

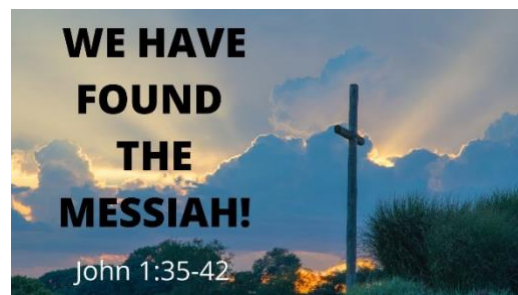


The Central Norfolk Methodist Circuit

Sunday 18th January 2026: 2nd Sunday after Epiphany

Theme for today is "We've found the Messiah!"

Prepared by Elsie Warby – Local Preacher



Opening words:

Lamb of God, light of the nations, you call us to yourself, that we might find our home in you. Open our eyes, that we might see. Open our ears, that we might listen. Open our hearts, that we may abide in you, and you in us. Amen.

Hymn 51: Great is Thy Faithfulness

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r4ox4es1jo8>

Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father,
There is no shadow of turning with Thee;
Thou changest not, thy compassions, they fail not
As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be.

*Great is Thy faithfulness! Great is Thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided
Great is Thy faithfulness," Lord, unto me!*

Summer and winter, and springtime and harvest,
Sun, moon and stars in their courses above,
Join with all nature in manifold witness
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy and love.

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide;
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!

Prayer:

Loving God, we praise you, because you are the God of power. And by that power you fashioned us in your own image, so that we might know you and walk with joy in your presence. We praise you that we were conceived to be a reflection of the love that dwells forever in the heart of the Father. We lift up our voices, and the whole of our lives, to sing your glory.

Forgive us when we have not listened to your voice, nor responded to your call of love. We are sorry when our actions and words have not reflected your light and love. We give thanks that in Jesus our Saviour, we are forgiven. Amen.

Hymn 338: There is a Redeemer

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5SG3a7PTSFE>

There is a redeemer
Jesus, God's own son
Precious lamb of God, Messiah
Holy one

*Thank you oh my father
For giving us your son
And leaving your spirit
'Till the work on earth is done.*

Jesus my redeemer
Name above all names
Precious lamb of God, Messiah
Oh, for sinners slain.

When I stand in glory
I will see his face
And there I'll serve my king forever
In that holy place.

Bible reading: John 1: 29 – 42

Hymn 250: Jesus Calls us! O'er the tumult

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

Jesus calls us o'er the tumult
Of our life's wild, restless sea;
Day by day his sweet voice sounding,
Saying, "Christian, follow me."

As of old apostles heard it
By the Galilean lake,
Turned from home, and toil, and kindred,
Leaving all for His dear sake.

Jesus calls us from the worship
Of the vain world's golden store,

From each idol that would keep us,
Saying, "Christian, love me more."
In our joys and in our sorrows,
Days of toil and hours of ease,
Still he calls, in cares and pleasures,
"Christian, love me more than these."

Jesus calls us—By your mercies,
Savior, may we hear your call,
Give our hearts to your obedience,
Serve and love you best of all.

Reflection:

During the holiday period, television programmes feature many 'celebrities'. Instead of the regular quiz and game shows, the contestants are well-known stars of stage and screen. Perhaps it is more interesting to see familiar people from other roles, rather than unknown members of the public. This contrast between the known and the unknown, can give us a better understanding of today's Bible passage, especially if we try to put ourselves in the shoes of the first disciples when Jesus was a complete stranger to them.

They knew nothing about him, except the hints that John the Baptist had given. He had told them to 'Look, there is the Lamb of God'; the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit, and he testified that this is God's chosen one. The disciples, who knew their Hebrew scriptures, would have been reminded that God would send a servant who would be like a 'lamb to the slaughter'. They began to realise that what the nation was waiting for, was possibly about to happen before their very eyes! As they tentatively followed him, he asked what they were looking for, and invited them to, 'Come and see'. Their meeting with him must have made a great impression on Andrew, for the first thing he did was to find his brother, Simon. He had to tell someone and confirmed that "We have found the Messiah." In the original Greek, the word used is eureka, or our 'Eureka!' It really was a 'eureka' moment, to find the one the Jews had been waiting for, for centuries. What had they found? As in all of us, they had a deep longing for something more satisfying than can be found in the world, a reassurance that all is well, that we are right with God. We are all called by Jesus, to 'come and see', to spend time with him, and get to know him. Only Jesus, 'the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world', can meet the longing for peace, love and joy in our hearts. May we find our 'eureka' moment, and then tell others that, 'we have found the Messiah'.

Hymn 556: Just as I am without one plea https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=enJ8JzW_A48

Just as I am, without one plea,
but that thy blood was shed for me,
and that thou bidd'st me come to thee,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, though tossed about
with many a conflict, many a doubt,
fightings and fears within, without,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, and waiting not
to rid my soul of one dark blot,
to thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, thou wilt receive,
wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
because thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Offering: We offer our gifts of money, time and talents, in thanksgiving for all that we have received, and to share the good news of Jesus in the world around us. Amen.

Prayers Loving God, we give thanks that you revealed yourself in Jesus, The Lamb of God, the Anointed One, Servant, King and Saviour. We pray now for your world, in all its need. We pray for the witness of the church throughout the world, and in our own communities. We pray for our ministers and all who take the good news to others. We pray for the nations of the world, where there is war, oppression, violence, poverty and disease, may those in power come to know your way of peace.

We pray for our own families and friends, and those who struggle with difficult situations.

May we open ourselves to your call, that we may know you, and give ourselves as fully as we are able, in your service, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Hymn 365: Jesu, The joy of loving hearts

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QHm-rl5pimY>

Jesu, the joy of loving hearts,
Thou fount of life, Thou light of men,
from the best bliss that earth imparts,
we turn unfilled to Thee again.

Thy truth unchanged hath ever stood;
Thou savest those that on Thee call;
to them that seek Thee, Thou art good,
to them that find Thee all in all.

We taste Thee, O Thou living Bread,
and long to feast upon Thee still;

we drink of Thee, the Fountain-head,
and thirst our souls from Thee to fill.

4 Our restless spirits yearn for Thee,
where'er our changeful lot is cast;
glad when Thy gracious smile we see,
blest when our faith can hold Thee fast.

5 O Jesu, ever with us stay,
make all our moments calm and bright;
chase the dark night of sin away;
shed o'er the world Thy holy light.

Blessing: May the blessing of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, remain with us always. Amen.