



**St Nicolas Church, Cranleigh**  
**WORSHIPPING AT HOME**  
**2 Before Lent**  
**Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2021**

**WELCOME . . . .** to our Worshipping at Home resources for this week.

**COVID-19 – LATEST . . . .** for the time being, we will continue to open the Church for live worship only at 11am on Sundays – all other services are cancelled.

In order to keep yourselves and others safe, please only come at 11am on Sunday if you are unable to access our Online Worship Resources

**THIS WEEK . . . .** (*Events in red will be online events*)

**Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> February – 2 before Lent:**

10am **(Zoom):** Church at Home.

11.15am **(Zoom):** SEA Church (for young people)

*(the Zoom joining code for both of these is*

*ID: 148-785-166, Password: Church)*

11am: Holy Communion (CW). **In Church and Livestreamed**

**Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> February – Candlemas. The Presentation of Christ:**

10am **(Zoom):** Church at Home.

11.15am **(Zoom):** SEA Church (for young people)

*(the Zoom joining code for both of these is*

*ID: 148-785-166, Password: Church)*

11am: Holy Communion (CW). **In Church and Livestreamed**

# AND LOOKING AHEAD . . . .

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> February – Ash Wednesday:

12noon: Holy Communion (CW). **In Church and Livestreamed**

## 2 BEFORE LENT

### COLLECTS:

Almighty God,  
you have created the heavens and the earth  
and made us in your own image:  
teach us to discern your hand in all your works  
and your likeness in all your children;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who with you and the Holy Spirit  
reigns supreme over all things,  
now and for ever.

*(or)*

Almighty God,  
give us reverence for all creation  
and respect for every person,  
that we may mirror your likeness  
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

### FIRST READING: *Proverbs 8:1 & 22-31*

Does not wisdom call,  
and does not understanding raise her voice?  
The Lord created me at the beginning of his work,

the first of his acts of long ago.  
Ages ago I was set up,  
at the first, before the beginning of the earth.  
When there were no depths I was brought forth,  
when there were no springs abounding with water.  
Before the mountains had been shaped,  
before the hills, I was brought forth—  
when he had not yet made earth and fields,  
or the world's first bits of soil.  
When he established the heavens, I was there,  
when he drew a circle on the face of the deep,  
when he made firm the skies above,  
when he established the fountains of the deep,  
when he assigned to the sea its limit,  
so that the waters might not transgress his command, when he marked  
out the foundations of the earth,  
then I was beside him, like a master worker; and I was daily his delight,  
rejoicing before him always,  
rejoicing in his inhabited world  
and delighting in the human race

**GOSPEL READING: *John 1:1-14***

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

#### **POST COMMUNION PRAYER:**

God our creator, by your gift  
the tree of life was set at the heart of the earthly paradise,  
and the bread of life at the heart of your Church:  
may we who have been nourished at your table on earth  
be transformed by the glory of the Saviour's cross  
and enjoy the delights of eternity;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

#### **SERMON (written by The Rector, Canon Roy Woodhams):**

For the second time in 6 weeks, I find myself saying how I'm staggered at some of the anomalies in the compilation of our Lectionary of readings! At Christmas we had John 1:1-14, then 2 weeks later we had part of it, and here we are again, just another month on, and today, we have it yet again!

So, avoiding the temptation to simply repeat the sermon I preached at Christmas Midnight, I'm going to go down a different track today, and I'm going to talk about words!

Words can be very powerful! When used in the wrong way, they have the power to inflict pain, incite hatred and cause long-term harm. It happens within family life, work life, and national life – sadly, we have seen the consequences of it in recent times, in the harmful rhetoric of politicians, and in the 'fake news' which is such a sad part of our society today! And I am sure you can all think of examples from your own experiences of words that have hurt you!

But, on the other hand, words also have the power to affect us in a very positive way – to support, to comfort and to encourage. And, like music, they have the power to lift us to a higher realm, and show us wonderful things, in such a way that nothing else can!

And again, I'm sure we can all think of times when words have had a profound and positive effect on our lives and thinking!

At my first Christmas as a choirboy, some 55 years ago, when I was only 8, I distinctly remember being profoundly influenced by the words (as well as the music) of the hymn which we listened to just now – *'Of the Father's Love Begotten'*!

It's probably the oldest hymn that we sing! Aurelius Prudentius Clemens, who wrote the words, lived through the latter part of the fourth Century, and was a Spanish poet and successful lawyer, who became a judge. He has been described as the "the first great poet of the Latin church."! And the tune, which we still sing, is almost as ancient, dating from 11<sup>th</sup> Century Italy.

The fourth century was a time in history when there were many debates and controversies about religious doctrine. In this hymn, Prudentius applies both his legal and poetic skills to make a case for what has become the orthodox understanding of the Trinity.

