

Welcome & Notices

Good morning and a very warm welcome to our Communion Service today, whether you are here with us in person or online, or indeed a visitor, we hope you will feel at home with us.

Our service this morning is being led by our minister Michael Docker, and we thank him for leading our worship, and look forward to sharing this time together.

This week as usual our Tuesday coffee shop will be taking place, from 10am until 12 noon here in the sanctuary. Do come along and enjoy this time of refreshments and conversation.

On Tuesday evening we have our church members monthly meeting at 7.30pm. This will be taking place online, and the zoom joining details will be sent out via email, later today.

Wednesday night at time@tyndale, is a 'Faith Matters' session led by Michael. As usual the evening will start here at 7.30pm with refreshments, with Michael's session starting at 8pm.

A message from Rachel Molyneux regarding the time@tyndale on Wednesday week, the 16th March. This will be the first of the Lent Conversations for 2022, which was going to be at Tyndale but is now being held on Zoom. Details of how to join the meeting are in the Link. The Very Reverend Mandy Ford, Dean of Bristol Cathedral will be leading the conversation on the theme 'The Bible and Ethics'.

Finally, on Thursday we have our online coffee shop, which starts at 11am. The details of how to join this time of informal chat are on our website.

Thank you.

Welcome to worship at Tyndale, here in church or on-line; we are glad to be together, though we recognise that many in our world are divided and apart; that there is great suffering abroad, that truth is an early casualty and dangerous talk – and action - is being let loose. We meet to use words carefully so as to express joy and thanks as well as sorrow and repentance. We meet in Lent, as those who are called to follow the cross-killed King -

CG26 'Come to me..'

Call to Worship

So we come, at the call of God, as we are, in our confusion, anxiety and waywardness; to seek after the truth and peace of God – and in Jesus' name we come to worship

God is here! As we his people
Meet to offer praise and prayer,
May we find in fuller measure
What it is in Christ we share.
Here, as in the world around us,
All our varied skills and arts
Wait the coming of his Spirit
Into open minds and hearts.

Here our children find a welcome
In the Shepherd's flock and fold;
Here, as bread and wine are taken,
Christ sustains us as of old.
Here the servants of the Servant
Seek in worship to explore
What it means in daily living
To believe and to adore.

Here are symbols to remind us
Of our lifelong need of grace;
Here are table, font and pulpit,
Here the cross has central place.
Here in honesty of preaching,
Here in silence, as in speech,
Here in newness and renewal
God the Spirit comes to each.

Lord of all, of church and kingdom,
In an age of change and doubt,
Keep us faithful to the gospel,
Help us work your purpose out.
Here, in this day's dedication,
All we have to give, receive;
We who cannot live without you,
We adore you! We believe!

Prayer

Lord, as the terrors of war and destruction come close, we worship you – the One who is above and beyond all things; in whom peace is to be found; through whom forgiveness is poured out; by whom we have been made and to whom we offer all that we have and all that we are; for we see Christ our Lord; the very peace, forgiveness, grace and love of God.

And Lord, as this very day many cower in fear and others mete out destruction and somewhere in the midst of all this the highest and best of human life gets lost, we thank you for such a life lived among us and for such a life given for us and for such a life lifted up for all to see – indeed the very life of God. Lord, accept our worship; in this simple way we would come closer to what you would have us be and rejoice that you have come close to

us in Jesus Christ; to hold us, to mend us, to give us hope and to shows us a peaceful, endless Kingdom. In his name we pray..

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

Readings:

[Deuteronomy 26.1-11](#)

[Luke 4.1-13](#)

Jesus who wandered alone in the desert,
We who would follow are wanderers too;
You fought the demons of pride and self-serving –
We too have demons; help us to win through.

There in the emptiness you faced your Tempter –
We who would follow run quickly from ours;
Stones and high places the sites of your tempting –
Ours are the rocks of a world's baleful powers

Lost in a wasteland of getting and spending;
Every horizon a mirage of greed –
All that we gain lends but small satisfaction ;
We stumble round from desire to need

Meanwhile the voice in our ears of the Tempter –
Something or Someone to lead us astray -
Wills us to choose from all options the lowest
So that we soon turn aside from the way.

