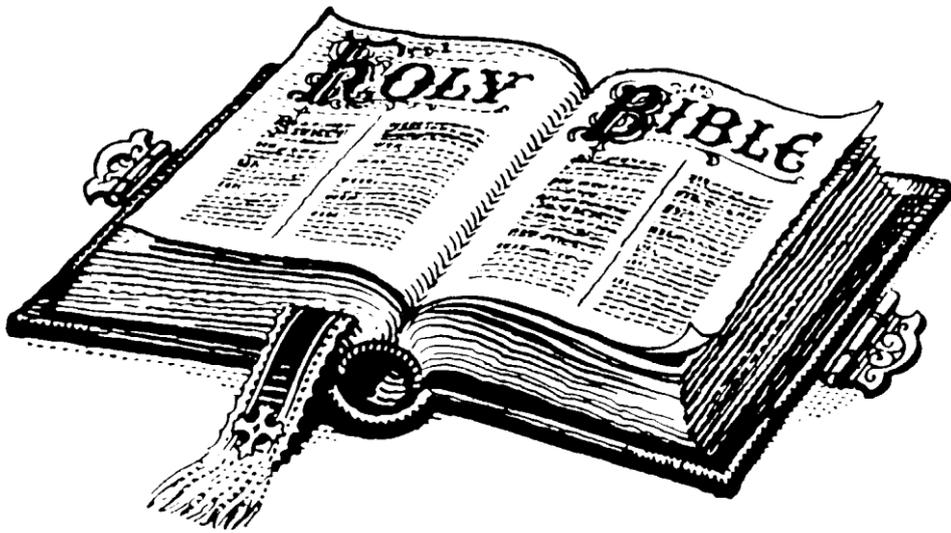


Holy Trinity

## MORNING WORSHIP



25<sup>TH</sup> October 2020

**BIBLE SUNDAY**

**Greeting** Welcome in the name of Christ. God's grace, mercy and peace be with us all. The Lord is with us. **Let us praise his name for ever.**

**Prayer of Preparation** Father God, we set this time apart for you, to praise you, to listen, and to bring to you our concerns. May we take into our lives something of the likeness of Jesus, such that our village might be closer to how you would have it be. **Amen**

**Collect** Blessed Lord, who caused all holy scriptures to be written for our learning: help us so to hear them, to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them that, through patience, and the comfort of your holy word, we may embrace and for ever hold fast the hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

**Summary of the Law** 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.'

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."

**Confession** We come to God as one from whom no secrets are hidden, to ask for his forgiveness and peace. Let us, therefore, bring to mind those things for which we wish to say sorry to God.

**God of mercy, we acknowledge that we are sinners. We turn from the wrong that we have thought, and said, and done, and are mindful of all that we have failed to do. For the sake of Jesus, who died for us, forgive us all that is past, and help us to live each day in the light of Christ our Lord.**

May the God of mercy and love bring us back to himself, forgive us our sins, and assure us of his eternal love in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

### **Hymn**

**1** Lord, thy word abideth,  
and our footsteps guideth;  
who its truth believeth  
light and joy receiveth.

**3** When the storms are o'er us,  
and dark clouds before us,  
then it's light directeth  
and our way protecteth.

**5** Word of mercy, giving  
succour to the living;  
word of life, supplying  
comfort to the dying.

**2** When our foes are near us,  
then thy word doth cheer us,  
word of consolation,  
message of salvation.

**4** Who can tell the pleasure,  
who recount the treasure,  
by thy word imparted  
to the simple-hearted?

**6** O that we, discerning  
its most holy learning,  
Lord, may love and fear thee,  
Evermore be near thee.

Father God, we thank you for the gift of your holy word. May it be a lantern to our feet, a light upon our paths, and a strength to our lives. **Amen**

### **Readings**

#### **Nehemiah 8.1-12**

When the seventh month came and the Israelites had settled in their towns, **8**<sup>1</sup> all the people came together as one in the square before the Water Gate. They told Ezra the teacher of the Law to bring out the Book of the Law of Moses, which the LORD had commanded for Israel.<sup>2</sup> So on the first day of the seventh month Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly, which was made up of men and women and all who were able to understand. <sup>3</sup> He read it aloud from daybreak till noon as he faced the square before the Water Gate in the presence of the men, women and others who could understand. And all the people listened attentively to the Book of the Law.

<sup>4</sup> Ezra the teacher of the Law stood on a high wooden platform built for the occasion. Beside him on his right stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiah and Maaseiah; and on his left were Pedaiah, Mishael, Malkijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah and Meshullam.<sup>5</sup> Ezra opened the book. All the people could see him because he was standing above them; and as he opened it, the people all stood up. <sup>6</sup> Ezra praised the LORD, the great God; and all the people lifted their hands and responded, "Amen! Amen!" Then they bowed down and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground.

<sup>7</sup> The Levites—Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan and Pelaiah—instructed the people in the Law while the people were standing there. <sup>8</sup> They read from the Book of the Law of God, making it clear<sup>[a]</sup> and giving the meaning so that the people understood what was being read.