From the first line of the first verse, *“Of the Father's love begotten”* (Literally translated, *“Born from the parent's heart before the beginning of world's”*), Prudentius sets forth his argument that the Son has always, is always, and will always be, with God, and with us.

The great nineteenth-century translator of classic Greek and Latin poetry, John Mason Neale, shaped Prudentius' poetry into six stanzas, adding the refrain *“Evermore and evermore”*!

By the time this hymn comes to us, it has travelled an amazing journey through seventeen centuries and at least three countries: a Latin poem from a Spanish poet in the fourth century, a tune from Italy in the eleventh century, and translation from an Anglican in nineteenth-century England!

And in it we find that glorious phrase:

*“By his Word was all created,  
He commanded, and ‘twas done . . . .”*

And there we have it – the *‘Word made flesh’* of today's Gospel, the very Incarnation of the Old Testament concept of God's Wisdom, which we heard expounded in the *‘Hymn to Wisdom’*, which was our first reading.

In creating the universe, God needed a great deal of wisdom, so wisdom was said to be *“with”* God from the beginning. And gradually, through

history, wisdom became thought of more and more as an actual person, and is pictured in some of the wisdom literature of the Old Testament as a young child playing and skipping with God, while God created the universe.

Wisdom was considered to be a female figure, Sophia, and this has continued in many Christian traditions, which regard the Holy Spirit as the female aspect of the Trinity. But in the prologue to his gospel, John takes the idea of Wisdom and applies it to Jesus.

And since Jesus clearly wasn't female, John combines the idea of Wisdom with a Greek idea, the *Logos*, which was thought of in Greek philosophy as the founding principle of the universe. *Logos* is a male noun, and is translated as "*The Word*".

Hence Jesus is "*The Word*" who, for John, was with God from the beginning, from the creation of the world. Hence . . . .

*"By his Word was all created,  
He commanded, and 'twas done . . . ."*

Now, this is all difficult stuff, and John engages with it, in a way that the other three gospel writers don't, by using poetry to make his point! So, rather than explicitly talking about Jesus, he talks instead about "*the Word*" and leaves his listeners to understand at whatever depth they can manage!

So, words are very important. As well as being important in all of the arenas of which I spoke earlier, they are also important in our understanding of God who is *beyond* words and yet is *The Word*! And they are also important to the church of today! If we want future

generations to know anything at all about the *Word of God*, then we need to find words right now, which will inspire them and introduce them to God, in every day terms which they will be able to connect with!

It's a big challenge, but I do believe that how we (the Church of today) deal with it, will make the difference between whether there is or is not a continuing Christian culture in our land!

So, my friends, if words are important, may we have the grace to remember that each time we open our mouths to speak, we are given the means to crush and knock down, and we are given the means to inspire and build up! We each have the opportunity to influence and change other people's thinking and understanding, and we have the means to show them God!

That is an awesome responsibility, and one in which we can only be sustained, through our worship of the Christ, who is God's word made flesh and come amongst us! Amen.

## **WEEKLY PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION:**

### **Church and Christian Ministry:**

- For all those supported by the work of The Bishop of Guildford's Foundation.
- In the Anglican Cycle of Prayer – the Anglican Church in Burundi.
- For our Church Pastoral Assistants and all those who they support.

### **National and World Affairs:**

- For our government and nation at this time of crisis.
- For those whose role it is to deliver Covid vaccinations around the UK, especially in our Village Hall.

- For all who work in education

### **Community and Family:**

- For those who live in Glebe Road and The Precinct.
- For our ecumenical partners in the other churches in Cranleigh.

### **The Sick and those in Need:**

- Tony Black, Ray Corver, Stella Goldsmith, George Hill, Helen and David, Philip Jones, Amy and Dennis Loveless, Libby O'Brien, Brian Pettyfer, Jean Quallington, Jean Sandow, Bert and Eileen Steed, Maureen Steele, Dennis and Rosemary Talbot, Marion Tomkins, Darcy Wigfield, Angela Wild, Henry Young and Nicholas. *(and from Dunsfold and Hascombe: Amanda and Hugh, Tim Bailey, Michael Burt, Sarah Godwin and John Davies, Norman Edsall, William and James Mason, Sally Rivett, Sue Simper, Jacky Williams, Alli, Judy Bolt, Sue and Dennis Evans, Sami Bennewith, Lizzy Laverty)*

And our Archbishops have asked us to use this prayer:

Gracious God,  
as we remember before you the thousands who have died,  
surround us and all who mourn with your strong compassion.  
Be gentle with us in our grief, protect us from despair,  
and give us grace to persevere and face the future with hope  
in Jesus Christ our risen Lord.