Steadied by Scripture and held by your destiny,
Yours was the war of the one against all –
We are engulfed by the false sounds of tyranny
Free us to live by the power of your call

Yours was the desert of lonely devotion;
Ours is a desert we made for ourselves –
Your Word alone – and the demons are scattered:
Speak, Lord, a Word for our world and our lives.

Michael Docker/Tune: Melissa (BPW619 (ii))

Sermon

Lord, we give you this time; speak to us and help us to think & reflect by your Spirit; lead us to decide again to seek the things that make for peace; indeed the things of your Kingdom

That picture, of Vladimir Putin and Emmanuel Macron a few days (seems like a lifetime) ago; both men sitting at opposite ends of a ridiculously long table.. And the bombs rain down in Ukraine.. Or, shortly after, Putin sitting at a desk in a huge room..his ministers sitting, uncomfortably, on upright chairs 20 metres away from him (& incidentally, distanced from each other..) Apparently, during the pandemic, Putin isolated himself more & more .. And the bombs rain down in Ukraine.. Meanwhile sanctions are beginning to bite for ordinary Russians. Isolation...distance. ...And the bombs rain down in Ukraine.. Please God it will end soon; please God it won't escalate into further conflict; please God the gospel message of peace on earth will find a way; Apparently Putin in the Kremlin is protected by hundreds of armed guards – part of a detachment of some 50000 troops dedicated to protecting him and his ministers. Isolation; unreality; distance from the consequences of his actions; acolytes to say 'yes' to his every whim...And the bombs rain down in Ukraine On this first Sunday in Lent we are taken to the story of Jesus' temptation in the wilderness. It is tempting, isn't it, to regard Putin as a figure of pure evil – some kind of Satan figure; the source of all

darkness against which the forces of light in the Western world are ranged. Darkness descends – of that there is little doubt – cluster bombs, vacuum bombs; cruise missiles, indiscriminate shelling of homes, shops, businesses – it's all very dark indeed.. It's difficult to find any light in all this, but for the bravery of the Ukrainian people, I suppose. But sometimes (as a preacher I know this full well) words give out; there's little to be said. On such occasions the gospel will have to be shown, more than spoken of; we *will* show the gospel, when we come to take communion in a little while – familiar words surrounding it, of course, but at its heart – not words, but an action, a drama *showing* the brokenness and wholeness at the gospel's heart.. But first - the temptation of Jesus. The forces of evil against the forces of light, you could say. You can imagine Putin, can't you, in this scenario; faced by the temptations of the devil – stones turned into bread; all the kingdoms of the world; angelic protection; Answering very differently to Jesus...'I'll have some of that! Billionaire lifestyle; Ukraine first, then the Baltic states, then...who knows....50000 troops protecting me....bring it on!' A messiah-complex, if ever there was one, Putin...like Saddam Hussein, perhaps, like Hitler before

him...Stalin...Napoleon...so many..maybe we should call it the Big Dog complex.....

But the story shows something else.Jesus, at the height of his powers, you might say – just after the baptism – ‘this is my Son with whom I am well pleased’... Just before the start of his ministry in Galilee – Luke tells us: *Then Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country. He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.* Just imagine the Messiah-complex all that might invoke....

Except – power through weakness...Dying to live...Going the extra mile....

This is the stuff of the gospel.....In the wilderness Did you notice? Not the destination of Israel (in Deuteronomy); ‘land flowing with milk & honey’ – but the journey....*through the wilderness..We were oppressed in Egypt...we journeyed through the wilderness...* It’s in the DNA of God’s people..*that’s* where the strength of faith comes from...not from lands flowing with milk & honey. ‘not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit says the Lord’..

