

# Swaythling Parish

## Sunday 22 November 2020

### Christ the King (Sunday before Advent)

#### Welcome

*Below is a service sheet for you to use at home. You can also find our Sunday morning reflection on YouTube channel, available at 10am on Sunday, (and afterwards). Please search for "Swaythling Parish" on YouTube to find and view it.*

#### Introduction from Rev Peter Dockree

Welcome to our service today, however you are joining us.

This Sunday we are celebrating a lesser known Festival called Christ the King. This comes at the end of the church year before we begin again at Advent. A time to reflect on Jesus, in majestic form before we remember him as God made man at Christmas.

#### Greeting

Grace mercy and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you

**And also with you.**

The Lord be with you

**And also with you**

#### Prayer of Thanks

We take a moment to recognise all the good things that we have in our lives. The gifts and talents we have been blessed with. To give thanks for the people that love us and who we love. Following on from this our first hymn is:

#### Hymn: Brother, Sister, let me serve you

1. Brother, sister, let me serve you;  
let me be as Christ to you;  
pray that I may have the grace to  
let you be my servant, too.

2. We are pilgrims on a journey,  
Fellow travellers on the road;  
we are here to help each other  
walk the mile and bear the load.

3. I will hold the Christlight for you  
in the night-time of your fear;  
I will hold my hand out to you,  
speak the peace you long to hear.

4. I will weep when you are weeping;  
when you laugh I'll laugh with you;  
I will share your joy and sorrow,  
till we've seen this journey through.

5. When we sing to God in heaven,  
we shall find such harmony,  
born of all we've known together  
of Christ's love and agony.

6. Brother, sister, let me serve you;  
let me be as Christ to you;  
pray that I may have the grace to  
let you be my servant, too.

#### Confession

We now take a moment to say sorry, a moment to recognise the times we have not acted as we would have wished to have acted.

For those moments when we have not  
sought to be Christ's hands and feet.  
Lord have mercy. **Lord have mercy**

For times when love has not been our  
watchword.  
Christ have mercy. **Christ have mercy**

For people we have hurt, and for hurt we  
have harboured from others.  
Lord have mercy. **Lord have mercy**

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

#### The Collect

God the Father,  
help us to hear the call of Christ the King  
and to follow in his service,  
whose kingdom has no end;  
for he reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, one glory.

## Readings:

### Matthew 25: 31-end

*The third of Jesus' parables – we shall be judged on how we have behaved to others.*

'When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, "Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me." Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?" And the king will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." Then he will say to those at his left hand, "You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to

drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me." Then they also will answer, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?" Then he will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me." And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.'

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

### A Reflection from Rev Canon Bruce Hartnell



Graham began his ordained ministry at the Church of Christ the Carpenter on the outskirts of Peterborough. He has never come across another with that name since. It was built in 1958 to serve the people of a large council estate and, the story goes, that its name was the idea of the bishop's wife who thought there might be many a carpenter and other

tradesmen living around it who would feel welcome inside.



Three years later Graham moved to Welwyn Garden City to a church dedicated to Christ the King. It seemed, he admits now, like a leg up in the world from carpenter to a royal throne.

You can see what he means. A church named after Christ the Carpenter suggests that God is a worker alongside us. He shares the labours, disappointments, joys and sorrows that are the basic stuff of human life. He is God immersed in the life of the world. In the dust and wood shavings of the carpenter's workshop the earthiness of human life is found. For this reason the table made for St Mary's, South Stoneham, is modelled on a carpenter's work bench.

A church dedicated to Christ the King seems to suggest something quite different. If Christ is a king then he must preside over creation. His spiritual authority seems to come from top down.

Both Graham's churches were modern, built in the nineteen fifties and sixties. Neither pretends to be an architectural masterpiece. Each has something to reflect the name on the board outside. Christ the Carpenter in Peterborough has a window over the entrance where the etchings on the glass are of a carpenter's tools – reminders of Jesus working in an ordinary job alongside Joseph, living alongside us.

In Christ the King, Welwyn, there was a Christus Rex to be seen. On this crucifix Jesus was wearing a crown not of thorns but of majesty and he wears the vestments a priest might use to celebrate Communion. The Christus Rex symbolizes Christ the Great High Priest, reigning over creation from a cross, meant by sinful humanity to be a tree of defeat, but made into a tree of glory.

