



The Central Norfolk Methodist Circuit

Sunday 25th January 2026: 3rd Sunday after the Epiphany

Theme for today is “One body facing the world today”

Prepared by Dee Moden – Local Preacher

End of the week of prayer for Christian Unity



Call to worship:

Still in the Season of Epiphany we continue exploring, seeking the meaning and experiencing the revelation and realisation of the coming of Jesus into the world, shedding light into the darkest of places. This is also the end of the week of Christian Unity, so we pray:

Lord Jesus Christ, show us how to be patient with one another in humility and gentleness. May the light You shine on our path lead us towards unity and help us heal the wounds of division and indifference that often break communities apart. Amen.

Hymn 59 Shine Jesus Shine <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=op17raOTXbk>

Lord, the light of your love is shining,
In the midst of the darkness, shining;
Jesus, light of the world, shine upon us;
Set us free by the truth you now bring us,
Shine on me, shine on me.

*Shine, Jesus, shine,
Fill this land with the Father's glory;
Blaze, Spirit, blaze,
Set our hearts on fire.
Flow, river, flow,
Flood the nations with grace and mercy;
Send forth your word,
Lord, and let there be light!*

Lord, I come to your awesome presence,
From the shadows into your radiance;
By the blood I may enter your brightness,
Search me, try me, consume all my darkness.
Shine on me, shine on me.

Chorus

As we gaze on your kingly brightness
So our faces display your likeness.
Ever changing from glory to glory,
Mirrored here may our lives tell your story.
Shine on me,
shine on me.

Chorus

Prayers:

Gracious God, faithful, just and loving: we praise you. We praise you for the fruitfulness of your Word, for the enabling power of your Spirit, and for your presence here with us today. We praise you for your guidance, your grace, your goodness and we bow our heads in awe and wonder of your love for us, you are our light in the darkness. Loving Lord, forgive us when we feel so familiar with your words that we so often don't appreciate the enormity of what it means to follow you, the generosity of your goodness to us, the power and difference you make to our lives. Help us to look continually both in scripture and the world around us with fresh eyes, as we live and grow in you. We ask that as we come to the end of the week for Christian Unity and we sing your praises and listen to your word, you will open our hearts and minds to receive anew your incredible gift given for all, sharing with one another your amazing grace. Amen

Readings: Isaiah 9: 1-4 1 Corinthians 1: 10-18

Reflection:

The people in that time, as we read in Isaiah, are going through a terrible time, just like many people today living through turbulent times. Then comes this prophecy moving them away from these dark times, looking towards a bright and a glorious future. A king from the line of David bringing peace and justice, holding them together in this knowledge giving them hope. This hope carried them through the generations. In Paul's letter we also see how he is bringing people back who have strayed, telling them of the importance of unity in Christ, that they are all one body and their mission is to share with others the message of Christ Jesus. As it is ours today. What a difference it makes when people come together as one, but respecting their differences, when we let go of old grievances and move on. We do pray for a more united world where peace will reign.

Hymn 691 What shall our greeting be? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fk7o6JANhj4>

What shall our greeting be?
Sign of our unity?
Jesus is Lord!
May we no more defend
Barriers he died to end:
Give me your hand, my friend:
One Church, One Lord!

He comes to save us now,
To serve him is to know
Life's true reward.
May he our lives amend,
All our betrayals end:
Give me your hand, my friend:
Jesus is Lord!

What is our mission here?
He makes his purpose clear:
One world, One Lord!
Spirit of truth descend,
All our confusions end:
Give me your hand, my friend:
Jesus is Lord!

