

Help us in our duty to read and study the bible, and to grow daily in obedience to your word. Bless all in our communities who spread faith by their teaching and example.

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

Have mercy on those who are broken or in any kind of need, restore their peace and bring them new hope through your word, which has the power to heal.

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

We pray for those who have come to the end of their time on earth and seen the glory of the Son of Man. May they be joyful in the eternal life which is the promise of scripture.

Lord in your mercy **Hear our prayer**

In a moment of silence, let us offer our own prayers and praises in the name of Christ, whose word leads us to salvation...

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

#### *Hymn*

**We have a gospel to proclaim,  
Good news for men in all the earth;  
the gospel of a Saviour's name,  
we sing his glory, tell his worth.**

**Tell of his birth at Bethlehem,  
not in a royal house or hall  
but in a stable dark and dim,  
the Word made flesh, a light for all.**

**Tell of his death at Calvary,  
hated by those he came to save,  
in lonely suffering on the cross,  
for all he loved his life he gave.**

**Tell of that glorious Easter moon,  
empty the tomb, for he was free.  
He broke the power of death and hell  
that we might share his victory.**

**Tell of his reign at God's right hand,  
by all creation glorified,  
he sends his Spirit on his Church,  
to live for him, the Lamb who died.**

**Now we rejoice to name him King,**

**Jesus is Lord of all the earth,  
this gospel message we proclaim,  
we sing his glory, tell his worth.**

### **The Rectorial Benefice of the East Vale Morning Prayer Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> October, 2020 Trinity 20 | Bible Sunday**

#### *Hymn*

**Angel voices ever singing  
round thy throne of light,  
angel-harps for ever ringing,  
rest not day nor night;  
thousands only live to bless thee  
and confess thee  
Lord of might.**

**Thou who art beyond the farthest  
mortal eye can scan,  
can it be that thou regardest  
songs of sinful man?  
can we know that thou art near us,  
and wilt hear us?  
yea, we can.**

**For we know that thou rejoicest  
o'er each work of thine;  
thou didst ears and hands and voices  
for thy praise design;  
craftsman's art and music's measure  
for thy pleasure  
all combine.**

**In thy house, great God, we offer  
of thine own to thee;  
and for thine acceptance proffer  
all unworthily  
hearts and minds and hands and voices  
in our choicest  
psalmody.**

**Honour, glory, might, and merit  
thine shall ever be,  
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,  
blessed Trinity.  
Of the best that thou hast given  
earth and heaven  
render thee.**

#### *The Gloria*

Glory to God, glory in the highest,  
peace to his people, peace on earth.  
**Glory to God, glory in the highest,  
peace to his people, peace on earth.**

Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father.  
**Glory to God, glory in the highest,  
peace to his people, peace on earth.**

We worship you,  
**glory in the highest,**  
give you thanks,  
**glory in the highest,**  
praise you for your glory.  
**Glory to God, glory in the highest,  
peace to his people, peace on earth.**

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father  
Lord God, Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world:  
have mercy on us,  
**have mercy on us;**  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:  
receive our prayer,  
**receive our prayer.**

Glory to God, glory in the highest,  
peace to his people, peace on earth.  
**Glory to God, glory in the highest,  
peace to his people, peace on earth.**

For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God, the glory of God the Father.

**Glory to God, glory in the highest,  
peace to his people, peace on earth.**

Amen. **Amen.**

#### *The Collect*

Blessed Lord, who caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: help us to hear them, 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. **Amen.**

*First Reading* (Nehemiah 8:1-4a, 8-12)

A reading from the book of Nehemiah.

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. The scribe Ezra stood

on a wooden platform that had been made for the purpose; 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.' So the Levites stilled all the people, saying, 'Be quiet, for this day is holy; do not be grieved.' And all the people went their way to eat and drink and to send portions and to make great rejoicing, because they had understood the words that were declared to them.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

*Responsorial Psalm* (Psalm 119:9-16)

**R/ Your words, O Lord, I have hidden in my heart.**

How shall young people cleanse their way: to keep themselves according to your word? With my whole heart have I sought you: O let me not go astray from your commandments. **R/**

Your words have I hidden within my heart: that I should not sin against you. Blessed are you, O Lord: O teach me your statutes. **R/**

With my lips have I been telling: of all the judgements of your mouth. I have taken greater delight in the way of your testimonies: than in all manner of riches. **R/**

I will meditate on your commandments: and contemplate your ways. My delight shall be in your statutes: and I will not forget your word. **R/**

*Second Reading* (Colossians 3:12-17)

A reading from Paul's letter to the Colossians.

