

ST. NICHOLAS, NEWPORT, LINCOLN, LN1 3DP
Registered Charity Number: 1133977
www.stnicholaslincoln.org.uk
CANDLEMAS
30th January 2022

TODAY

9:00 am Said Eucharist
10:30 am Said Parish Eucharist
Hymns: 2; 110; 317; 113 (omit starred verses)

THIS WEEK

MONDAY

8:45 am Morning Prayer
10:00 am Church open

TUESDAY

8:45 am Morning Prayer
10:00 am Church open

WEDNESDAY

8:45 am Morning Prayer
9:30 am Said Eucharist
10:00 am Church open

THURSDAY

8:45 am Morning Prayer



9.30am-11.30am - ST. NICK'S NIPPERS
Worship & Coffee & Friendship for young
children and those who have care of them.

FRIDAY

10:00 am Church open

SATURDAY

10:00 am Church open
10:30 am ARK – Craft Group

NEXT SUNDAY – 4TH SUNDAY BEFORE LENT

9:00 am Said Eucharist
10:30 am Sung Eucharist

READINGS FOR NEXT WEEK

| <u>SUNDAY 6TH FEBRUARY</u> | <u>WEDS 9TH FEBRUARY</u> |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Isaiah 6:1-8 | 1 Kings 10:1-10 |
| Psalms 138 | Psalms 37:3-6, 30-32 |
| 1 Corinthians 15:1-11 | Mark 7:14-23 |
| Luke 5:1-11 | |

FROM THE ASSOCIATE PRIEST

Dear Friends,

“Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace.”

The Song of Simeon in St. Luke's account of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, which we will hear on Sunday, is familiar to many from its place in the services of Evensong and Compline. When Archbishop Cranmer simplified the seven services of the daily office into two for the Prayer Book, he took the Magnificat from the evening service of Vespers and the Nunc Dimittis from the final service of the day, Compline.

Compline sees sleep as rest but also as a preparation for death, so the other place where the Nunc Dimittis is heard in our worship is in our ministry to the dying and at funeral services. Like many priests, I have said these

words many times at the bedsides of those whose lives were drawing to a close. When I had only been a priest for a few weeks, the Rector was on holiday and I was on my own in the parish. An elderly lady who lived in a care home near the church, became ill suddenly. In the last couple of weeks of her life I would visit to take her the Sacrament or in the evening to say Compline with her. Lena was a retired nursing sister and knew perfectly well that she was dying. As her life drew to a close, she made Simeon's words her own. Steeped for a lifetime in the Scottish Prayer Book, she would have prayed often in one of its litanies for “a holy and happy death, for rest in paradise, and for the perfect vision of the glory of God.” When I celebrated her funeral eucharist, her friends and I recited the Nunc Dimittis for her again as she was carried from the church which had been her spiritual home, the temple where she had met Jesus Sunday by Sunday. I have recited them, or a choir has sung them, for many others since then.

Not everyone I have ministered to as they were dying has had Lena's calm faith and acceptance in the face of what St. Paul calls the “last enemy”, but I have often seen it when ministering to faithful Christians. Trusting that they were going to be with the Lord, not for them Dylan Thomas's “Do not go gentle into that good night. Old age should burn and rave at close of day; Rage, rage against the dying of the light.” They had no need to rage against the dying of the light, because they had found the one who says: “I am the light of the world.”

Our culture fights shy of acknowledging the reality of death. To think or speak of dying is thought morbid. People avoid the word 'death' by using phrases like “she passed.” Funerals have become “celebrations of life.” TV adverts, aimed at the elderly, offer to arrange “non-funerals,” so that families need not be present. Yet, at the same time, one of the great sadnesses of the Covid pandemic has been people dying without their loved ones around them, and severe restrictions of numbers at their funerals. Who can forget those pictures of the Queen sitting alone at Prince Philip's funeral? Perhaps we are beginning to learn anew that, as John Donne said, “No man is an island.” The death of a member of our family, a friend, a neighbour, a colleague, touches us all, and that needs to be marked publicly. To bury the dead is one of the traditional Christian “corporal works of mercy.” It is an acknowledgement of the dignity of every human being, however humble or flawed, as a child of God. To prepare people for death and to accompany them in their dying is part of the ministry of a priest.

In a Christian funeral we do give thanks for the life of one who has died, but their death is set in a wider context. The reality of death is faced: “In the midst of life we are in death, of whom can we seek for succour but of thee, O Lord, who for our sins art justly displeased.” We acknowledge the sense of loss, of separation from one “we love but see no longer,” so we pray for those who mourn and for ourselves. We give thanks for one who has died, but we do not pretend that they were perfect. We pray for them as fellow-sinners, as we trust others will one day pray for

us. All this is a long way from Frank Sinatra's anthem of individualism, "I did it my way."