<sup>9</sup> Then Nehemiah the governor, Ezra the priest and teacher of the Law, and the Levites who were instructing the people said to them all, "This day is holy to the LORD your God. Do not mourn or weep." For all the people had been weeping as they listened to the words of the Law.<sup>10</sup> Nehemiah said, "Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the LORD is your strength."

<sup>11</sup> The Levites calmed all the people, saying, "Be still, for this is a holy day. Do not grieve."<sup>12</sup> Then all the people went away to eat and drink, to send portions of food and to celebrate with great joy, because they now understood the words that had been made known to them.

#### **Matthew 24.30-35**

<sup>30</sup> "Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. And then all the peoples of the earth<sup>[a]</sup> will mourn when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory.<sup>[b]</sup> <sup>31</sup> And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.

<sup>32</sup> "Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. <sup>33</sup> Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it<sup>[a]</sup> is near, right at the door. <sup>34</sup> Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. <sup>35</sup> Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

### **Reflection**

Reading that passage from Nehemiah, I see in my mind a highly excited crowd shouting for Ezra the priest, and chanting "Bring out the book! Bring out the book!"

Ezra brought out the Book of the Law and, standing on a high wooden platform, read it out loud all morning, as Levites (stewards and teachers of the temple) passed among the crowd, explaining it to them, and making it understandable.

According to Leviticus 23, the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the 7<sup>th</sup> month was a sacred day of rest, and the crowd were weeping to hear the word read and explained. Ezra, however, tells them not to weep, but to go and celebrate their understanding of the sacred words. Nehemiah tells them to go and enjoy choice food and drink, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. So, taking their advice, the crowd go home and celebrate.

In those days, of course, the spoken word was hugely significant. Few people would have been able to read it for themselves, and listening to the Book of the Law was a shared activity, a word for the community, to build the community.

We live in an age when access to the Bible is so easy via the internet that there is not that same desire to come together to hear the Word, or indeed to hear anything else. Since the imposition of COVID-19 restrictions we have been unable to come together as a congregation, or as a community, and there has been a growing realisation of what we have been missing.

When COVID-19 is brought under control could it be that a greater value will be placed on the contributions of everyone else? And could we all take on Nehemiah's advice to celebrate all the new things we have learnt to understand?

Jesus said "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away".

### ***Affirmation of Faith***

**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**

***The Peace*** God is love, and those who live in love live in God, and God lives in them.  
The peace of the Lord be always with you. **And also with you**

### ***Prayers***

Father, we see around us a world troubled by the ravages of COVID-19, and we are aware of the sadness, sorrow and pain in so many places. Send, we pray, your love and hope to quell the fear and suffering, and we ask that an effective vaccine and effective treatments may soon be safely in use.  
In your mercy, hear our prayer.

Father, open our eyes that, like the prophets of old, we may become more aware of your glory and your power surrounding us on every side. Save us from despair, we pray, fill us with courage, join our wills to yours, and make us channels of your grace and messengers of your word in all that we say and do and are.  
In your mercy, hear our prayer.

Father, we pray for your church. In these times of restricted access, help us not to lose our way. Give to us here in Long Itchington and Marton the hope to reach out in love. Rekindle our faith in the promise given to us in the Bible that all tears will be wiped away.  
In your mercy, hear our prayer.

Father, we pray for Christians everywhere. We ask for courage to stand firm on the promises and teachings of scripture. Give us the power and the conviction, to not only live by your word, but to make it known everywhere.  
In your mercy, hear our prayer.

Father, we pray for those who are sick, and all needing our prayers; for Jane and Tim, and for Jean and her family, and for all others known to us. May they know your love in their difficult times.  
In your mercy, hear our prayer.

Merciful Father, **accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen**

### ***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 today our daily bread;  
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, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen**

Let us bless the Lord:

**Thanks be to God.  
Blessing, honour and glory be yours,  
Here and everywhere,  
now and, for ever. Amen**

Father God, look on your Creation, and support us through the pandemic. In trial and tribulation, in uncertainty, may Jesus walk with us. And may your blessing be upon us now and always. **Amen**

### ***Hymn***

1. Thou, whose almighty word  
chaos and darkness heard,  
and took their flight;  
hear us we humbly pray,  
and where the gospel-day  
sheds not its glorious ray,  
let there be light.

3. Spirit of truth and love,  
life giving, holy Dove,  
speed forth thy flight;  
move on the water's face,  
bearing the lamp of grace,  
and in earth's darkest place  
let there be light.

2. Thou, who didst come to bring  
on thy redeeming wing,  
healing and sight,  
health to the sick in mind,  
sight to the inly blind,  
O now to all mankind  
Let there be light.

4. Holy and blessed three,  
glorious Trinity,  
Wisdom, Love, Might;  
boundless as ocean's tide  
rolling in fullest pride,  
through the earth far and wide  
let there be light.

Heavenly Father, may we, through the words of the Bible, keep learning new things about you, your world, and the people you mean us to be. **Amen**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
**In the name of Christ. Amen**

Our worship is now ended but our service is just beginning.

**You can hear a daily message from Justin Welby on the Hope line  
Phone 0800 804 8044  
Coventry diocesan website: [www.coventrydiocese.org](http://www.coventrydiocese.org)**

