

HOLY TRINITY CUCKFIELD

Joyfully serving Jesus



Weekly devotions, prayers and news

Third Sunday of Epiphany

23rd January 2022

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me

My dear friends,

Elgar starts his oratorio *The Apostles* with a beautiful setting of the words from Isaiah which Jesus quotes in our Gospel reading this Sunday, as he sits in his hometown synagogue in Nazareth. It forms a powerful manifesto of love which we are all called to use as part of the Body of Christ. The Spirit of the Lord is upon us! This wonderful gift is one we offer through our own faith, gifts and talents, and even within weaknesses. In revealing the Lord, we do so within the seeming ordinariness of life, and God gives us the ability to bring healing, sight to the spiritually blind and freedom to those imprisoned in their own self-made prisons into his marvellous light. All this and more can be achieved through the grace of God at work within each one of us.

Paul gives us a great list of connections in the New Testament reading, yet he captures the wonder of our common life as part of the body of Christ. We will all feel sometimes that our faith and its communication is less than satisfactory. Yet, Paul says to us that even 'the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable.' I thank the Lord for that! Let's all remember how cherished we are, and seek to display this in every aspect of our lives.

With love,

Michael

The Third Sunday of Epiphany (23rd January 2022)

8.00 Holy Communion *(in church)*

Reader: Roger Edmonston

9.45 Family Eucharist *(in church and online)*

Readers: Jocelyn Bentley & Val Thompson; Intercessor: Tony Lawrence;

12.00 Holy Baptism *Oryn John Dylan James*

1.00 Holy Baptism *Sophie Marie Ellen Bedding*

6.00 Sung Evensong

Services during the week:

Wednesday: 10.30 Holy Communion (C. Worship) *(in church & online)* **Timothy & Titus, Companions of Paul**

Readings: Isaiah 61: 1-3a; 2 Timothy 2: 1-8; Luke 10: 1-

Wednesday: 6.30 Space for Grace

Thursday: 9.00 Holy Communion (Iona/Celtic) *(in church & online)*

Readings: 12 Samuel 7: 18-19, 24-end; Mark 4: 21-25

Friday: 11.00 Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer) *Readings: Third Sunday of Epiphany (in church)*

Next Sunday: Candlemas (30th January 2022)

8.00 Holy Communion *(in church)*

9.45 Family Eucharist *(in church and online)*

For services live on Zoom: Click the blue link on the front page of the church website

The Collect for Third Sunday of Epiphany

God of all mercy,
your Son proclaimed good news to the poor,
release to the captives,
and freedom to the oppressed:
anoint us with your Holy Spirit
and set all your people free
to praise you in Christ our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen

The Post Communion Prayer:

Almighty Father,
whose Son our Saviour Jesus Christ
is the light of the world:
may your people,
illumined by your word and sacraments,
shine with the radiance of his glory,
that he may be known, worshipped,
and obeyed to the ends of the earth;
for he is alive and reigns,
now and for ever. Amen

Nehemiah 8: 1-3, 5-6, 8-10

All the people gathered together into the square before the Water Gate. They told the scribe Ezra to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had given to Israel. Accordingly, the priest Ezra brought the law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could hear with understanding. This was on the first day of the seventh month. He read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law. And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was standing above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up. Then Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God, and all the people answered, 'Amen, Amen', lifting up their hands. Then they bowed their heads and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground. So they read from the book, from the law of God, with interpretation. They gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading.

And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, 'This day is holy to the Lord your God; do not mourn or weep.' For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law. Then he said to them, 'Go your way, eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions of them to those for whom nothing is prepared, for this day is holy to our Lord; and do not be grieved, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.'

I Corinthians 12: 12-31a

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot were to say, 'Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body', that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear were to say, 'Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body', that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many members, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you', nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you.' On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and those members of the body that we think less honourable we clothe with greater honour, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honour to the inferior member, that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together with it.

Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? But strive for the greater gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way.

Luke 4: 14-21

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. When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written: 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.' And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he began to say to them, 'Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.'

A thought

Christians are sometimes called the People of the Book - as are our Jewish brothers and sisters. However, it might be more profitable to think of ourselves as people of the word—The Word—made flesh. His words have power to heal us, set us free, restore our sight, and give us comfort if we but hear His voice. Listen. Let us seek to turn off the noise, listen with an inner stillness and hear the Word of everlasting life. This mysterious Body is made real in our Eucharistic 'Amen,' a word that bids us to become what we receive. The power of the prophetic word hits us even today amid earthquakes, pandemics and wars, amid poverty and neglect. Do you hear it? Does it speak to your soul and call you into caring? For therein is its power, our being part of the Body of Christ.

A prayer for our parish:

**God of all compassion, your love never fails.
Help us to listen to the tranquillity
of your presence within our lives,
so that we may grow in the knowledge
that your Son, Jesus Christ, walks beside us,
and your Holy Spirit comforts us
at the heart of our being;
for you are One God,
world without end. Amen**

Please remember those for whom we pray:

Immediate need: Barbara Booth, John Bernardi (priest), Maureen Griffiths, Paul Simpson, Tim Burrows, Carol Cox, Jane Terry, Martin Packham

Long Term Need: Young Joshua, Young Reggie, Anne Greenhill, Ros Ayling, Wendy, Ann Went, Dave Cox, Julie Sadler, Christopher, Janet Card, George Snashall, Wendy Hibling, Yvonne Godsmark, Carla Spear, Pam Sagar, David Davidson, Eileen Knight

Those in Care Homes: Alan Prebble, Stephanie Gilpin, Jill Rockey, Jean Simmons, Mary Watts, Ruth Baker, Keith Thompson,

Please remember the recently departed and their families: Brian Brown, Tony Burbidge, Veronica Hutchinson, Shirley Lewis

In our Book of Remembrance this week we remember 23rd Anthony Seabrook, Reg Burdett, Reg Rapley, Doug Maude, Enid Saunders, 24th Lorna White,, 25th Beryl Hodges, Phyllis Choppin, 26th Joyce Sears, Joan Nash, Keith Morgan, Mervyn Adams, Bernard Godsmark, Vera Chandler, 27th Roger Kirkbell, Frank Hemstead, Frances Gunston, 28th Sybill Cheesman, Deborah Robbys, Hilda Saunders, Clarence Mathers, 29th Edith Stopes