

# ST. JOHN THE DIVINE, RASTRICK

## Welcome to Morning Worship

27<sup>th</sup> December 2020

### Festival of John the Divine

*Click on the underlined links to take you to safe content on the internet.*

*If you are able light a candle as you start the service and if others are in the house encourage them to reading some of the service with you.*

#### *Introduction*

This is the day that the Lord has made.

**Let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

We have come together in the name of Christ to offer our praise and thanksgiving, to hear and receive God's holy word, to pray for the needs of the world, and to seek the forgiveness of our sins, that by the power of the Holy Spirit we may give ourselves to the service of God.



#### *Prayer of Penitence*

Jesus says, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand.' So, let us turn away from our sin and turn to Christ, confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

#### *Together we pray:*

**Lord God, we have sinned against you.  
we have done evil in your sight. We are sorry and repent.  
Have mercy on us according to your love.  
Wash away our wrongdoing and cleanse us from our sin.  
Renew a right spirit within us  
and restore to us the joy of your salvation,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**Hymn:** [Angels from the realms of glory](#)

**The Word of God –** [Click Here](#)

First Reading: Exodus 33: 7-11a read by Graham Readshaw

Second Reading: 1 John 1 read by Derek Davis

## *Reflection prepared by Alan Hoggard*

Today 27<sup>th</sup> December we celebrate the patronal festival of our church St John the Divine or St John the Apostle, John the Evangelist, John of Patmos, writer of the 4<sup>th</sup> Gospel, of three epistles of the New Testament and of the book of revelations, the apocalypse of John, the revelation of John from Jesus Christ. He was a busy man, a fisherman, younger brother of James he was one of the first disciples to be called by Jesus after he witnessed Jesus's baptism by John the Baptist. at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan. It seems from that time on he followed Jesus and presented the gospel of Jesus in depth that lives us much to ponder and unpack.

When Michael preached on Advent Sunday four weeks ago, he reminded us that the first walk of the St Johns rucksack club was 40 years ago today unfortunately no walk today and I don't know for certain but I imagine that not a year has been missed in all the time we have walked ourselves and enjoyed the fellowship with many others as well as the stake food and drink at conclusion of course.

It seems to me like the fellowship of the rucksack club, John thrived on the fellowship of Jesus and his disciples, he was a listener and observer of all that Jesus said and everything that was going on around him, that enabled him to not only leave us with the richness of his writings which we can feast on 2000 years later but also his listening and observing skill enabled him to witness to those whom he met and share with the truths about Jesus in a living and real way hence is title John the Evangelist. It seems he had an intimacy with Jesus that the other disciples recognised and at the end of the gospel Peter describes John as the disciple whom Jesus loved and John finishes his Gospel by sharing

*<sup>24</sup> This is the disciple who testifies to these things and who wrote them down. We know that his testimony is true.<sup>25</sup> Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written.*

I love that because it says to me you can write all the things that you want spend a lifetime writing about Jesus – and we know John did that, but in the end it is about taking Jesus into your own heart, about listening to what Jesus is saying in every situation, it is like the well-known wrist band which says WWJD – What would Jesus Do – John more than anyone had an inkling of what Jesus would do - not only because he was there and he watched and listened but because he allowed Jesus to become part of his life, part of who he was, he was in full fellowship with Jesus. Many Years ago when I was living in Northowram the PCC decided we needed a parish day and the church warden at the time Bob Knowles came up with the title of the day 'faith, fun and fellowship'. It was and still is a brilliant title because for me it sums up so much about our Christian faith and how we are to live our lives.

We are celebrating Christmas, Gods gift of Love to our world in the person of Jesus born in a manger in the words of John, *The word became flesh and made his dwelling amongst us.*

When we allow God a space in our lives, when we allow that space to be a dwelling space for Jesus, not just an occasional visitor but someone who dwells within us, then we like John will begin to understand in a clearer way what Jesus would do and so

what we can do. We have fellowship with God with other people and it is fun because our lives are filled with blessing.

In our old testament reading Moses used to take a tent and pitch it outside the camp and it was there in this tent that the Lord would speak to Moses face to face. I do like a good film and particularly ones about real life situations and with a happy ending. I am the first to start crying when things turn out well – I even cried at all creature Great and small the other night. One of our favourite Christmas films is The Holiday with Jude Law and Cameron Diaz, Jude law is a widow bringing up two little girls by himself, Cameron Diaz on a house swap from America meets the girls and discovers their bedroom tent full of stars and sparkle and a special place to be. It is a magical place a place of comfort and security a place of Love

Jesus call us to create that space in our lives which is special and wonderous, a place that is filled with love and a place where we can have fellowship and fun in allowing God to feed our faith and our witness to His Love in our lives. I was thinking during the midnight communion service how God blesses us time and time again. For all our struggles to tell others about our faith the greatest witness is share with others the blessings that he pours upon us.

So, at the end of 2020 with all its difficulties and the uncertainties we can do worse that follow the example of John after which our church was named. A fisherman who was busy listening to Jesus and following him, who in his writings showed us how fellowship with Jesus will transform us when we allow Him to dwell in our lives. Amen

**Hymn: [In the bleak midwinter](#)**

### **The Creed**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.  
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again.  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting.           Amen.**

[Prayers of intercession prepared by Julia Tum](#)

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours  
now and for ever. Amen.**

*The Collect for today*

Merciful Lord,  
cast your bright beams of light upon the Church:  
that, being enlightened by the teaching  
of your blessed apostle and evangelist Saint John,  
we may so walk in the light of your truth  
that we may at last attain to the light of everlasting life;  
through Jesus Christ your incarnate Son our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. Amen

**Hymn: Thou didst leave thy throne**

**Final Prayer**

Almighty God,  
who wonderfully created us in your own image  
and yet more wonderfully restored us  
through your Son Jesus Christ:  
grant that, as he came to share in our humanity,  
so we may share the life of his divinity;  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever Amen

*Our service ends with the Grace,*  
**The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
and the Love of God,  
and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit,  
be with us all evermore. Amen.**