

Parish of St. Thomas, Apostle & Martyr, Ipswich

Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity - 27th September 2020

Today, Malcolm Gibbs will be licensed as Evangelist at
Bury St Edmunds Cathedral at 6pm

Collect:

God of the church, we thank you that you give gifts to us that we may work together in the service of your Son. Bless all in your church today, lay and ordained, that we may be firm in faith, yet humble before you, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



Psalm 78.1-7

1 Give ear, O my people, to my teaching; incline your ears to the words of my mouth.

2 I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings from of old,

3 things that we have heard and known, that our ancestors have told us.

4 We will not hide them from their children; we will tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord, and his might, and the wonders that he has done.

5 He established a decree in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our ancestors to teach to their children;

6 that the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and rise up and tell them to their children,

7 so that they should set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments;

A reading from the letter to the Ephesians (4.4-13) There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all. But each of us was given grace according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore it is said, 'When he ascended on high he made captivity itself a captive; he gave gifts to his people.'

(When it says, 'He ascended', what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is the same one who ascended far above all the heavens, so that he might fill all things.) The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. *This is the word of the Lord.*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke (6.12-19)

Now during those days he went out to the mountain to pray; and he spent the night in prayer to God. And when day came, he called his disciples and chose twelve of them, whom he also named apostles: Simon, whom he named Peter, and his brother Andrew, and James, and John, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James son of Alphaeus, and Simon, who was called the Zealot, and Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.

He came down with them and stood on a level place, with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea, Jerusalem, and the coast of Tyre and Sidon. They had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases; and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. And all in the crowd were trying to touch him, for power came out from him and healed all of them.

This is the gospel of the Lord. Praise to you, o Christ.

Reflection: Malcolm Gibbs writes about the ministry of an Evangelist and why he feels called to it.

What is an evangelist? It is a word that may make you sceptical yet it is an integral Christian ministry. When you hear the word you may think of Billy Graham, for example. Or a sole figure, brave and hardy, standing on the Cornhill equipped with bible in hand shouting 'repent of your sins' or quoting bible verses completely out of context. But that is not my role. I can assure you: I will not be standing and shouting on the Cornhill or anywhere else.

Evangelists are one of the primary biblical ministries and have been recognised within the Church of England for many years. They enable others and tell the Good News by word and deed. They can minister in various contexts. They have a desire to talk about faith and church, and to encourage others to do so also.

Some of the traditions of the church, like ours, have not had a licensed evangelist in the past, and may not even have heard of this important ministry. We all know of priests, deacons, curates, lay readers, elders. They have been part of our church life and worship for many year, but evangelists? Evangelist is not a new ministry in our diocese. The role already exists in some churches. As I said it is a biblical ministry mentioned several times in scripture. For example, in our first reading today, the letter to the Ephesians, 4.11. This was written in the early days of the Church when things were beginning to get organised and structured. *"The gifts he [Christ] gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip [his people] for works of [service], so that the body of Christ may be built up."*

This verse is an example of how important evangelists are. Notice that evangelists come before pastors and teachers. The role is bringing and nurturing people to faith, and the work of pastors and teachers comes later. The evangelist sows the seed and encourages growth. When roots are formed and buds begin to grow, then pastors and teachers provide the nourishment to grow strong in faith.

Across our diocese, Licensed Evangelists minister in church groups, pubs, within new housing estates and run courses like Alpha and Faith Pictures. Some are involved in running Fresh Expressions like Café Church or are involved in chaplaincy, online church services and outreach. They are supported locally as part of a diocesan team and can join the Church Army Mission Community nationally.

So why have I been called to serve this parish as a Licensed Evangelist? I feel called to share the good news about Jesus! I have attended this church and been part of this church community for many years. I love and care about the church and feel that I must tell others how good it is to be part of a loving caring church family and community. Faith has been an important part of my life's journey, going through each day with Christ beside me who listens, speaks, supports us and befriends us without any qualifications and conditions. How wonderful is that! I don't want to keep this to myself, but I want to tell others and spread the good news. And, I feel called to encourage others to do likewise. My faith has been such an important gift in my life, that I want to go out and tell others about the wonders of having real and meaningful faith.

This leads me onto to a fundamental question: what is the church? Is it about bricks and mortar? Yes, it is a building, a haven and a place to meet friends and huddle together. But, church is not only the church building; first of all, it is you and me; it is the people! Bricks and mortar do not talk. They have no feeling. They do not communicate directly with humans. But we do. We can talk. We can listen. We all have feelings. We know how it feels to be followers of Christ and to have faith. The building cannot do that, but each of us has that the responsibility and mission to do this. We may not all be called to be evangelist, but we are 100% called to witness.

My role as the evangelist is encourage, to listen and enable each one of us to talk more easily and clearly about belonging to the church family. When someone asks you: 'why do you go to church?' 'how can you believe in something you cannot see or hear?' - what would you say? Those who attended the Faith pictures course recently may have grown in confidence to talk more openly about how good it is to have faith and to follow Jesus. We will be doing another 'talking faith course' in the next few months, and I will be encouraging those who have not been before to join. Alpha is another way to bring people to faith in a gentle, caring and friendly way. A new Alpha course will be starting soon in our church.

