

## Notices

Good Morning & welcome on this somewhat warmer Sunday morning: love is in the air! For those of you who don't know me I'm Bruce Lloyd, one of Tyndale's Church Secretaries.

Our worship today is being conducted by our minister Michael Docker. I would like to thank him for leading us, and look forward to a greater understanding of God's message.

Our Zoom coffee shop will take place as usual on Tuesday morning at 11.00 with the sign in details being able to be obtained through the Tyndale web site.

On Wednesday evening at 7.30, again on Zoom, there will be a discussion group led by Dr Michael Whitfield entitled Dr Jekyll or Hyde- Medical Ethics. 'Pushing the boundaries'. Please join us if you are free....

The next notice concerns the election of Deacons. On Tuesday night the February Church Meeting took the decision that this annual event, which takes place at the March Church Meeting, should go ahead. To enable this to occur it was agreed that both an online voting on the night & a postal voting system would be utilized. The voting system will be explained in more detail in a couple of week's time, but for now I have to give formal notice that an election will take place on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> March. We have three retiring Deacons: they are David Bell, Graham Lewis & Ian Waddington, and they are all eligible for re-election. We are entitled to 12 Deacons and we currently have a full Diaconate. If you wish to make a nomination please contact either myself or Denise Lewis and each nomination requires a proposal from two Church Members and obviously with the agreement of the nominee.

And finally tea and coffee will be served at the end of this service if you walk to your kitchen and make it. Thank you.

## Welcome

Welcome once again to the morning service of Tyndale Baptist Church – welcome if you're viewing the recording from Bristol or from farther afield; whether you're a member of the church & congregation, someone with a connection to the church (perhaps through your family, or from an earlier time in Bristol) or just – like me from time to time – 'dipping in' to what's available as you look around on line.

We are all united in this common, human activity, of finding something to inspire or lift our mood or help us through these dark days; perhaps, for you, it's often music or a film, or a poem or play, or some wildlife or landscape photography, or a cute cat video! – but from time to time that common urge finds its expression in a desire to worship..

Anything can be worshipped of course, but always with frustration, unless, like this and a hundred other services, worship is directed to God. The themes of this service, just before Lent, are strange indeed, taking in heavenly visions and transfigurations, but they serve to direct our minds and hearts beyond what we can see and know and what causes suffering *as well* as what fails to satisfy, to God alone.

The God who, in Christ, in this Christian service, we worship..

['Jesu Tawa Pano'](#)

Africa University Choir

## CALL TO WORSHIP

We are here, as we often say, 'together though apart'; we are 'here' through the wonders of technology and because of our own sense that we have been *called* here

For, we believe, God is here also – not that God is *not* anywhere else – indeed God, we proclaim, is everywhere, always..but for now, and for us, and for this worship, God in Christ is here – and we come at his call, and we worship..

['All the wonder that surrounds us'](#)

John Bell & Graham Maule/Cantus Firmus Trust

## Opening Prayer

Surrounding us, filling us, lifting us, holding us, the very life of God – Lord God we come to you to praise and worship, for a love that knows no limits and a peace that undergirds everything and a power of forgiveness that goes beyond anything we can imagine – all this surrounds us; all this wonder – Lord God we worship you

All made known to us in and through Christ; in the Galilean whose life rings with your wonder and the one-and-the-same risen Lord whose eternal life shines with your glory – Lord God, *for* Christ we worship you

All made real for us by your own Holy Spirit; there at creation; there in every moment of recreation; there in every action of love and peace and forgiveness in the world – Lord God, by your Spirit we worship you.

Lord, forgive us for often we have not seen because we have not looked; often we have not perceived because we have not bothered to open our minds; often we have not known the way because we have not tried to *follow* the way of love and peace and forgiveness in a hateful, hurtful, vengeful world – forgive us and restore us, we pray – we wait on your word.

The Lord Jesus once said, 'your faith has saved you, go in peace' -we take these words to ourselves, for our faith, for peace, for forgiveness without limit – thanks be to God

Now, Lord, bless us and receive us as we worship, wherever we are, whatever we've done, however we have been – receive us and bless us with an awareness of your presence this day and a fresh encounter with your promises in Christ – this we ask as we worship you, in Jesus' name, amen.

#### Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen

#### 'Speak, O Lord'

Townend & Getty sung by Kristyn Getty

#### Readings

[2 Kings 2:1-12](#)

[Mark 9:2-9](#)

**BPW 203 'Jesus, transfigured, we scarcely can look'**

Mike Garnier

#### Sermon

On the last Sunday before Lent, time to prepare ourselves. Lent is traditionally a time when Christians go in for some self-denial to make, as it were, 'like Jesus', embarking on his increasingly arduous journey to Jerusalem & to the cross

Of course, no one's pretending that *our* self-denial (such as it may be), is anything like the sacrifices that marked the way of the Galilean. Indeed, so artificial has Lent seemed to many, that Christians in some parts of the Church – amongst them, not least, Baptists, have largely given up on them altogether –

Or else made light of them. 'Giving things up for Lent' has become a bit gimmicky in our day. As I recalled recently at a funeral, one or two folk at Tyndale gave up *moaning* for Lent – to our mutual amusement. Ironically the people involved were some of the hardest-working, most faithful Christians anywhere. They had no need to 'give things up' so as to demonstrate their discipleship..

Gradually the idea has grown up that there's a gap between 'surface-Lent' activities - giving up chocolate, wine, whatever - and the true discipleship of the heart

Anyway, we're not in Lent yet – and in today's world there is suffering and denial aplenty going on, what with Covid 19 & lockdown restrictions – such that Lent-type rituals seem ever more out-of-touch with reality.

Still, preparing ourselves...Never mind Lent; it's a case of preparing ourselves to live by faith – not just to *believe*, but to live by faith and to walk the way of the suffering, dying Saviour in today's world – *all the time...at any time...*

Prepare yourselves - that's what the transfiguration story does in the gospels. In Matthew, Mark and Luke It happens just after Jesus has spoken about his forthcoming death, to the incredulous disciples – probably not what they signed up for, right?

– the transfiguration story shows them being prepared – given a glimpse of heaven, if you like – at least, some of them..Peter, John and James, to be precise

In the previous chapter *all* Jesus' disciples, with the crowd, heard him talk about his death & resurrection. In this story, only Peter, John & James get to see Jesus 'transfigured'

Why just those three? Judging by Jesus's reaction to Peter earlier – remember? 'Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.'

He wasn't convinced that Peter, anymore than the others, really understood what was going on. Maybe that was why these three were singled out for this special revelation

I remember, when I was an apprentice, being singled out – with two or three others – to go on an Outward Bound course. It was fairly arduous as it happens, and involved cold showers and mountain-climbing and circuit training – but when we were chosen, we knew none of that, I just remember feeling excited.

I remember asking why I had been chosen; I'll never forget what the Training Officer said – "it's either because you're very good and we just want you to get even better, or because you're bloody hopeless, and we hope this will sort you out once and for all..."

Which is it?, I said, hopefully.... 'We'll tell you when - *if* - you come back...'

I did come back, as it happened, but I never did find out!

I wonder if that was how it was for Peter, James and John – either they were the best of all the disciples and Jesus wanted to give 'em something special, or else they were the worst of a bad bunch, and he wanted to sort them out once and for all..

Anyway..the story of the transfiguration – rich with connections back into OT history and full of ideas about the Messiah and the end of the ages and it's not the kind of story that we can ever understand fully – and the whole experience was only seen by those three disciples – Peter, James and John went with Jesus, saw him 'transfigured' which means changed, which means that they had confirmation that this Jesus was more than just a Galilean teacher, he was, in some mysterious way, a heavenly, glorious, eternal being - And then all the stuff about tents and Peter coming over all Peter-like and compulsive and – we can take it, can't we, that they were no better, no different, no more understanding, than they had been before

Except... *they were prepared...*

It is, perhaps, time for us to prepare ourselves. I mean, it's no good going into Lent or our lives just thinking that Jesus is some historical all-round nice chap with a good line in pithy sayings; it'll only be any good – it'll only be possible - if we go into Lent – indeed into the rest of our lives - believing that Jesus of Nazareth is all of a piece with – that idea from last week, remember – the Word.

Which means, I think, that this service will have to do...

Oh, dear. I look at myself on the recording – I try not to wince too much at the choice of tie or the way I'm standing..but I look at myself and I think

Is that it? I'm banging on about the presence of God – and about being prepared like some kind of transfiguration and actually...nothing to see here, as they say – just little old me standing at a lectern – just some nice music and some good readings and..that's about all!

