

Sunday 3rd March 2024: Third Sunday in Lent

For use by the Central Norfolk Circuit at 10.30 am or other suitable time.



StF 17 H&P 19 'With gladness we worship' by George Rawson (1807 – 1889)

Opening Prayer

Think of the past week and say both 'thank you' and 'sorry' to our loving God.

Old Testament Reading set for today: Exodus 20 v 1 – 17

StF 72 MP 128 'Father God, I wonder' by Ian Smale (b 1949)

Gospel reading set for today: John 2 v 13 – 22

To think about

John, in his Gospel, puts this incident at the beginning of the ministry of Jesus – rather than at the end as Matthew, Mark and Luke do. Think of reasons why it fits well with the start of everything and why it might fit well with the end of everything?

Message from a Circuit Friend

Today is the third Sunday in Lent - nearly halfway through our journey to Easter. When you're on a long- distance walk the half- way mark is encouraging and we're tempted to think 'all downhill from now on!' Our readings today encourage us to reflect on our attitude to The Rules. Our OT reading has the giving of the Ten Commandments. In the old little red communion books we used to regularly read the 10 Commandments as part of the Communion Service. It preceded the prayer of confession. The inference is that even if we try really hard, we will break the rules at some point. In the gospel reading, we have people who are technically following the rules but doing it in such a way that it puts a barrier between people and God. At this point in our Lenten journey, take a moment to consider your attitude to rules? Are there some you are happy to or used to breaking? (I'm thinking of the 20mph or 30mph speed limits!!) Can we break some unintentionally, or just by being careless? Or are you a stickler for keeping to ALL the rules? Are there some more important than others?

The hymn 'Help us, O Lord, to learn' is helpful. In verse one we ask God to help us to study so that the laws are written on our hearts. In verse 2, we move on - if the laws are on our hearts, may our thoughts and words and deeds all bring glory to God. And vs 3 shows us that the next step is to teach others that all may find Christ and make a life of praise. That's surely why the rules are there - to help us on our journey with Christ and to Christ.

Anne Richardson (Minister in the Central Norfolk Circuit)

StF 501 H&P 474 'Help us, O Lord, to learn' by William W. Reid (1923 – 2009)

Prayers of Intercession

We pray for our world... for the church... for our communities... for our families & friends...

Collect for the third Sunday in Lent

Almighty God, whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory before he was crucified: mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Offer to God your offertory for the week, and say the Lord's Prayer...

StF 564 H&P 745 'O thou who camest from above' by Charles Wesley (1707 – 1788)

May the blessing of God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with us, and all those we love, this day and always, Amen.

Circuit News: Please pray for Rev Jonny and all the Probationer Ministers as they meet with the Regional Probationers' Committee this coming Thursday. Please also remember Rev Anne as she works towards moving sections, Rev Derek as he prepares to come to our Circuit as Superintendent, and Rev Jacqui & Deacon Jen as they ask to 'sit down' at their respective presbyteral and diaconal synods.