

# Worship for Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> February    Second Sunday in Lent

## Welcome

Welcome to worship on this second Sunday in Lent. Today we consider the journey of life as it was experienced by Abraham and Sarah and Peter in conversation with Jesus. Our journey at the moment is difficult even though there may be some glimmers of light at the end of the tunnel. We pray that God will walk with us as we continue to travel through Lent towards the glorious light of Easter.

O God, our God, you fulfil all your promises,  
and so we turn to you in prayer:

**for you have not hidden your face from us.**

Thank you that we are your offspring,

**for you have fulfilled your promise to us.**

As we remember your faithfulness and patience with us:

**teach us to be like you,**

that we may seek you and praise you.

**Amen**

**Hymn**        New every morning is the love

## Prayers

God of covenant and cross, you come alongside us and call us to follow, to lay down all that belongs in the past, all possessions, practices and prejudices, so that we might lay hold of all that you promise.

God of covenant and cross, you come alongside us and call us to follow, to take up our cross of our own free will, to carry it to the end that only you know, so that we might lay hold of all that you promise

God of Abraham and Sarah, **we rejoice that you know us each by name.**

God of young and old, **we rejoice that you love us all the same.**

God of promise and potential, **we ask your forgiveness for our doubt and faithlessness.**

God of all the nations of the earth, **we ask your forgiveness for our arrogance and selfishness.**

Change not only our names but our hearts. **Bless us and others through us,**

to the glory of your name.

**Amen**

## Reading

Genesis 17: 1-7, 15,16

Mark 8: 27-33

## Reflection

**It was a wonderful moment!** – (Peter's thoughts)

It was a wonderful moment, I really thought I'd cracked it. After all the uncertainty, all the questions, all the confusion, I finally believed I understood who he was. "You're the Messiah!" I told him, and he beamed at me with such delight that I felt my heart would burst. No one else had grasped it you see, not properly.

They wondered, of course, but like so many others they were still guessing, groping in the dark.

He might as well have been Elijah or John for all they knew. I was different, and Jesus knew it.

"Blessed are you," he said, "for God has revealed this to you and not man." What an accolade!

But then it all went wrong, just when I felt I'd arrived the bubble burst, and with a vengeance!

I suppose I got carried away, never stopped to think. Typical of me really. It's just that it came as such a shock, him going on like that about the future, everything he had to suffer, all doom and gloom, even talking of death itself.

I wasn't having any of it. "Not likely!" I shouted. "No way!" I meant no harm, I just didn't think such things could happen to the Messiah, but you should have seen his face, the anger, the disappointment.

Satan, he called me! Can you believe that?

Me, his right hand man, the one who'd just hit the nail on the head, the pick of the bunch, so I thought-Satan!

I was hurt at the time, cut to the heart if I'm honest, but I can see now, all too clearly, that he was right and I was wrong. I still had so much to learn, so much to understand, and I needed a reprimand, a stern hand, if I was to progress any further.

I'd only just begun to glimpse the truth and if I'd have had my way it would have meant him denying everything he stood for. He was the Messiah but not in the way I meant it; he had come to establish his kingdom, but in very a different way than we expected. His was the way of service, of sacrifice, or self-denial, offering his life for the life of the world.

I see that now and I marvel at his love, but what I marvel at even more is that even when I understood him so little, he understood me so much.

Peter marvelled at Jesus' love for him, even when things were difficult. Even when it seemed they disagreed. Abraham and Sarah were prepared to do what God wanted them to do, even if it didn't seem to make sense to them.

In both of their cases the promise wasn't fulfilled immediately, they had to wait until God's time was right. They had to continue to journey with him, on the difficult path.

We are still on a difficult journey, the news is positive, it looks like things are starting to open up, but along with that comes uncertainty and much apprehension for those who feel vulnerable.

There are many things we can't be certain of as things move forward but the one thing we can be certain of is that however long and hard the journey may be he will be there beside us.

"The journey of life may be easy, may be hard, but with Christ at my side I'll do battle as I ride 'gainst the foe that would lead me astray."

These are the opening words of a hymn many used to sing in school and so as we reflect on Peter's faith, and Abraham and Sarah's willingness to serve let us listen to those words now.

**Music**                      The journey of life

### **Prayers**

God of grace, trusting in Your promises, confident of Your love, we bring our prayers for others to You today.

Let us think about people in various situations and in the silence that follows pray for them:

People who are hungry, remembering the increased use of food banks and the rise of food poverty in our country, giving thanks for initiatives that ensure meals are provided for children.

Some people are homeless, without shelter or adequate clothing. We think of how varied their circumstances have been during this time of Coronavirus. We remember the work of care vans, shelters, charities and all who help people out of homelessness

Many people face times of hardship in these days: people whose jobs have gone, businesses facing collapse, families worried about paying the rent or mortgage. We think of initiatives designed to offer support and remember those in government, local and national, whose decisions affect the lives of many.

People are unwell or mentally distressed at this time because of coronavirus or other illnesses, whether at home or in hospital. Let us also remember all who care giving thanks for their dedication and skills, thankful for the work of scientists and those in charge of the logistics as they make vaccines available, remembering especially people in poorer nations.

Let us also take some moments to bring the private prayers of our hearts, letting our cry come to God, knowing that God is listening

These prayers we offer to You, God of Grace, God of Promises kept. By the strength Your Spirit gives, may we journey with Jesus into life in all its fulness, that Your Kingdom of love and justice may be known all the more among us and in Your world, and many may see Jesus in all His glory.

### **Lord's Prayer**

#### **Offering**

Lord, we thank for Your faithfulness. Thank you that we can always trust in You. You are an abundant God and out of Your great mercy you have given us so much. We give you this offering today. With it we worship You and give our whole selves to You. Please now take it and use it for Your kingdom and Your glory.      **Amen**

#### **Hymn**

Great is thy faithfulness

#### **Blessing**

God has called us to come.

Jesus tells us to go.

So let us go in the power of the Spirit and know that God goes with us.

**Amen**