

VICTORY CHAPEL

The Second Sunday After Epiphany



Botley Market Hall
Sermon & Holy Communion
18th January 2026 @ 10am

CALL TO WORSHIP

O Lord, open thou our lips.

And our mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

Serve the LORD with gladness.

Come before his presence with singing.

OPENING PRAISE: Psalm 42 (83)

THE LORD'S PRAYER

OUR Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

THE COLLECT FOR PURITY

ALMIGHTY God, unto whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid; Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who dost govern all things in heaven and earth; Mercifully hear the supplications of thy people, and grant us thy peace all the days of our life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

CONFESSION OF SIN

THE SUMMARY OF THE LAW

Hear what our Lord Jesus Christ saith:

THOU, shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.

ALmighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Maker of all things, Judge of all men; We acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness, Which we, from time to time, most grievously have committed, By thought, word, and deed, Against Thy Divine Majesty, Provoking most justly Thy wrath and indignation against us. We do earnestly repent, And are heartily sorry for these our misdoings; The remembrance of them is grievous unto us; The burden of them is intolerable. Have mercy upon us, Have mercy upon us, most merciful Father; For Thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, Forgive us all that is past; And grant that we may ever hereafter Serve and please Thee In newness of life, To the honour and glory of Thy Name; Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE DECLARATION OF ABSOLUTION

ALmighty God, the Father, who of his great mercy hath promised forgiveness of sins to all them that with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto him; Have mercy upon you; pardon and deliver you from all your sins; confirm and strengthen you in all goodness; and bring you to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

CONSECRATION TO GOD

THE OLD TESTAMENT READING.....*Jonah 1:1-17*

Here beginneth the first verse of the first chapter of the Book of Jonah

NOW the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, ²Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me. ³But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD, and went down to Joppa; and he found a ship going to Tarshish: so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD. ⁴But the LORD sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken. ⁵Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every man unto his god, and cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea, to lighten it of them. But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship; and he lay, and was fast asleep. ⁶So the shipmaster came to him, and said unto him, What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not. ⁷And they said every one to his fellow, Come, and let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this evil is upon us. So they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah. ⁸Then said they unto him, Tell us, we pray thee, for whose cause this evil is upon us; What is thine occupation? and whence comest thou? what is thy country? and of what people art thou? ⁹And he said unto them, I am an Hebrew; and I fear the LORD, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry land. ¹⁰Then were the men exceedingly afraid, and said unto him. Why hast thou done this? For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the LORD, because he had told them. ¹¹Then said they unto him, What shall we do unto thee, that the sea may be calm unto us? for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous. ¹²And he said unto them, Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you: for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you. ¹³Nevertheless the men rowed hard to bring it to the land; but they could not: for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous against them. ¹⁴Wherefore they cried unto the LORD, and said, We beseech thee, O LORD, we beseech thee, let us not perish for this

man's life, and lay not upon us innocent blood: for thou, O LORD, hast done as it pleased thee. ¹⁵So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased from her raging. ¹⁶Then the men feared the LORD exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the LORD, and made vows. ¹⁷Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

HYMN OF EXALTATION: Psalm 75 (143)

THE HOLY GOSPEL.....*Matthew 12:38-41*

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to St. Matthew

Glory be to Thee, O Lord.

Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee.³⁹ But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: ⁴⁰For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. ⁴¹The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

THE NICENE CREED

WE BELIEVE in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, And of all things visible and invisible:

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, Begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of very God, Begotten, not made, Being of one substance with the Father, By whom all things were made; Who for

us men, and for our salvation came down from heaven, And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the virgin Mary, And was made man, And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried, And the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures, And ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of the Father. And he shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead: Whose kingdom shall have no end.

And We believe in the Holy Ghost, The Lord and giver of life, Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spake by the Prophets.

And We believe one catholick and apostolick Church. We acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins. And We look for the Resurrection of the dead, And the life of the world to come. Amen.

THE SERMON HYMN: All Creatures Of Our God & King (344)

THE SERMON: Jonah 1

OFFERTORY SENTENCES

Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do unto them; for this is the Law and the Prophets. *St. Matth. vii.*

HYMN OF THANKSGIVING: Psalm 84 (155)

DOXOLOGY

**Praise God from Whom all blessings flow,
Praise Him all creatures here below,
Praise Him above ye heavenly host,
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

PRAYER FOR THE CHURCH

Let us pray for the whole state of Christ's Church militant here in earth.