Reading: Matthew 4 12-23

Reflection

This reading is about both beginnings and endings, the first part was John the Baptist who was cruelly arrested ending his public ministry, and then beginning for Jesus leaving his home to start his ministry calling too for repentance as the kingdom of God was near. God's promise was coming to fruition. Jesus needed help to proclaim his message to spread it far and wide. He didn't look for people in high places – he looked for people he could nurture and teach to relate his message to others. So we come to more beginnings and endings as we hear the call of the first disciples, leaving the only lives they had known handed down through generations, to start a completely new life. This was tough for them and their families, they trusted Jesus but they had no idea what was to come, how they would be shaped and grow, and how important they were going to be. They were going to experience highs and lows, but Jesus knew that this was the start building up his special followers, who would carry on his work. Faith is the most wonderful thing it brings so many special gifts. At different times in our lives we have to face doors closing and doors opening, sometimes surprising us like the disciples taking us on an unexpected journey, but if Christ calls he enables. Let us be willing to say yes to his call bringing us together in unity with one another.

Hymn 251 Jesus Christ is waiting

Jesus Christ is waiting,
Waiting in the streets;
No one is his neighbour,
All alone he eats.
Listen, Lord Jesus,
I am lonely too.
Make me, friend or stranger,
Fit to wait on you

Jesus Christ is raging,
Raging in the streets,
Where injustice spirals
And real hope retreats.
Listen, Lord Jesus,
I am angry too.
let me rage with you.

Jesus Christ is healing,
Healing in the streets;
Curing those who suffer,
Touching those he greets.
Listen, Lord Jesus,
I have pity too.
Let my care be active,
Healing just like you.

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

Jesus Christ is dancing,
Dancing in the streets,
Where each sign of hatred
He, with love, defeats.
Listen, Lord Jesus,
I should triumph too.
On suspicion's graveyard
Let me dance with you.

Jesus Christ is calling,
Calling in the streets,
"Who will join my journey?
I will guide their feet."
Listen, Lord Jesus,
Let my fears be few.
Walk one step before me;
I will follow you.

Prayers for Others,

Heavenly Father in your wisdom you know all the needs of the world, your world, and we give thanks for all the prayers that have been answered. Lord we also know that prayers are answered sometimes in different ways than we expect and not in our time but your time. Lord you are our light Help us to be a light for others

Lord in this special Season we pray for all the dark places in the world, the warring, the political unrest and vying for power, that there may be a revival of longing for your kingdom to come, a renewed commitment to working for peace. We pray for all who have authority and power in our nation and our world, that they may use it for the good, upholding and instigating what is right and fair, and listening to the needs they represent. May we recognise our responsibility to support and stand up for God's values. Lord you are our light Help us to be a light for others We pray that in homes and communities there may be a new awareness of one another's gifts and needs, more sensitivity and respect in our relationships, that as fellow beings we appreciate that we are all born of your creative love. We think of the bereaved, the lonely, the sick, and the sad, and in a moment of quiet we bring the names known to us who need our special prayers today..... Lastly Lord we ask that you will be with us through the coming week guiding and leading us in your service. Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Offering Prayer

Closing Hymn 455: All my hope on God is founded <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DohxO6ytsaU>

All my hope on God is founded;
he doth still my trust renew.
Me through change and chance he guideth,
only good and only true.
God unknown, he alone
calls my heart to be his own.

Human pride and earthly glory,
sword and crown betray his trust;
what with care and toil he buildeth,
tower and temple, fall to dust.
But God's power, hour by hour,
is my temple and my tower.

God's great goodness aye endureth,
deep his wisdom, passing thought:
splendour, light, and life attend him,
beauty springeth out of naught.
Evermore from his store
new-born worlds rise and adore.

Daily doth the Almighty giver
bounteous gifts on us bestow;
his desire our soul delighteth,
pleasure leads us where we go.
Love doth stand
at his hand;
joy doth wait on his command.

Still from earth to God eternal
sacrifice of praise be done,
high above all praises praising
for the gift of Christ his Son.
Christ doth call
one and all:
ye who follow shall not fall.

Closing prayer

God of light, keep us faithful as light-bearers.

Help us to keep our focus on you and then outwards to others.

Be with us as we move outwards beyond our comfort zone. Help us, like the fishermen, to leave behind the familiar and safe and move into your light with freedom and joy.

Amen.

The Grace