

# THE CAMEL-ALLEN CHURCHES

WORSHIP AT HOME – SUNDAY 14 FEBRUARY 2021

THE SUNDAY BEFORE LENT



Happy Valentine's Day! May you know God's love today.

As we come to worship, let us pause and be still,  
and acknowledge that wherever we are worshipping today,  
God is with us:  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

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

## Hymn

Love divine, all loves excelling,  
Joy of heaven to earth come down;  
Fix in us thy humble dwelling;  
All thy faithful mercies crown!  
Jesu, thou art all compassion,  
Pure unbounded love thou art;  
Visit us with thy salvation;  
Enter every trembling heart.

Breathe, O breathe thy loving Spirit,  
Into every troubled breast!  
Let us all in Thee inherit;  
Let us find thy promised rest.  
Take away the love of sinning;  
Alpha and Omega be;  
End of faith, as its beginning,  
Set our hearts at liberty.

Come, Almighty to deliver,  
Let us all thy grace receive;  
Suddenly return and never,  
Never more thy temples leave.  
Thee we would be always blessing,  
Serve thee as thy hosts above,  
Pray and praise thee without ceasing,  
Glory in thy perfect love.

Finish, then, thy new creation;  
Pure and spotless let us be.  
Let us see thy great salvation  
Perfectly restored in thee;  
Changed from glory into glory,  
Till in heav'n we take our place,  
Till we cast our crowns before thee,  
Lost in wonder, love, and praise.

## **We make our confession and receive God's forgiveness...**

In penitence and faith we come before you,  
Holy God and say:  
'This is who we are.'

We are the people who long for the new heaven  
and the new earth  
but can't always take the first step towards it.  
**Forgive us gracious God.**  
**Lord have mercy.**

We are those who love your world  
but who too often participate in its destructive patterns of life  
and fail to live up to its beauty and creativity  
**Forgive us gracious God.**  
**Christ have mercy.**

We are the people who commit ourselves to build the  
community of the Gospel  
but we so often betray that hope and fail each other.  
**Forgive us gracious God**  
**Lord have mercy**

We are those who sometimes see the vision for our own lives  
but we are weak and fall far short of the dream  
**Forgive us gracious God**  
**Christ have mercy.**

May the Father of all mercies  
cleanse us from our sins,  
and restore us in his service  
to the praise and glory of his name,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen**

## **We respond to his forgiveness by glorifying God...**

**Gloria** (tune: *Cwm Rhondda - Guide me O thou Great Redeemer*)

Glory be to God in heaven  
Songs of joy and peace we bring:  
Thankful hearts and voices raising  
To creation's Lord we sing  
Lord we thank you:  
Lord we bless you:  
Glory be to God our King (repeat)

Lamb of God who on your shoulders  
bore the load of this world's sin:  
only Son of God the Father  
you have brought us peace within.  
Lord have mercy:  
Christ have mercy:  
Now your glorious reign begin (repeat)

You O Son of God are holy  
You we praise with one accord:  
None in heaven or earth is like you,  
Only you are Christ the Lord:  
with the Father  
and the Spirit  
ever worshipped and adored. (repeat)



### **First Reading:**

**2 Cor 4.3-6**

<sup>3</sup>And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. <sup>4</sup>In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds

of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. <sup>5</sup>For we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake. <sup>6</sup>For it is the God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness', who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.



## Gospel Reading

### Mark 9.2-9 The Transfiguration

<sup>2</sup> Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, <sup>3</sup>and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them. <sup>4</sup>And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus. <sup>5</sup>Then Peter said to Jesus, 'Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.' <sup>6</sup>He did not know what to say, for they were terrified. <sup>7</sup>Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, 'This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!' <sup>8</sup>Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus. <sup>9</sup> As they were coming down the mountain, he ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead.

## Reflection

In our reading from 2 Corinthians we heard of '*the glory of Christ, who is the image of God*', and that God has '*shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*'

*the light of the knowledge of the glory of God* The light switched on to reveal what God is like (cf light behind a stained-glass window) could almost describe this strange little incident in the Gospel. The disciples are on the mountain-top seeing for themselves the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ as if a light has been turned on briefly or a curtain drawn back to reveal another dimension.

And here is good old Peter - jumping in feet first as ever! I'm always amused and sometimes frustrated by the modern desire to take 'selfies', "Just enjoy the moment!" I long to say. It seems people miss the excitement of what is happening or the beauty of the scene by spending all their time capturing it for posterity. Peter is trying to do something similar here. Lets put up a tent and stay here! In other words, Lets freeze this moment, lets record it for posterity so we will always have it - Lets stay here with God in the wonder of this time, lets store away this moment with God and stay here for ever.

But no, Jesus on his way to the cross now, there are tough times ahead and the disciples must move on with him or be left behind in the cold. The glory remains with Jesus, but veiled now, hidden to many, hidden from the disciples too, but because they have seen it once, they know it's there, and it gives them the confidence to go on with him.

