

Peter Declares That Jesus Is the Messiah

Notices & Birthdays

Thank you for joining us for worship this morning. Gerald & Pat are have a very much deserved break and we trust they are having a lovely time. Having been involved in preparing today's worship has made me realise even more how much hard work and time Gerald has put in throughout the pandemic

Plans for re-opening the church are underway and the risk assessments are in the process of being completed. We will give more information as it becomes available.

We wish anyone celebrating a birthday this coming week a Happy Birthday and hope you have a special day.

I would like to thank the elders for their contribution to this morning's worship and Gerald for his guidance on setting it up. Also thank you for the quotes you have sent in to Janine.

Call to Worship

Recent weeks and months have been unprecedented for our own lives, the life of the nation, the world and the Church. Today's reading from Matthew which tells of how Peter recognises who Jesus truly is, gives hope for the whole church

Prayer

When Jesus asked, Simon Peter answered:
'You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.'
Let us make the same bold answer,
and let us come together to worship
Jesus, the Messiah, the Son of the living God.
Amen.

Our first hymn this morning is O Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness after which Janine has prepared something for us to all enjoy.

Hymn: O Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness 457 S of F

O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness!
Bow down before him, his glory proclaim;
with gold of obedience, and incense of lowliness,
kneel and adore him: the Lord is his Name!

Low at his feet lay thy burden of carefulness,
high on his heart he will bear it for thee,
and comfort thy sorrows, and answer thy prayerfulness,

guiding thy steps as may best for thee be.

Fear not to enter his courts in the slenderness
of the poor wealth thou wouldst reckon as thine;
for truth in its beauty, and love in its tenderness,
these are the offerings to lay on his shrine.

These, though we bring them in trembling and fearfulness,
he will accept for the Name that is dear;
mornings of joy give for evenings of tearfulness,
trust for our trembling and hope for our fear.

O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness!
bow down before him, his glory proclaim;
with gold of obedience, and incense of lowliness,
kneel and adore him: the Lord is his Name!

Janine's Slot -Quotes from Favourite Books

How do you recognise someone?

It is a simple question and it should have a simple answer.

You open your eyes and you see someone's face.

Sometimes, you might recognise that person without seeing them.

You might hear a familiar voice, smell a certain smell, or go to a certain place that reminds
you spending time with that person, especially if you haven't seen that person for a while.

When Jesus was with his disciples, he asked them, "But who do you say I am?"

Peter replied, 'You are the Christ. The son of the living God.'

Peter recognised Jesus, not because of who stood in front of him, but because of what he
felt in his heart.

God's love gives us the ability to recognise love in others, with something we feel inside. The
ability to know Jesus as the son of God.

We are all given the ability to recognise Jesus as the son of God, and receive his love.

Now something else that might be familiar, is a book or film that we've watched or read
over and over again. This week, we've asked you to send in your favourite quote from a
book or a film and we've put together a little quiz to see how many of you recognise that
quote and where it comes from.

The answers will be at the end.

Good Luck!

Song: Thank you
Lord for this fine Day

Thank You, Lord, For This Fine Day,
Thank You, Lord, For This Fine Day,
Thank You, Lord, For This Fine Day,

Thank You, Lord, For This Fine Day,
Right Where We Are.

Alleluia, Praise The Lord!
Alleluia, Praise The Lord!
Alleluia, Praise The Lord,
Right Where We Are.

Thank You, Lord, For Food to eat
Thank You, Lord, For Food to eat
Thank You, Lord, For Food to at,
Right Where We Are.

Thank You, Lord, For Clothes to wear
Thank You, Lord, For Clothes to wear
Thank You, Lord, For Clothes to wear
Right Where We Are.

Thank You, Lord, For All you Gifts
Thank You, Lord, For All your Gifts
Thank You, Lord, For All your Gifts
Right Where We Are.

Prayers

Lord God, we come before you in humble adoration. How blessed are we that the one who holds the keys to the kingdom of heaven is the one who has the key to our hearts. Thank you, God, for the privilege of being part of the amazing story of faith that sustained our ancestors. Thank you, God, that we know our future is safe with you. **Amen.**

CONFESSION Lord, thank you that you are always ready to forgive us when we trust you enough to confess our sins to you, even when we feel we don't deserve it.

Be merciful to us, O God.

Forgive us for the times when
just because someone else's story is different from ours
we don't always want to believe it.

Forgive us for the times we only live our story,

not seeing the bigger picture.

Be merciful to us, O God.

Forgive us for the times
we see you as less than the Son of God,
and our whole outlook on life
needs a good dose of your love and understanding.

Be merciful to us, O God.

Amen.

Offering Prayer

Dear Lord we offer you now our gifts given in a variety of ways during the closure of our church. We thank everyone for their continued support and pray that the gifts be used wisely to further your kingdom in Haydon Wick and out community.

Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory, forever and ever.
Amen.

**Our reading from Matthew 16 has been recorded by Rachel Parmenter.
After the reading will be the hymn I believe in Jesus.**

Reading Matthew 16.13-20

Rachel P

Hymn: I believe in Jesus

I believe in Jesus
I believe He is the Son of God
I believe He died and rose again
I believe He paid for us all

And I believe He's here now
I believe that He's here
Standing in our midst

Here with the power to heal now
With the power to heal
And the grace to forgive
I believe in You Lord

I believe in Jesus
I believe He is the Son of God

I believe He died and rose again
I believe He paid for us all

And I believe He is here now
Standing in our midst
Here With the power to heal now
And the grace to forgive

I believe in You, Lord
I believe You are the Son of God
I believe You died and rose again
I believe You paid for us all.

Talk:

¹³ When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say the Son of Man is?”

¹⁴ They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”

¹⁵ “But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?”

¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.”

¹⁷ Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. ¹⁸ And I tell you that you are Peter,^[a] and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades^[b] will not overcome it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be^[c] bound in heaven, and whatever you forgive on earth will be forgiven in heaven.”

Our church communities have had to find new ways of meeting over the past few months; in cyberspaces rather than physical spaces, expressing togetherness in new and sometimes alien ways. This has led to us asking questions about what it means to be Church.

This Bible passage finds Jesus investing his hope in Peter as the rock on which the Church will be built. It's interesting that Jesus' rock was not a rock at all, but a person. Our church buildings, impressive as many may be, are, by way of contrast, not people but merely rocks. Simon Peter was a person, but he was a person who recognised Jesus' true nature; this is what made him a suitable foundation stone for the future Church.

It is helpful to hear the political overtones of this story.

The setting, in the shadow of the walls of King Philip's city, tells us that Peter's confession is a political declaration rather than a religious creed. So, Jesus is gathering a rival kingdom to Caesar's empire, breaking free of its grip through their faith.

For Jews the newly renamed city of Caesarea Philippi is a blasphemous, idolatrous horror, a headquarters of the foreign rulers and a symbol of oppression. There, in temple and inscription, Caesar is worshipped as 'Saviour', 'Son of God'. There, despite all the evidence to the contrary, Peter gets it right (for once!). Seeing beyond the might of empire, and that of Babylon implied by the reference to the figure of the 'Son of Man' well known from the Book of Daniel, it is this unarmed figure who will be given 'everlasting dominion'.

The disciples said something similar about Jesus in the boat when Jesus calmed the storm (Matthew 14.22ff.), so what is significant here is that Peter dares to say it in an Eastern capital of the Roman Empire, as indeed he will proclaim it in person in Rome. The message is deeply subversive. 'The gates of Hades will not prevail' against the Church. The implication is of the gates being unable to withstand the Church bursting out of the tomb to risen life. These gates are broken and those of heaven simply unlocked.

We can get too hung up on 'whatever you bind on earth...'. We are all capable of binding ourselves quite adequately by our own sins without any help. What is needed is loosing – or forgiving (see Matthew 18), and surely Peter is one who acknowledges he has much that needs forgiveness. Indeed, rather than 'the Rock', Peter may appear to be 'rocky' – like the stony ground on which grain is sown – springing up quickly and then falling when things get tough because he isn't firmly rooted enough.

Empires today, like that of Rome, demand our allegiance, and indeed may require our worship in some way. And besides nations there are giant multinational businesses, media organisations and the like. So, for empires, it isn't just Russia or China or the USA – think also in terms of Tesco, BP, Facebook, Amazon, broadcasting companies...

- On a day-to-day level, who do you give allegiance and offer worship to?

IN PREPARATION for our prayers of intercession brought to us by Angela Jones, we will sing Open our eyes Lord

Hymn: Open our Eyes Lord 443 S of F

Open our eyes, Lord
We want to see Jesus
To reach out and touch Him
And say that we love Him
Open our ears, Lord
And help us to listen
Open our eyes, Lord
We want to see Jesus

Open our eyes, Lord
We want to see Jesus
To reach out and touch Him

And say that we love Him
Open our ears, Lord
And help us to listen
Open our eyes, Lord
We want to see Jesus
Open our eyes, Lord
We want to see Jesus

Prayers of Intercession & Benediction Angela Jones

We come now to our time of prayers for others and for ourselves. Let us pray.

Heavenly Father - we are so thankful to be able to call you that and to bring our prayers to you today in faith that you will hear and answer them.

There are so many in need in this world today that we hardly know where to start but we know that the coronavirus pandemic is stretching the ability to cope of many health services all over the world. Please be with them Father and help them to cope with the extraordinary demands that are made of them. Bless them in their work we pray.

We pray too for those struggling with their mental health since lockdown and ask that they may receive the help they need. Help them to be able to seek that assistance and not suffer in silence.

There are many whose future financial and work situation is precarious and we pray for them that help will be available. We thank you for food banks at this time of hardship and for the kindness of those who offer help in many ways to assist friend or stranger.

Help us we pray Lord to remember as Peter said in our reading "You are the Messiah, the Son of the Living God". We know this but in the midst of trouble sometimes forget this relationship and that you have your hand on our lives always. Help us to trust you to show us the way ahead.

We pray for your church throughout the world that though many are still unable to meet together that church leaders will be enabled to keep contact with the worshipping community and not lose links with their fellowship.

We thank you for the technology that enables people to keep in touch when physical nearness is not possible.

We pray for the many thousands of people who mourn at this time. We pray that they may feel you close to them and their families. Help them to face the future with hope.

We pray for those without faith. They do not know the comfort of your presence and we pray that those who give your message of hope that their

work would be blessed and bring more souls into your kingdom. What greater gift than to know and love you Lord.

We ask all these prayers in the name of Jesus Christ our loving saviour and friend. Amen. And now, though apart let us bless each other with the words of the Grace:

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all evermore Amen.

We close our worship now with the hymn Onward Christian Soldiers.

Closing Hymn: Onward Christian Soldiers

Onward, Christian soldiers, marching as to war
With the cross of Jesus going on before
Christ, the royal Master, leads against the foe
Forward into battle see His banners go

Onward, Christian soldiers, marching as to war
With the cross of Jesus going on before

Like a mighty army moves the church of God
Brothers, we are treading where the saints have trod
We are not divided, all one body we
One in hope and doctrine, one in charity

Onward Christian soldiers...

Onward then, ye people, join our happy throng
Blend with ours your voices in the triumph song
Glory, laud and honor unto Christ the King
This through countless ages men and angels sing

Onward Christian soldiers...