### **The Departed:**

- All we have known and loved, and especially Joyce Armin, Doris Cooper, Doris O'nions, Jack Sieber, Mac Walker *(and from Dunsfold and Hascombe: Revd Norman Edsall, Paddy Laverty).*

## **WEEKLY NOTICES:**

**CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR** . . . . We are delighted to announce that Nicola Craven-Smith, who has been our Interim Church Administrator since September, has now been appointed to the permanent post. Congratulations Nicola! We look forward to welcoming her properly into the Church Office when we are able to re-open. In the meantime, she will continue to work from home, and is contactable as in the details on the back page.

**POST-PANDEMIC QUESTIONNAIRE** . . . . Thank you to all those who have already responded to the questionnaire that The Rector sent out week. A reminder that completed questionnaires need to be returned by today.

**RECTORY FETE 2021** . . . . It is hoped to hold a Rectory Fête on Saturday 10th July. With this in mind, and with many of us having spare time on our hands, and perhaps sorting out all those cupboards we haven't looked at for some time, we could put aside some items for the fête, such as bags, scarves, jewellery, and of course new items for the regifting stall. There is also the craft stall and I know many of you are knitting and making things. We could have a bumper craft stall. If anyone has more ideas for what we could do please do not hesitate to contact me on 275643. Sandra Keeping

**CHURCHYARD MOWING** . . . . The team did a grand job last year, despite lockdowns etc. We're hoping that they will feel able to do the same this season - I regard it as socially distanced exercise - but as usual there have been departures for various reasons. We need new volunteers to join in, particularly from our newer and younger parishioners. The commitment is two periods of two hours each between March to October, and I look forward to hearing from anyone interested by the middle of February,

when the rota will be sent out.

Malcolm Keeping [malcolm.twoaks@btinternet.com](mailto:malcolm.twoaks@btinternet.com) 01483 275643

**JOIN YOUR FRIENDS FOR COFFEE AFTER 11AM SERVICE EACH WEEK . . . .**

Are you missing meeting up with friends over coffee after Church? After the success of last week's trial, we will be making it a regular feature to meet on Zoom when the 11am Service ends, for a chat and a catch up! The scheduled Zoom Meeting will be open from 11.45 onwards. **Meeting ID: 830 2040 3902 and the Passcode: 'Coffee'**

**'CONGREGATIONAL COFFEE' ON THURSDAY MORNING EACH WEEK . . . .**

While we are not able to meet in person, you can meet members of the Ministry Team and other friends online (Zoom) over a cup of coffee each Thursday Morning at 10am. **Meeting ID: 819 9819 4645 and the Passcode: 'Thursday'**

**MIDWEEK MORNING PRAYER . . . .** Members of the Ministry Team say Morning Prayer each Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday at 8am. In normal times we meet in Church, but during this lockdown we are meeting on Zoom. If anybody else would like to join us, the Zoom codes are: **Meeting ID: 546 358 461 Passcode: 'MP'**

**TRAI DCRAFT:** Sue Knight is offering Traidcraft goods for sale by appointment or would be willing to deliver to Cranleigh on receipt of an order. She will have catalogues or you can go on line at [traidcraftshop.co.uk](http://traidcraftshop.co.uk) to see the whole range and if she has to order it in, this usually takes about a week. You can pay for any orders by BACS or she will accept cheques. Call Sue on 275032 or 07950 025137.

## **KEEP IN TOUCH:**

**Rector - Revd Canon Roy Woodhams**

*(Day off: Monday)*

Tel: 01483 800655. Email: [roy@stnicolascranleigh.org.uk](mailto:roy@stnicolascranleigh.org.uk)

**Curate - Revd Tim Clifford Hill**

*(Day off: Monday and furloughed Saturday)*

Tel: 01483 276267. Email: [tim@stnicolascranleigh.org.uk](mailto:tim@stnicolascranleigh.org.uk)

**Part time Curate - Revd Rutton Viccajee**

*(Works Wednesday, Friday, Sunday)*

Tel: 01252 910212. Email: [rutton@stnicolascranleigh.org.uk](mailto:rutton@stnicolascranleigh.org.uk)

**Administrator - Nicola Craven-Smith**

*(Works Monday, Wednesday and Thursday 9.30-2.30)*

Tel: 01483 273620. Email: [nicola@stnicolascranleigh.org.uk](mailto:nicola@stnicolascranleigh.org.uk)

**Young People's Minister - Gabrielle Clarke**

*(Currently only working Monday, Thursday and Sunday)*

Tel: 07427 748408. Email: [gabrielle@stnicolascranleigh.org.uk](mailto:gabrielle@stnicolascranleigh.org.uk)

**Church Website:** [www.stnicolascranleigh.org.uk](http://www.stnicolascranleigh.org.uk)

and on **Facebook**.