We too may have experienced 'mountain-top experiences', times when God seems particularly close; when the light goes on, as it

were, and we *know* he is there and that he loves us. Maybe these have been in great celebration services when the thrill of worshipping with lots of people has lifted us into the glorious presence of God. Maybe in times of quiet contemplation on our own : a walk on the beach at sunset, or the stillness of a misty morning when God' has seemed almost tangible. But great as those times are, we can't pitch a tent and stay there.

Or maybe in these times of uncertainty and restriction we find ourselves longing to be 'back to normal', so we can settle back into our usual routines, comfortable knowing where we are and what we are doing. Such thoughts are only natural and I'm sure we have all thought them, I know I have. However, there is a sense that we cannot go backwards, the 'new normal' will be – different from the old normal! God is moving on, there may be trouble ahead...the cross looms. Thank God there is resurrection too. There will be moments of glory again, but they will be different ones. That is unsettling, scary even, but we take reassurance from what we know to be true: God whose image we have seen reflected in Christ Jesus goes with us –wherever he is leading us.

We are nearly at Lent again - this six-week period, a time set aside to book ourselves in for a spiritual MOT, begins on Wednesday, Ash Wednesday. Along with this service you should have received both a service to use on Wednesday, if you wish, and the first instalment of a leaflet suggesting a 'Prayer a Day for Lent.' I encourage you to set-aside just 10 minutes or so a day, this Lent, to pray these prayers, reflecting on the words and listening for what God might be saying in reply.



### Hymn

Make me a channel of your peace  
Where there is hatred, let me bring your love  
Where there is injury, your pardon Lord  
And where there's doubt, true faith in you

O Master grant that I may never seek  
So much to be consoled as to console  
To be understood as to understand  
To be loved as to love with all my soul

Make me a channel of your peace  
Where there's despair in life, let me bring hope  
Where there is darkness, only light  
And where there's sadness ever joy

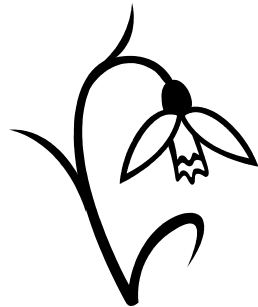
Make me a channel of your peace  
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned  
In giving to all men that we receive  
And in dying that we are born to eternal life

## The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.



## Prayers of intercession

Come, Lord of light, transfigure us,  
Increase our vision and reveal to us your glory.  
May your church seek to transform our darkest places with your light.  
May we seek out the lost and the deprived, the poor and the  
rejected,  
and bring them home to you and your love.  
We pray for the mission and outreach of the whole church,

especially for...

Lord touch us  
**and transfigure us.**

Come, Lord of light, transfigure our towns and villages.  
We pray for areas of danger and places of vice,  
for those in poor housing and for the homeless.  
Lord, transform our places of poverty;  
change our attitudes towards each other for the better.  
Lord touch us  
**and transfigure us.**

Lord of light, come and transfigure our homes,  
That they may be radiant with your presence.  
Make them places of peace and kindness,  
of holiness and once again soon, places of hospitality,  
of grace and goodness;  
that you may be known to be among us.  
Lord touch us  
**and transfigure us.**

Lord of light and love, transfigure our hospitals and nursing homes.  
We pray for all whose lives have been marred by Coronavirus.  
We pray for all who are downcast, grieving or fearful.  
We remember all who await a doctor's diagnosis or treatment.  
We pray for all who seek healing and hope, especially...  
Lord touch us  
**and transfigure us.**

We give thanks for all who have passed beyond death and been  
transformed in your glorious kingdom, remembering....

We pray that in our time, we too may come to the fulness of your presence.

Lord touch us  
**and transfigure us.**

Let the Lord touch you and transform you.  
Let the Lord surround you with peace.

**Amen**



**Hymn** *(tune: Thaxted – I vow to thee my country)*

O God beyond all praising,  
we worship you today  
and sing the love amazing  
that songs cannot repay;  
for we can only wonder  
at every gift you send,  
at blessings without number  
and mercies without end:  
we lift our hearts before you  
and wait upon your word,  
we honour and adore you,  
our great and mighty Lord.

Then hear, O gracious Saviour,  
accept the love we bring,  
that we who know your favour  
may serve you as our king;  
and whether our tomorrows  
be filled with good or ill,  
we'll triumph through our sorrows  
and rise to bless you still:  
to marvel at your beauty  
and glory in your ways,  
and make a joyful duty  
our sacrifice of praise.

*Michael Perry (1942 - 1996)*  
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### **Final prayer and blessing**

The Lord open our eyes to his presence,  
surround us with his great love,  
and fill our days with his glory

And the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,  
be upon us and remain with us,  
and with those whom we love,  
this day and always. **Amen**

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*Prayers of Intercession adapted from David Adam in Radiance of his Glory*  
Compiled by The Revd Angela Cooper