

# ST. JOHN THE DIVINE, RASTRICK

## Welcome to Morning Worship Epiphany 2

17<sup>th</sup> January 2021

*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*

We come from scattered lives  
to meet with God.  
Let us recognize his presence with us.  
The Lord of glory be with us.  
The Lord bless us.



God of awe and wonder  
Worthy of honour and praise  
You know us through and through  
From the beginning to the end  
and in every day of our lives  
We come into your presence amazed by your love for us  
And your delight in knowing us  
We come to worship you, ready to be changed. Amen

### *Prayer of Penitence*

During the season of Epiphany, let us seek the renewal of our lives in the light of Gods love for us revealed by Jesus Christ:

Jesus Saviour of all, who revealed the breath of God's love, forgive us when we fail to show care to those who are different.

**Lord have Mercy.**

Jesus, Son of God, who revealed the depth of Gods love, forgive us when we are too busy to pray, or to seeks God's will  
Christ have Mercy

Jesus, Son of Man, who revealed the cost of Gods Love, forgive us when we have made light of Gods love, forgive us when we have made light of our sins

**Lord have mercy,**

**May Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen**

Hymn: [There's a quiet understanding](#)

**The Word of God** – [Click Here](#)

First Reading: 1 Samuel 3: 1-20 read by Anne Johnson

Gospel: John 1:43-end read by Julia Tum

*Reflection prepared by Rev Stephen Hannam*

I wonder are you good at making decisions? I like to think I am but perhaps I am deceiving myself! How do you make those difficult decisions? Perhaps this is not the way to go about it:-

A Christian had to make a decision so he decided he would seek God's guidance by taking his bible and opening it at a random page and then sticking a pin on a verse. Whatever it tells me to do I will do he said. He fanned the pages and stuck the pin into the text: - "Judas went and hanged himself."

Maybe you had to do it more than once? Second attempt: - End of the Good Samaritan "Go and do likewise!" He decided perhaps this was not a good way to ask for guidance!

It's an old story but it illustrates the point. If the pin method is unreliable how do we seek God's guidance?

In the Gospel Nathanael was looking for guidance. Jesus says: - "I saw you under the fig tree. I recently read that the Jews thought that the best way to study the Scriptures was under a fig tree. (I must get one!) So, I suppose Nathanael could have been studying the Bible and praying. Jesus called him "a true son of Israel."

Israel's other name was Jacob and when Jacob prayed for guidance, he had a dream of a ladder reaching up to heaven with angels taking prayers up and bringing guidance down. Jacob said: - "This is the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." The place where he prayed for guidance was the place where he met with God.

In our Gospel reading Nathanael met God in the person of Jesus. That is in the place where he prayed for guidance. Jesus said to him v 51 "You'll see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the son of man." So, it seems Jesus is Jacob's ladder!

What can we take from that? Perhaps whenever we pray for guidance, we will find it in the person of Jesus. That is whenever we pray the angels will carry our prayers up and bring God's guidance down. The question is then where do we find this guidance?

First in Scripture: - Look in the Bible for helpful passages. Don't use the pin method!! But ask yourself what would Jesus do? In these days of uncertainty and

with so many decisions to make I quite often wear my WWJD wristband! What would Jesus do? I ask myself WWJD?

Second: - Seek out the Churches opinion on what you are wrestling with. Has the church ever offered advice or is there an opinion on it?

Third: - Use reason. For many people it seems common sense is going out of fashion. Personally, I like common sense – think it out. I believe common sense is a gift from God.

Fourth: - Ask for advice, from family, a friend, or an expert. God gifts people with all sorts of talents - seek them out.

Fifth: - Conscience:- That feeling of right and wrong is not infallible but it can be a good guide. The gut feeling! The should I - shouldn't I feeling.

Six: -Turn to prayer. Not last on the list but 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc.

Samuel heard a voice, Jacob had a dream, John saw a vision.

Quite often people come away from prayer with a quiet conviction that God wants them to go in one direction. So when you need help be like Nathanael find your fig tree and pray. "You'll see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the son of man."

When Jacob prayed for guidance remember how he had a dream of a ladder reaching up to heaven with angels taking prayers up and bringing guidance down.

I wish you all the blessing of a fig tree just be aware of falling fruit! (Double meaning there!) Amen

**Hymn: [Seek ye first the Kingdom of God](#)**

**The Creed**

**All 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 David Marshall [Click Here](#)

*A prayer for our Church Growth*

God of Mission  
Who alone brings growth to your Church,  
Send your Holy Spirit to give  
Vision to our planning,  
Wisdom to our actions,  
And power to our witness.  
Help our church to grow in numbers,  
In spiritual commitment to you,  
And in service to our local community,  
Through Jesus Christ our Lord Amen.

*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*

Almighty God,  
in Christ you make all things new:  
transform the poverty of our nature by the riches of your grace,  
and in the renewal of our lives  
make known your heavenly glory;  
through Jesus Christ your 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: [Give thanks with a grateful heart](#)**

**Final Prayer**

Lord of all time and eternity,  
God of glory,  
you nourish us with your Word  
who is the bread of life:  
fill us with your Holy Spirit  
that through us the light of your glory  
may shine in all the world.  
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. 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.**

[Ein feste Burg, J C Bach: played by Gordon Bamforth](#)