard, Bishop of Oxford 2007 - 2014:

There are at least five pieces of evidence to look at:

1. **The empty tomb.** All the gospels report this as an incontrovertible fact. The question is: ‘why is it empty?’ Well, who else might have moved the body? If it were the disciples wanting to keep this precious friend’s body safe, why would they pursue the falsehood to the point of martyrdom? Why make silly claims? If it were the Jewish leaders or the Romans wanting to avoid a cult veneration of Jesus, why didn’t they produce the body when things started to get out of hand?
2. **The resurrection appearances.** Jesus is reported as having been seen over an extended period of time, by a variety of people, in a variety of places – at the tomb, in the Upper Room, on an evening walk to Emmaus, by the sea shore in Galilee, on a mountain top and ‘by 500 people at one time’ (1 Cor 15 v 6). Was this imagination, hallucination, wish-fulfilment? What do we make of it?
3. **The transformation of the disciples.** The gospels and the letters of the New Testament give us remarkable ‘before’ and ‘after’ pictures of the disciples. Indeed, it’s hard to recognise them as the same people. ‘Before’ they were broken and demoralised. They’d denied and deserted Jesus; now they were hiding away to avoid the same fate as him. ‘After’, in the early chapters of Acts, we see them fearlessly and joyfully telling everyone they can about what they’ve seen and heard. They’re arrested, harassed, beaten up, martyred, but they are unstoppable. Something radical has happened. Something big enough to account for their total transformation.
4. **The existence of the Church.** The early Church was soon exploding in size. Within 300 years the might of Rome itself has fallen under the spell of the penniless preacher from Galilee. Now 30% of the World’s population names the name of Christ and there are 70,000 more believers every day of the year. Could all of this be based on a lie or a mistake?
5. **What they said about Jesus.** Within a few years the people who had known Jesus best, who had walked the paths of Galilee with him, chatted on the way, shared the jokes, the barbeques and the washing-up, these friends of Jesus were speaking of him in terms that applied to God. They were calling him ‘Lord’, and

giving him scores of other exalted names and titles. Paul refers to Jesus as 'Lord' nearly all the time, and that was how Greek speaking Jews referred to God himself. This was astonishing for fiercely monotheistic Jews. Again, something huge had caused such a claim, something like a resurrection. Only a risen Christ can justify such extravagance.

Have not the rational fact-based sceptical thinkers of today been made to look foolish, as Paul says?

Andrew Grant

Access links and codes for the March Zoom Services

Holy Communion Zoom Service - Sunday 7th March 2021 at 10:00am

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81301800126?pwd=TXcwalEzMUNEU3B1dWd1WGxUYjMrZz09>

Meeting ID: 813 0180 0126

Passcode: Ex9HV0

Mothering Sunday Service – Sunday 14th March at 10:30am

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82326205297?pwd=WTdWYTBDsw9oS0dISW0yWlUzUk8wQT09>

Meeting ID: 823 2620 5297

Passcode: vJa0hW

Holy Communion Zoom Service – Sunday 21st March at 10am

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84127061146?pwd=NGxuUIZhUVNCdXIUbWRGbUNmeGdQdz09>

Meeting ID: 841 2706 1146

Passcode: aDfKy3