All that we do in ministry to the dying, and at a funeral, and in our remembrance of the dead, is in the context of the resurrection hope. The Funeral Sentences begin with Jesus' words at the tomb of Lazarus: "I am the resurrection and the life says the Lord. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and every one who lives and believes in me will never die."

So we pray at funerals – but surely not just then: 'Heavenly Father, in your Son Jesus Christ, you have given us a true faith and a sure hope. Strengthen this faith and hope in us all our days, that we may live as those who believe in the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins and the resurrection to eternal life.'

When I think of the deaths of people like Lena, I am reminded of a purple passage in Dom Gregory Dix's classic book 'The Shape of the Liturgy.' He wrote of a 'little ill-spelled, ill-carved epitaph for the fourth century from Asia Minor: "Here sleeps the blessed Chione, who has found Jerusalem, for she prayed much." Not another word is known of Chione, some peasant woman who lived in that vanished world of Christian Anatolia, But how lovely if all that should survive after sixteen centuries were that one had prayed much, so that the neighbours who saw all one's life were sure that one must have found Jerusalem! How lovely if people were able to say of us: "They found Jerusalem for they prayed much."

Yours in Christ,
Fr. Alan

NOTICES

OUR PATTERN OF SERVICES

After discussion at the PCC, it was decided that during the vacancy the normal service pattern will be as follows:

SUNDAY

9:00 am Said Eucharist with Homily

10:30 am Sung Eucharist with Sermon

WEDNESDAY

9.30am Said Eucharist with Homily

The 10.30 am Sunday Eucharist will have a 'family' emphasis once a month. The first of these will be on **Mothering Sunday** (27th March).

The PCC recognised that family services, if they are to be done well and reach the families we have contact with, require a considerable amount of planning, preparation and publicity, on the part of clergy, musicians and others. *Fr. Alan*

COVID UPDATE

With the Government's recent relaxation of Covid-related restrictions, the legal limits on the numbers of people allowed to meet indoors and outdoors have been removed, as have the one metre plus social distancing rules. Face coverings are no longer mandatory in any setting but may be recommended

in enclosed or crowded places, particularly where there is contact with people outside your normal circle of family and friends.

The House of Bishops' Recovery Group issued guidance to parishes on 25th January, which can be viewed in detail by following this link: COVID 19 Guidance v2.4_0.pdf (churchofengland.org) or by visiting <https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance>. If you are unable to access the information electronically but would like to read it, please contact the Parish Office during office hours for a paper copy.

The aforementioned guidance re-iterates that the responsibility for making locally appropriate decisions about how to proceed lies with the incumbent. This applies to acts of worship, to events run by the PCC or church community, and to decisions on whether to hire out spaces or allow other events to proceed. In the absence of the incumbent, that responsibility falls to your Churchwardens, in consultation with the clergy team and the PCC.

At the time of going to press, there has not been an opportunity for the churchwardens and clergy to discuss the latest guidance from the National Church and decide upon our next steps, but there are plans to do so at the next Standing Committee meeting on 7th February. For the moment then, a "steady as she goes" approach seems sensible.

What this means for us in practical terms is that the wearing of face masks is no longer obligatory during worship. Should you choose not to wear a face covering, that decision will be respected. If, given the continued level of infections locally, you decide to continue to protect yourself and others by wearing a mask however, that also will be respected. The sacrament will continue to be administered in one kind only; recipients are encouraged to continue to sanitise their hands prior to receiving and the one way system of circulation will remain. Should you prefer to maintain some distance from the main body of the congregation, the red chairs on the north and south side of the church are reserved for that purpose.

Regardless of personal preferences, the members of St Nick's leadership team are navigating the local situation, conscious of the environment, our community and remembering that, as members within one body, we are called to be responsible to and for one another. Your patience as we work towards any changes is appreciated. *Sue Humphrey*

THE PHOENIX GROUP RISES AGAIN!

Following the Government's recent lifting of Covid restrictions, the Phoenix Group will hold an initial meeting on Monday, 21st February starting at 2pm in the Blenkin Room in the St. Nicholas Centre. This first meeting will be a Photographic Quiz of Lincoln, followed by refreshments. There will be a charge of

£3 per person to cover costs. We would encourage people to wear face masks and use the hand sanitisers provided, and look forward to welcoming you all back. Please spread the word. *Betty Brown*

REMEMBERING THE HOLOCAUST

On Sunday 30th January – today - there will be a Holocaust Memorial Service at St Hugh's, Lincoln, from 3-4 pm. This ecumenical service is being held to commemorate the Holocaust and subsequent genocides. It is an open invitation to all across Lincolnshire.

PARISH INFORMATION

Parish Office

☎ 01522 540614; stnicholaslincoln@gmail.com

Notices for next week's sheet by Wednesday please.

