

ALTON BAPTIST CHURCH

e-Service

Sunday 28 February 2021

We are going up to Jerusalem

Welcome

Our Lord leads and guides us all, as He has done in the preparation of this Service; and we will all receive a blessing. So, wherever you are let us begin.

Opening Prayer

O Lord we ask that you give us open minds and hearts as we come to You at this time of worship with You and others. That you will strengthen our belief in You as we listen to the YouTube videos, read your Word, speak with you in our prayers and as we consider what Your Word has to say to us to encourage and enrich our lives.

Our 1st hymn

This hymn appears in our hymn book as listed as a Christmas and an Easter hymn. It bridges the two major Christian festivals and it is good to remind ourselves that Jesus left His heavenly throne to come down to earth to live as one of us.

Thou didst leave Thy throne

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w1Bryvmvz_Q

Prayers of Praise and Forgiveness

- **We thank you for coming to earth to save us from our sins.**
- **For your mercies and provisions for daily needs.**
- **That you will forgive us for our sins.**

Reading for today - Matthew 20:17-19

Jesus Predicts His Death a Third Time

¹⁷ Now Jesus was going up to Jerusalem. On the way, he took the Twelve aside and said to them, ¹⁸ **"We are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of**

Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death ¹⁹and will hand him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified. On the third day he will be raised to life!”

2nd hymn

In our second hymn we need to remind ourselves of what kind of man is this that would come to earth and what kind of love that he was going to sacrifice His life for us?! Who today on earth would give their life for us?

What kind of love is this

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nTsfZnOlReo>

Intercessory Prayers

- **We need to continue to pray for our previous minister Chris and his wife Ruth who are both ill she following a severe stroke. We pray that Our Lord in knowing their wishes - His will be done.**
- **Guidance for our spiritual and civic leaders as we begin the route out of this lockdown.**
- **Safety for those of our ‘emergency services’ / NHS *et al* that they are kept safe from COVID-19 and physical attacks by people.**
- **We need to pray for ourselves and the way forward for ABC.**

3rd hymn

This hymn again reminds us of His love to us and I make no apology at repeating this attribute of Jesus. This time His love is compared to the vastness of an ocean. When we visit Jo’s brother and wife in Swanage we often go for a walk on the cliffs and look across the Channel; that looks so vast.

Here is love vast as the ocean

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v8YOPj5TnUM>

Let us look at His word.

We are going up to Jerusalem

When our Lord guided me to this topic in early January, little did I know how appropriate it would be for the Sunday after Boris had told us the timetable for the resumption of our normal lives? For many of us this will include our going on earthly journeys; just like Jesus. And of course, Jesus’ journey was both an ‘earthly’ one and a ‘spiritual’ one that would have the

greatest consequences for humanity. So we will consider 'His' and 'our' journeys both 'earthly' and 'spiritual'.

In journeys, we need 1) destination? 2) route? 3) purpose? 4) companions? 5) who are we meeting? (More could be added but these will suffice.)

1) destination? Jesus always knew his ultimate earthly goal. Matthew records that moment when Jesus sets His sights on Jerusalem for that fateful journey. He says this with clarity and purpose.

What destination for Our Lord's work are we planning, doing, or have done? In all that we do for our Lord, we need to have a clear goal in mind. Take for example our praying to our Lord on behalf of those who seek our help. This was first devised many years ago by Robin in the form of printed cards that we delivered through peoples' doors. Now online via our website to a potential 7.5B recipients. I am sure one of them is a Kiwi being our furthest neighbour.

2) route? The first journey by my wife and I will be to our son who lives in Northamptonshire. There are many routes and we usually chose one on a whim. Ok, Jesus in travelling to Jerusalem had few choices of route and we may on some occasions face the same. In many activities we do for our Lord we often take the well-used route; but do explore other routes. Look, a year ago this Service was broadcast to those who physically attended ABC church on Sunday morning; say around 15. Yet today this eService is reaching three times that number by being distributed using email; and many more by being posted on our website. Again suggested by Robin our Secretary. Just think about what Jesus would have done with the internet? With lockdown, we were forced to confront a new route for maintaining contact with our fellowship, and some of us also meet via Zoom to conduct this eService.

3) purpose? Whatever we do - we need to do it for a purpose.

Jesus clearly set out His purpose.

¹⁷ Now Jesus was going up to Jerusalem. On the way, he took the Twelve aside and said to them, ¹⁸ **"We are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death ¹⁹ and will hand him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified. On the third day he will be raised to life!"**

This could not be clearer and we will deal with this in the weeks ahead as we come up to Easter. Our e-Services are to enable us to reach out to all who wish to learn and hear about Christian Service and be encouraged on

our walk with our Lord. Our prayerline is to share others burdens and petition our Lord.

4) companions? Generally, we can choose our companions and this makes for a pleasant journey. But the exception is on public transport, yet we can often take the opportunity to spread the Word when are sat together for 14 hours on that long haul flight! Jesus went with His disciples and His other followers; they would have made an impression. Everyone we meet is an opportunity to share Jesus.

5) who are we meeting? False accusers and executioners! These were the characters Jesus was going to meet, but few of us will ever face this fate. Hopefully, a welcoming crowd. But yet in His service, many of us have experienced hostility; why not - the devil opposes our Lord's work. The Barnabas Fund for the persecuted church daily tells us of Christians being abused and killed for their faith in many countries. It is a reality now.

Few of us would go on this journey of Jesus, yet I would suggest that many of us have been and are going on this journey. Whenever we set out on a journey to serve our Lord we sacrifice earthly pleasures. Time and money spent on our Lord's work is not spent on nights out or on paradise island holidays. Time whilst at that Christian visit or club, with people opposing and abusing us, is time not lazying around watching TV.

If you want an example of journeys undertaken by people in the Bible one of the best examples of faithfulness is that of Ruth. If you have not done so please do read Ruth and be encouraged.

Why do we do His will?

Because, **We are going up to Jerusalem.**

4th Hymn

His has been risen for nearly two millennia. So we cannot leave without reminding ourselves He is NOT dead. He, Jesus Christ Our Lord and Saviour is RISEN and ALIVE amongst us. Let us raise the roof!!!

Christ is risen, hallelujah

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nzy7jFNUc3w>

Closing Prayer

Revelation 4:11

**11 'You are worthy, our Lord and God,
to receive glory and honour and power,
for you created all things,
and by your will they were created
and have their being.'**