ALMIGHTY and everliving God, who by thy holy Apostle hast taught us to make prayers, and supplications, and to give thanks for all men; We humbly beseech thee most mercifully to accept our alms and oblations, and to receive these our prayers, which we offer unto thy Divine Majesty; beseeching thee to inspire continually the Universal Church with the spirit of truth, unity, and concord: And grant, that all they who do confess thy holy Name may agree in the truth of thy holy Word, and live in unity, and godly love.

We beseech thee also, so to direct and dispose the hearts of all Christian Rulers, that they may truly and impartially administer justice, to the punishment of wickedness and vice, and to the maintenance of thy true religion, and virtue.

Give grace, O heavenly Father, to all Bishops and Curates, that they may both by their life and doctrine set forth thy true and lively Word, and rightly and duly administer thy holy Sacraments. And to all thy people give thy heavenly grace; and especially to this congregation here present; that, with meek heart and due reverence, they may hear, and receive thy holy Word; truly serving thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of their life.

And we most humbly beseech thee, of thy goodness, O Lord, to comfort and succour all those who, in this transitory life, are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity. And we also bless thy holy Name for all thy servants departed this life in thy faith and fear; beseeching thee to give us grace so to follow their good examples, that with them we may be partakers of thy heavenly kingdom. Grant this, O Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our only Mediator and Advocate. **Amen.**

COMMUNION

YE that do truly and earnestly repent you of your sins, and are in love and charity with your neighbours, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking from henceforth in his holy ways; Draw near with faith, and take this holy Sacrament to your comfort.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.

It is meet and right so to do.

IT is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto Thee, O Lord, Holy Father, Almighty, Everlasting God.

THEREFORE with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify Thy glorious Name; evermore praising Thee, and saying, **Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of Thy glory: Glory be to Thee, O Lord most High. Amen.**

WE do not presume to come to this Thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in Thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under Thy Table. But Thou art the same Lord, whose property is always to have mercy: Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of Thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink His blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by His body, and our souls washed through His most precious blood, and that we may evermore dwell in Him, and He in us. Amen.

ALMIGHTY God, our heavenly Father, who of Thy tender mercy didst give Thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the Cross for our redemption; who made there (by His one oblation of Himself once offered) a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world; and did institute, and in His holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that His precious death, until His coming again; Hear us, O merciful Father, we most humbly beseech Thee; and grant that we receiving these Thy creatures of bread and wine, according to Thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of His death and passion, may be partakers of His most blessed Body and Blood: who, in the same night

that He was betrayed, (a) took Bread; and, when He had given thanks, (b) He brake it, and gave it to His disciples, saying, Take, eat, (c) this is My Body which is given for you: Do this in remembrance of Me. Likewise after supper He (d) took the Cup; and, when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of this; for this (e) is My Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you and for many for the remission of sins: Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of Me. Amen.

THE Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was broken for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life. Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on Him in thy heart by faith with thanksgiving.

THE Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life. Drink this in remembrance that Christ's Blood was shed for thee, and be thankful.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

ALMIGHTY and everliving God, we most heartily thank Thee, for that Thou dost vouchsafe to feed us, who have duly received these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of Thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ; and dost assure us thereby of Thy favour and goodness towards us; and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of Thy Son, which is the blessed company of all faithful people; and are also heirs through hope of Thy everlasting kingdom, by the merits of the most precious death and passion of Thy dear Son. And we most humbly beseech Thee, O heavenly Father, so to assist us with Thy grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as Thou hast prepared for us to walk in; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with Thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, world without end. Amen.

THE GLORIA

GLORY be to God on high, and in earth peace, good will towards men. We praise thee, we bless thee, we worship thee, we glorify thee, we give thanks to thee for thy great glory, O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty.

O Lord, the only begotten Son Jesu Christ; O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayer. Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us.

For thou only art holy; thou only art the Lord; thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

COMMISSION

THE BLESSING

THE peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord: And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be amongst you, and remain with you always. Amen.

