



Sunday Worship at Home February 4th 2024 2nd before Lent

Opening Prayer:

Lord Jesus, you are the light of the world, thank you for taking the darkness away.

Invitation to confession:

Jesus says, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand".

So let us turn away from sin and turn to Christ,
confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

God our Father, when we forget you, we walk in the dark:

Lord have mercy

Lord Jesus, every time we say sorry: you bring us into the light.

Christ have mercy.

Holy Spirit, fill us with light and forgiveness as you forgive us.

Lord have mercy

May God our Father have mercy upon us, forgive our sins
and bring us to eternal life. Amen.

The Collect:

Almighty God, give us reverence for all creation and respect for every person, that we may mirror your likeness in Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Gospel Reading: John 1. 1-14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

This is the Gospel of the Lord

Reflection on the Gospel: Today's Gospel should still be fresh in our minds as it is one that we are instructed to have at the main Christmas Service. In it, John tells exactly who Jesus is: the Word made flesh, the light of the world, the revealer of the heart of God; he shows us Jesus in action, interacting with troubled people, performing healings, and teaching truth. Jesus our Teacher and Saviour speaks the words that will lead us into truth. He enters into conversation and relationship with troubled people bringing them an offer of new

birth, light, healing and way to live. He is our living water, good shepherd, and the Bread of Heaven. He is, in the end, willing to lay down his life for us, his friends. The Incarnation brings the promise that, strengthened by his presence, we can bring his wisdom and unselfish love to others. This Gospel also reminds us that we are light, God's light that banishes darkness and brings all that it shines on into focus; just think how much a tiny candle flame can light up the darkness – that is what you can do by being a shining light for someone in the darkness of despair. A light that doesn't shine is no good to anyone, just as Christians without compassion to help others will never truly be doing God or themselves justice. The forthcoming weeks to Lent and beyond are a good time to take stock of our own lives. If it is your choice to give up chocolate, crisps, alcohol, social media, or any other things we could choose, please do so in a way that helps people less fortunate than yourself. Give any money you save to a charity like Christian Aid or the Red Cross. These charities (among others) carry out Jesus' commands to help the poor, the words and symbol in their names – Christian and Cross point to Jesus. You could improve your own spiritual life by taking part in a bible study activity to learn more about God and open yourself to the prompting of the Holy Spirit, who in turn will guide you in a direction you have never thought of. When we share our gifts and time with those in need, we say, "Here I am Lord, use me for the good of others" and thereby show the love of God in action. God calls you to be his light in the world and you are not much use to him if no one benefits from your good deeds!

The Creed:

We believe in God the Father,
from whom every family in heaven and earth is named.
We believe in God the Son, who lives in our hearts through faith,
and fills us with his love.
We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens us with power from on high.
We believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. **Amen**

Be still and pray that you may shine God's light in the world by using your gifts for the good of others. Pray for those who are in need of God's comfort and blessings at this time, including those you know and love, conclude your time of prayer with:

The Lord's Prayer.

Our Father who art in heaven.....

Final Prayer:

Lord Jesus Christ, you have called us to be lights in the world.

Grant that we shine brightly so others benefit from the good we do in your name. Amen

Reverend Irene