The two different roles fulfilled by Jesus Christ are not mutually exclusive. The church dedicated to Christ the King is actually the humbler building. A visiting preacher noted for his time-keeping arrived only just in time for a service. He'd never been to the church before and explained. 'I drove past your church. I thought it was the Fire Station.'

Jesus Christ is both carpenter and king. God is found in the ordinary and every day. But Jesus Christ is not only beneath our feet but also the Lord of Glory. Even the grandest cathedral cannot give God enough glory.

A very ordinary parish with a priest and congregation marked by failures and mistakes can be a community of transformation. There's

nowhere like our churches, says Graham James who recently retired as Bishop of Norwich. There is nowhere else proclaiming faith in the Lord of Glory who is also the God beneath our feet.

*Lord Jesus Christ, carpenter of Nazareth and King of creation, open our eyes to your transforming presence in every place and every circumstance.  
Amen*

*Graham James A Place for God  
Mowbray 2018 Chapter 23*

### **Prayers**

*Let us pray for our world, our community and those in need around us.*

God of hope-filled trials, God of a cautious release: as we begin to imagine good news arising from the measured process of labs and computers, of heroes and scientists, of incomplete successes and instructive failures, may we allow ourselves a sigh of relief, but one that draws in more strengths so that a winter of waiting may bring a spring of renewal.

**Amen.**

God of those who agree with us, God of those who don't: keep us from dividing the world into us and them, for or against, good and bad.

Remind us that humans and human systems are always more complex than the binary choice of on/off, up/down. As you have met us in the reality of a living, breathing human life, may we meet each other again as three-dimensional people and not as another yes or no.

**Amen.**

We pray for all those in need at this time, for the vulnerable, the isolated, the hurting and the grieving. For the lost, those who feel beyond hope, those who have lost their own sense of purpose and potential. For all in need in our communities in our nation and in our world. As we recognise again that our care for the needy is the measure of our care for you, Lord of All and Servant to everyone in God's name.

**Amen.**

Some of the above prayers are taken from the Corrymeela Community.

### **Prayer of thanks for Gifts**

Let us have a moment to acknowledge again all that we have as individuals and as a church community, not what would be but what is. If you would like to give to the life and work of this church then you can send a cheque made payable to Swaythling Parish, or give online : [www.give.net/SwaythlingParish](http://www.give.net/SwaythlingParish)

Let us take a moment now to give thanks to God: We thank you Lord for all the gifts we have received, financial and in so many other ways. Help us to use them wisely to share your love in this place. **Amen**

## Hymn: When I needed a neighbour

- 1 When I needed a neighbour  
Were you there, were you there?  
When I needed a neighbour, were you there?  
And the creed and the colour  
And the name won't matter  
Were you there?
- 2 I was hungry and thirsty  
Were you there, were you there?  
I was hungry and thirsty, were you there?  
And the creed and the colour  
And the name won't matter  
Were you there?
- 3 I was cold, I was naked  
Were you there, were you there?  
I was cold, I was naked, were you there?  
And the creed and the colour  
And the name won't matter  
Were you there?
- 4 When I needed a shelter  
Were you there, were you there?  
When I needed a shelter were you there?  
And the creed and the colour  
And the name won't matter  
Were you there?
- 5 When I needed a healer  
Were you there, were you there?  
When I needed a healer, were you there?  
And the creed and the colour  
And the name won't matter  
Were you there?

- 6 Wherever you travel  
I'll be there, I'll be there  
Wherever you travel, I'll be there  
And the creed and the colour  
And the name won't matter  
I'll be there

Sydney Bertram Carter © 1965 Stainer & Bell

## A Closing Prayer

God of our pilgrimage,  
you have fed us with the bread of heaven.  
Refresh and sustain us  
as we go forward on our journey,  
to live and work to your praise and  
glory. **Amen**

## Closing Blessing

Thank you to everyone for joining us today.

God of love and mystery, grant us with all  
your people rest and peace.

And the blessing of God almighty, Father,  
Son and Holy Spirit, be with you now and  
always. **Amen.**

*Closing blessing from The Bright Field  
by Martyn Percy and others, 2014 p266.*

*Thank you for joining in with us. If we can support you in  
any way, please get in touch. peter.dockree@outlook.com  
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