Jesus goes to Galilee *in the power of the Spirit...*the peaceful, humble, spirit of God But first, *in the wilderness*, all the tempting powers of the world come up against the calling to be human... ‘If you will only worship me’... ‘command these stones to become bread’.. ‘throw yourself down.’ Anyone other than Jesus – a Putin perhaps...a Hitler..a me?...a you?...would have given in, to the temptation to take everything to ourselves; to worship evil; to put God to the test...

Jesus doesn’t give in...Jesus, in the desert...knows starvation; gives up everything; refuses the seduction of power – weak, vulnerable, *human*....

Perhaps Putin thinks of himself as more than human...Russia, the US, the UK, Europe, China...God help anywhere that thinks it can be led by anyone who thinks they’re more than human – for whom the rules don’t apply; who does what he or she likes; who abuses power.

God help the church, if it ever tries to do that...God help its ministers, its people. There is only one future, if we are to be true to the gospel;

It is a future of suffering and sacrifice and taking up our cross – please God it might not be for us what it is for the people of Ukraine

But if it is to be...if it is *ever* to be....then.. *it will be for us as it was for our Lord* – who ‘emptied himself, taking the form of a servant’; who ‘turned the other cheek’; who ‘gave his back to his oppressors’; who went to a cross; Who said ‘take up your cross and follow me’ Who resisted the forces of darkness in the wilderness...who was humble there, and hungry there, and who trusted God alone there....

No distance...no social distance...between the life of God and what it means to be human..

This is what Messiah really means.. And the bombs rain down in Ukraine....and maybe all we can do, is pray...and do what’s right....and wait for God’s own time... And watch the mystery of the gospel acted out in front of us....(the table)

Prayer

Lord we come to you; we are never more nor less than human; we have our dreams of grandeur; of having everything; of always being protected; we live in a world that thrives on such dreams, that is being destroyed for such dreams – but Lord, we would align ourselves with Jesus, the servant king, the humble, dying Lord – and in his name and for his sake, we give of ourselves in these and all our gifts...and this bread and wine

Grace

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

‘He comes...’

Communion

The table of the Lord is spread, it is for those who will come and see in broken bread and poured out wine – not merely symbols, but the very substance of his life shed for us on the Cross and raised again the third day. The risen Christ is present among his people and it is here that we meet him. It is for those who know him a little and long to know him more - the invitation is for all those who are seeking him and who are weary of their sin and doubt to come and share the feast.

Confession

Lord, we confess... (silence)

Father forgive us and bring us through this act to the very footstool of grace once again, so that we may gaze on the true cost and glory of the gospel – in the lamb who was slain who is alive for evermore.

Institution

For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you; the Lord Jesus on the night he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks he broke it and said, take, eat, this is my body which is for you, do this in remembrance of me. In the same way after supper he took the cup saying this cup is the new covenant in my

blood; do this whenever you drink it in memory of me – for whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

Thanksgiving

Lift up your hearts,

we lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is not only right it is our duty & joy at all times & in all places to give you thanks & praise, holy Father, heavenly King, almighty & eternal God, through Jesus Christ, your only Son, our Lord. Therefore with angels & archangels & with all the company of heaven we proclaim your great & glorious name, for ever praising you & saying

Holy Holy Holy, God of power and might. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the lord.

Hosanna in the highest!

God our Father, pour out the Holy Spirit on all your people, that we may have faith, & upon these gifts of bread & wine & this eating & drinking, that this may be for us the mystery of the body and blood of our risen Lord – so that we may receive Christ to ourselves once again, for the strengthening of our faith, the assuring of our hope, and the deepening of our love.

Responses

Leader Here is bread

All **For us to feed on Christ**

Leader Here is wine

All **For us to refresh our souls.**

Leader Our suffering Lord calls us to his table

All **In Lent we come in brokenness**

Leader Our dying Lord calls us his friends

All **In Lent we come with frail hearts**

Leader How shall we eat?

All **Weeping with those who weep,**

Leader How shall we drink?