You could have a look on Youtube..you'll soon find something else to look at; some deep-voiced US preacher, some video of a soaring cathedral, some inspirational choir..

And all you've got here is....actually, I think that's the transfiguration. It was clearly no kind of life-changing, world-shaking event; over and over again in the story we're reminded that only Peter, James and John saw – It wasn't much in the great scheme of things, but it was, for Peter, James and John, perhaps enough..for their faith – for their continuing to live by faith, to follow Jesus.

There's much more that could be said about the story itself, but for now, just this way of thinking about it – with its connections to the world of faith - perhaps it was enough, for Peter, James and John – enough for *their* faith.

In the end I – we – can only hope that this service, in this difficult time, while we're 'together though apart', is enough. We hope and pray that it will connect with what you already know, and help you to believe – as did the transfiguration for Peter, James and John..

So that – well, I suppose what we're really saying is we hope that this service will help to reinforce, draw out, bring back to the surface, deepen and freshen, your faith – so that we all, like Peter, James and John, will be prepared..

To live by faith; not just to believe – if all you want is to believe I suggest that you look around, try lots of other services – find something more exciting, perhaps

But this will do - will be enough, for you who have been 'singled out' (for better or worse); if you would follow Jesus and his costly way – to love and serve and give – to work out what it means, in today's world, to take up your cross..

### **Words of Offering**

So, Lord we would follow you with our lives; we would love and serve - in our hearts and in the world - and give; 'of these and all our gifts' - and as we give, and as we continue to follow the costly way of Jesus, to

love and serve, we pray that not just our own faith, but the world around - will be transfigured and changed..

['Lord, you hear the cry \(Lord, have mercy\)'](#)

written and sung Geraldine Latty

### **Intercessions - Practical prayers for today**

For all those struggling at the moment – children at home craving structure, learning and friendship; parents trying to square impossible circles; teachers aching for the classroom; students in debt and unfulfilled; doctors and nurses getting near to exhaustion; workers of all kinds trying to keep going; business owners facing swingeing losses; the unemployed; others who must choose whether to heat their homes or eat; those waiting for routine but oh-so-necessary treatment; elderly people feeling isolated and alone; grandparents unable to see or hold grandchildren – so many others; we're bound to have missed some – we take a moment to keep silence for anyone known to us..

God whose world this is and who sees all; lead us through by your Spirit.

Lord, in your mercy **Hear our prayer**

For all those grieving or anxious or physically distressed at the moment; who've lost partners or siblings or colleagues to Covid 19; who are very ill with the virus, in hospital or at home; those for whom the daily grind is causing depression or worsening existing conditions; whose homes are places of abuse and fear; who are feeling more and more estranged from family and friends – so many others; we're bound to have missed some - we take a moment to keep silence for anyone known to us.

God of all comfort who suffers with us in Christ; minister your grace to us, by your Spirit

Lord, in your mercy **Hear our prayer**

For all those working, planning, discovering at the moment; the scientists who are working on vaccines & treatments; the medical staff & administrators who are making the vaccine roll-out possible; the technicians, drivers and managers who are making components and keeping services running and goods moving; journalists who are seeking to tell true stories; politicians who are making plans and hard decisions - so many others; we're bound to have missed some we take a moment to keep silence for anyone known to us.

God whose creation was made good and who works to reconcile all things by Christ; help us to trust in your Spirit

Lord, in your mercy **Hear our prayer**

### **The Grace is said:**

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

**CG 49'**['Heaven Shall Not Wait'](#)

by John L. Bell & Graham Maule sung by Frodsham Methodist Church Cloud Choir

### **Blessing**

So may the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be with us and remain with us always,  
Amen

Once again thanks to everyone who has made this service possible – Ian recording and processing; Nick & Tina printing and posting; John & Rachel reading; Rachel sorting music, Mike playing – thank you one and all for taking part.

We are committed to reviewing the decision to close Tyndale each month and hopefully it will not be too long before we can open again. In the meantime, on behalf of the Officers and Deacons, I wish you all well and assure you of our thoughts and prayers. Please continue to pray for & support one another, as we all seek to continue to live by faith and look beyond this present darkness to the light of the Light of the World.

We meet to share a 'together though apart' time on Zoom from 11.30 am.

['Nearer, My God, to Thee'](#)

800 musicians from 55 countries