HYMN: The Son Of God Goes Forth To War (666)

DISMISSAL

Minister: Let us go forth, in the Name of Christ.

All: Thanks be to God.

ON THE CALENDAR:

Church Lunch & Baby Shower – Today

Bible Study – Tuesday, 20th January @8pm, Zoom (Genesis 13)

Seminar Series – 25th January (Darren)

Sermon Notes (Jonah 1)

Introduction

- We should start by asking why certain incidents & stories are recorded in the Bible.
- Why did God choose to record a story about a man swallowed up by a fish?
- Often we can be helped by references or allusions in the New Testament.
- In this case there are many, with the NT referring or alluding to Jonah many times..

References to Jonah in the New Testament

- Jonah is among the most frequently referenced OT narratives in the NT.
- When asked for a “sign” by scribes and Pharisees in Matthew 12, Jesus cites Jonah.
- He says no other sign shall be given to them, as they are a perverse generation.
- As Jonah was in the fish, so too would the son of man be in the heart of the earth.
- In Luke’s Gospel, Jesus says that Jonah was also a sign to the Ninevites.

Echoes of Jonah in the New Testament

- There are then echoes of the story of Jonah in the New Testament.
- In Matthew 8, we have the incident where Jesus is in a ship when a tempest hits.
- Like Jonah, he is asleep, and like Jonah he is awoken by a fearful crew.
- Yet unlike Jonah, he doesn’t throw himself overboard, but merely speaks.
- His word brings calm, and his disciples are in fear – just as the crew in Jonah.
- At the end of the book of Acts, we find another echo of the story.
- This time, Paul is on his way to the heart of another empire – Rome.
- Yet unlike Jonah, he has every intention of getting there, and preaching the Gospel.
- A tempest arises, and the crew is in great fear.
- But as they start to try to leave the ship, Paul stops them.
- He tells them that the only way they can be saved is if everyone stays on the ship.

Allusions to Jonah in the New Testament

- There are also allusions to the book of Jonah in the NT.
- The clearest one is the Parable of the Prodigal Son.
- It echoes the ending of Jonah, with an unresolved question.
- Are you, Jonah, going to rejoice in God’s grace towards the Ninevites?
- Are you, elder brother, going to rejoice in God’s grace and go in and join the party?

The Story (Chapter 1)

- God commands Jonah to “arise” and go to Nineveh, to cry against it for its evil.
- Jonah “arises”, but then goes down, down, down, and down.
- Down to Joppa; Down to the boat; Down in the ship; Down to the fish.
- This downward movement symbolises the trajectory of death from disobedience.
- When the storm comes, we find that Jonah is highly orthodox: he knows his Bible.
- He openly states that his God is the only God: who made sea and land.
- And yet (irony alert) he’s trying to flee from him!
- When Jonah proposes they cast him into the sea, we can speculate on his motives.
- It could be that he is identifying himself as a scapegoat (see Leviticus 16).
- Or it could be that he is still trying to flee from God.
- But what we can be sure of is that repentance doesn’t seem to be on the menu.
- But here we have another irony: even his disobedience is used by God.
- The sailors come to fear Yahweh, and repent – offering sacrifices and vows..

The Big Question: Why Does Jonah Flee?

- Chapter 1 doesn’t answer the question of why Jonah flees.
- Some think he is a nationalist who doesn’t think salvation is for non-Israelites.
- But there’s more to it, and it’s connected to the Song of Moses (Deuteronomy 32).
- In that Song, Moses talks about what would happen if Israel continues to rebel.
- And in verse 21, God says that he would have mercy on another nation or people.
- And that Israel would then be destroyed and scattered.
- Jonah gets this, and so his problem is not just that mercy might come to Nineveh.
- It’s that mercy coming to Nineveh would be a sign of judgement coming to Israel.
- But this is a totally skewed way of thinking.
- Just as Jonah on the ship could have repented and then seen the crew converted.
- The conversion of the Ninevites could have been met with repentance by Israel.
- Sadly, that didn’t happen & 40 years later, Assyria sacked Israel, scattering its people.
- This is why it is a sign in Jesus’s generation.
- 40 years after rejecting the sign of Jonah – Christ in the grave – Rome destroyed it.
- Ultimately, this book is about this:
- Do we rejoice in God’s free grace to others; or do we begrudge it?