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in

the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

This is the word of the Lord **Thanks be to God**

*The Gospel* (Matthew 24:30-35)

**Alleluia! Alleluia!**  
**Give thanks to the risen Lord.**  
**Alleluia! Alleluia!**  
**Give praise to his name.**

**Jesus is Lord of all the earth,  
he is the king of creation.**  
**Alleluia! Alleluia!...**

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Listen to the gospel of Christ according to Saint Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Jesus said, 'The sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see "the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven" with power and great glory. And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.' From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see all these things, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Spread the good news o'er all the earth,  
Jesus has died and risen.**  
**Alleluia! Alleluia!...**

**The Homily** **Fr David**

The Catechism of the Church in Wales is a document that outlines what we believe in the form of a series of questions and answers. It was used as part of confirmation preparation. Within it there is a section headed 'The Bible' and it summarises what we believe about the bible in this way:

*What is the Bible?*

The Bible is the record of God's revelation of himself to mankind through his people of Israel, and above all in his Son, Jesus Christ.

*How was the Bible given to us?*

The Bible was given to us by the Holy Spirit who first inspired and guided the writers, and then led the Church to accept their writings as Holy Scripture.

*How should we read the Bible?*

We should read the Bible with the desire and prayer that through it God will speak to us by his Holy Spirit, and enable us to know him and do his will.

As we are aware, the bible is an integral part of the faith we profess today, because it contains within it the story of the salvation of the world, the story of our redemption. As the catechism suggests it is a record of God's revelation, inspired by the Holy Spirit and a means by which God speaks to us by his Holy Spirit. The word 'bible' derives from the Greek 'biblia', which means 'books' or 'library', because the bible as we know is a collection of books.

One of the beauties of the bible is that it contains between its covers seemingly every genre and form of writing, so if you like poetry, history, fiction, fantasy, prose, or stories of war, murder, deceit, mystery, tragedy or romance and things a bit saucy... then it's all there and more! As written works go, it's pretty epic! Grappling with the biblical texts is an important exercise to enable us to better understand the context and politics surrounding them, and to work through some of the allegories and metaphors, the contradictions and exaggerations. To ask questions around authorship and why a particular person was writing in a particular style, for a particular audience, at a particular time. Ultimately, as well as all the things I've listed above, the bible contains truth and a regular reading of the scriptures is one way in which God, the source of all truth, draws closer to us. Therefore, we understand why St Paul exhorts the Christians in Colossae to 'let the word of Christ dwell in you richly' in our second reading today.

However, unfortunately studies suggest only a third of Christians read their bible regularly. So, for two thirds of us large parts of it will go unexplored and be unfamiliar, and we may feel we don't know our bibles as well as we could or perhaps, should. Today, is Bible Sunday, and so what better Sunday than to make a renewed and more concerted effort to start getting to know the scriptures better. It is our intention as clergy to begin an online study group to enable us to do just that, and I hope that you will all give some thought to being a part of it, so that Christ's word may dwell in us richly.

At times of uncertainty and challenge such as this, the scriptures can be a light to our path and a source of solace and wisdom, instilling in us greater resilience, peace and hope for the future. I hope that these study sessions will be a source of blessing to us and enable us to enter more fully into the mystery of God.

**Hymn**

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

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

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

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

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

**O that we, discerning,  
its most holy learning,  
Lord, may love and fear thee,  
evermore be near thee!**

**The Intercessions**

Let us pray that the word of God will be heard and honoured by all.

Keep the church faithful to the revelation made known in scripture. Bless all who preach and make them worthy messengers of the good news. Grant that all Christian people shall hear and receive the word with reverence. In our cycle of prayer with the parish of Lagunda, we pray particularly for the Church of Sweden's presence and work outside of Sweden and during One World Week we pray for a just, peaceful and sustainable world.

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

Make the glory of your word shine throughout the world, to be a light to all people. Teach us so to read the signs of the present time that there shall be wise planning for the future. Bless individuals and organisations who work to make God's word known and available throughout the world.

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