All **Mourning with those who mourn.**

Leader Christ who dies gives us his body & blood

All **We eat and drink in faith**

Bread & Wine

‘Strengthen for service, Lord’

Prayer after communion (slides during..)

CEC General Secretary Dr Jørgen Skov Sørensen offers a prayer for peace in Ukraine amid recently escalating tension in the country.

The news can be difficult to listen to and to read. When that news relates to faces we know and to voices familiar to us, it becomes all the harder to hear.

Lord God, we ask you to hold the people of Ukraine deep in your heart. Protect them, we pray; from violence, from political gamesmanship, from being used and abused. Give, we pray, the nations of the world the courage and the wisdom to stand up for justice and the courage too, to dare to care – generously. Lord in your mercy, take from us all, the tendencies in us that seek to lord it over others: take from us those traits that see us pursuing our own needs and wants before those of others. Teach us how to live in love and dignity and respect – following your example. In your name and for your sake, Amen

A prayer for Ukraine by David Thomas, Christian Aid Ireland's Church and Community Manager

Lord of all people and all nations, we lift before you the people of Ukraine and the people of Russia, each girl and boy, each woman and man living in fear of what tomorrow might bring,

We long for a time you spoke of through your prophet Isaiah, when weapons of war would be beaten into ploughshares, when nation will no longer lift up sword against nation, we cry out to you for peace, Protect those who only desire and deserve to live in security and safety, comfort those who fear for their lives and the lives of their loved ones, change the hearts of those set on violence and aggression, fill earthly leaders with great wisdom to find paths to peace, please Lord come and have your way in your world, may your will be done here, on earth as it is in heaven, may your peace reign. Now and always, we lift this prayer to you, our God who is able to do more than we can ever ask or imagine, In the name of Christ our saviour, Amen

From the European Baptist Federation

Even as Ukrainian Baptists are fleeing for safety themselves, they are diligently working to have a coordinated response to the war. From hosting those fleeing in churches to procuring and distributing food & hygiene items, Baptists in Ukraine need your prayers and your help.

Prayer requests from Ukraine – BMS working with the EBF have compiled these requests:

- Pray for the people of Ukraine – that they will be able to seek safety and know the comfort of God's presence at night
 - Pray for Baptists in the region, as they prepare to use their churches as safe havens and emergency supply distribution points for those fleeing.
 - Pray for the coming days, that there will be enough food, money, fuel and resources in the country for ordinary citizens
 - Pray for those who are fleeing across the country, that their paths will be clear and they have places to rest. Pray also for neighbouring countries, some of whom have already begun preparing to receive refugees –
 - Pray for those who cannot, or will not, leave. Pray that they are not discouraged by those who do and do not feel that the international community has given up hope for the possibility of peace
 - Pastor Igor requests that we pray for his fellow pastors to "keep believing that God will be glorified"
-

Lord hear our prayer; we do not pray easily or lightly, realising that we must pray because of great sin at work in our world – and whatever the particulars of blame in this situation, we are all implicated in the violence, greed, thoughtlessness and political intrigue that leads to such conflict; if we have allowed fear to rule, forgive us; if we have turned a blind eye to injustice forgive us; if we have neglected truth for the sake of a quiet life forgive us. Lord, we cannot change much by our actions, but we can give, and we can pray, in the hope and belief that our prayers will be added to the weight of prayer that rises to your Spirit that continues His quiet, brooding, healing and changing work in the world.

We pray that guns might fall silent; we pray that talk will replace violence; we pray that people in Ukraine will be helped, find new hope, have their courage strengthened, their wounds and suffering healed and their faith enriched; we pray that families here and elsewhere will be reunited; we pray that Russian people everywhere will not be abused and that people of faith in many countries will be moved to action; we pray that above and through all things your peace will come to reign. Lord, these prayers are expressions of our hopes – in the real world they would be no more than wishful thinking if it were not for your power and unending love – help us, once again, to trust in you.

BPW209 'Search for the infant'

Benediction

Thanks to all who have made today's service possible.