I want to end with the words of my favourite hymn, 'What a friend with have in Jesus'. It means so much to me and rings so true of my experience of faith. The words talk about faith in a plain and almost childlike way, reminding us that we are all children of God.

Malcolm Gibbs

God is love. Those who live in love live in God, and God lives in them.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

Here are the words of two hymns you may like to sing or pray this week:

1 What a friend we have in Jesus,
all our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry
everything to God in prayer!
O what peace we often forfeit,
O what needless pain we bear,
all because we do not carry
everything to God in prayer!

2 Have we trials and temptations?
Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged;
take it to the Lord in prayer!
Can we find a friend so faithful
who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every weakness;
take it to the Lord in prayer!

3 Are we weak and heavy laden,
cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Savior, still our refuge--
take it to the Lord in prayer!
Do your friends despise, forsake you?
Take it to the Lord in prayer!
In his arms he'll take and shield you;
you will find a solace there.

Joseph M. Scriven (b. Seapatrik, County Down, Ireland, 1819; d. Bewdley, Rice Lake, ON, Canada, 1886),

1 Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;
naught be all else to me, save that thou art--
thou my best thought by day or by night,
waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.

2 Be thou my wisdom, and thou my true word;
I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord;
thou my great Father, I thy true child;
thou in me dwelling, and I with thee one.

3 Be thou my battle shield, sword for my fight;
be thou my dignity, thou my delight,
thou my soul's shelter, thou my high tow'r:
raise thou me heav'n-ward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.

4 Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise,
thou mine inheritance, now and always:
thou and thou only, first in my heart,
High King of heaven, my treasure thou art.

5 High King of heaven, my victory won,
may I reach heaven's joys, O bright heav'n's Sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

Source: *Trinity Psalter Hymnal #446*

*Call this number ↓ for free, to
listen to hymns being sung, prayers,
or reflections. Give it a go, it's a lovely
way to worship from home!*



A free phone line of hymns,
reflections and prayers

Notices:

Congratulations to Malcolm who will be licenced as an Evangelist today at 6pm at the Cathedral in Bury St Edmunds by Bishop Martin. **Livestream at 6pm from <https://www.facebook.com/stedscathedral/>** Malcom talks about his calling and this ministry in place of the sermon today. We pray that God will richly bless his ministry among us.

Electoral Roll: The new roll is available for inspection today.

APCM: 11 October at 11 am after the Eucharist in Church and on ZOOM

Harvest: 4 October—For Harvest giving see last week's newsletter

Please pray for:

Those with chronic or long-term illness: Eric Dickerson, Rosemary, Jenny, Andrew Barfield, Kathy Steele, Frank D., Andrew Derrett, Peggy, Natacha, Christine, Stephen, Samantha, Rex, Margaret Christian

Those undergoing treatment or currently ill: Emily, Gloria Elmer, Helen Harlow, Jean Dominy, Leslie Bloomfield, Katie (cancer), Jim, Alice (Joan's grandson's wife), Vincent Lightbody, Colin Wells, Trish, Roger Dickerson

All who are affected by the Coronavirus in the UK and around the world: *For all who have lost their jobs due to Covid19; all who are despairing. For all who have lost their lives & livelihoods, the injured, the bereaved.*

For our government & MPs', and local councillors: for honesty in politics, for wisdom and justice for all. For refuges across the world & diplomates and peace makers, working to end conflicts

Those who have recently died, and their families mourning their loss: Gwen Strike (Phyllis' sister)

Sunday Worship & other Worship resources on the Church Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/sthomasipswich/>

27th September—Trinity 16 no video—livestream of Eucharist on facebook

10 am: Eucharist & ZOOM Worship & chat

Tuesday 29th September

7.30pm Meditation Group livestream on Facebook/StThomasPilgrimCommunity

Wednesday, 30th September, 10am

Eucharist in Church with livestream on Facebook/StThomasipswich

Pray for members of the St Thomas Congregation (each week we will include a dozen names)

Sylvia & Russell Dickerson, Susan Dickerson, Amanda with Luke & Ruth, Lucy Drake, Susan Dunn & Reuben, Caren, Patrick, Emma-Louise, William & Daniel



For Joanne & Patrick, to be married on 1 October



Birthdays this week:

Helen Pratt (30th)

**YOUR SUPPORT NEEDED FOR NWIPSWICH
FOODBANK organised by the Big Local Trust:**

Please drop non-perishable food at Castlehill Community Centre, Highfield Road on **MONDAYS** between 9.30 and 11.00am.

Church website:

<http://sthomasipswich.org.uk/>

Please note: The NEW website is up!

Contacts:

Priest in charge: Revd Jutta Brueck
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Email: jutta.brueck@cofesuffolk.org

Jutta's days off are: Fridays & Saturdays

Assistant Curate: Revd Cat Connolly
m: 07530 412988

**If you would like to chat,
please do give us a ring:**

← Revd Jutta or Rev Cat

Roger Elmer 07810 274586

Gloria Elmer 745590

Sylvia Dickerson 07903 739487

Malcolm Gibbs 07906 663530

Mary Bullass 625135

Rev Jackie 07962 172639

Revd Pat 464748