Online & Social Media

🐦 @StNicksLincoln 📘 @stnicholaslincoln

www.stnicholaslincoln.org.uk

READINGS

Sunday 30th January

COLLECT

Almighty and ever-living God, clothed in majesty, whose beloved Son was this day presented in the Temple, in substance of our flesh: grant that we may be presented to you with pure and clean hearts, by your Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

FIRST READING

MALACHI 3:1-5

Thus says the Lord God:

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years.

Then I will draw near to you for judgement; I will be swift to bear witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired workers in their wages, the widow, and the orphan, against those who thrust aside the alien, and do not fear me, says the Lord of hosts.

PSALM

PSALM 24:7-END

Refrain: The Lord of hosts, he is the king of glory.

Lift up your heads, O gates;

be lifted up, you everlasting doors;
and the King of glory shall come in.

'Who is the King of glory?'

'The Lord, strong and mighty,
the Lord who is mighty in battle.' **R**

Lift up your heads, O gates;

be lifted up, you everlasting doors;
and the King of glory shall come in.

'Who is this King of glory?'

'The Lord of hosts,
he is the King of glory.' **R**

SECOND READING

HEBREWS 2:14-END

Since the children share flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death. For it is clear that he did not come to help angels, but the descendants of Abraham. Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

GOSPEL READING

LUKE 2:22-40

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, Mary and Joseph brought Jesus up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, 'Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord'), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, 'a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons.' Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, 'Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.'

And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, 'This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner

thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.’

There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband for seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favour of God was upon him.

POST COMMUNION

Lord, you fulfilled the hope of Simeon and Anna, who lived to welcome the Messiah: may we, who have received these gifts beyond words, prepare to meet Christ Jesus when he comes to bring us to eternal life; for he is alive and reigns, now and for ever. **Amen**

Wednesday 26th January

COLLECT

Almighty God, by whose grace alone we are accepted and called to your service: strengthen us by your Holy Spirit and make us worthy of our calling; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

FIRST READING

2 SAMUEL 24:2, 9-17

The king said to Joab and the commanders of the army, who were with him, ‘Go through all the tribes of Israel, from Dan to Beer-sheba, and take a census of the people, so that I may know how many there are.’ Joab reported to the king the number of those who had been recorded: in Israel there were eight hundred thousand soldiers able to draw the sword, and those of Judah were five hundred thousand.

But afterwards, David was stricken to the heart because he had numbered the people. David said to the Lord, ‘I have sinned greatly in what I have done. But now, O Lord, I pray you, take away the guilt of your servant; for I have done very foolishly.’ When David rose in the morning, the word of the Lord came to the prophet Gad, David’s seer, saying, ‘Go and say to David: Thus says the Lord: Three things I offer you; choose one of them, and I will do it to you.’ So Gad came to David and told him; he asked him, ‘Shall three years of famine come to you on your land? Or will you flee for three months before your foes while they pursue you? Or shall there be three days’ pestilence in your land? Now consider, and decide what answer I shall return to the one who sent me.’ Then David said to Gad, ‘I am in great distress; let us fall into the hand of the Lord, for his mercy is great; but let me not fall into human hands.’

So the Lord sent a pestilence on Israel from that morning until the appointed time; and seventy

thousand of the people died, from Dan to Beer-sheba. But when the angel stretched out his hand towards Jerusalem to destroy it, the Lord relented concerning the evil, and said to the angel who was bringing destruction among the people, ‘It is enough; now stay your hand.’ The angel of the Lord was then by the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite. When David saw the angel who was destroying the people, he said to the Lord, ‘I alone have sinned, and I alone have done wickedly; but these sheep, what have they done? Let your hand, I pray, be against me and against my father’s house.’

PSALM

PSALM 32:1-8

Refrain: Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice in the Lord.

Happy the one whose transgression is forgiven,
and whose sin is covered.

Happy the one to whom the Lord imputes no guilt,
and in whose spirit there is no guile.

For I held my tongue;

my bones wasted away

through my groaning all the day long.

Your hand was heavy upon me day and night;

my moisture was dried up like the drought in
summer. **R**

Then I acknowledged my sin to you
and my iniquity I did not hide.

I said, ‘I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,’
and you forgave the guilt of my sin.

Therefore let all the faithful make their prayers to you
in time of trouble;

in the great water flood, it shall not reach them.

You are a place for me to hide in;

you preserve me from trouble;

you surround me with songs of deliverance. **R**

GOSPEL READING

MARK 6:1-6A

Jesus left that place and came to his home town, and his disciples followed him. On the sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astounded. They said, ‘Where did this man get all this? What is this wisdom that has been given to him? What deeds of power are being done by his hands! Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?’ And they took offence at him. Then Jesus said to them, ‘Prophets are not without honour, except in their home town, and among their own kin, and in their own house.’ And he could do no deed of power there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and cured them. And he was amazed at their unbelief.

Then he went about among the villages teaching.

POST COMMUNION

God of truth, we have seen with our eyes and touched with our hands the bread of life: strengthen our faith that we may grow in love for you and for each other; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**