

# **CUTTING EDGE CAMELOT, No 87**

**Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2021**

**'Virtually Church but with some way to go...'**

## **Welcome**

Welcome to this Sunday's edition of Cutting Edge Camelot.

## **Scripture Passage**

*John 1: 1-14*

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

## Reflection

If you've been to one of my Christmas Carol services, you'll have noticed that instead of having this passage as the final reading, I put it at the beginning. To me, it makes sense. In the beginning was the Word. Everything kicks off from there. Words are fun, and I love word games and crosswords, and poetry that makes words jump about and do tricks. Science fiction lives on words. Why don't the crew of the Starship Enterprise float about? Artificial gravity! Why don't they shoot out the front windscreen when the ship goes from light speed to no speed at all? Inertia dampers. See? You don't need the actual thing, just the word. And back in the beginning, in Creation, God said "Let there be light", and there was light. Because God's word is good.

A better theologian than me put it this way. God the Father *thought up* a hedgehog. God the Son (in his role as the Word) *said* "Hedgehog!" and God the Holy Spirit *breathed life* into it, and off it snuffled in search of slugs. The Word of God is more than just a word, he is The Word. And was in the Beginning.

The first words of the letter to the Hebrews, in the Bible, are, *Long ago, God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways through the prophets, but in these last days, he has spoken to us by his Son.*

God speaks to us through Jesus, his Son. The Bible assumes God wants to speak to us. And that's a pretty amazing suggestion. Up until then, quite a lot of people thought their god was something made of wood, or stone, or bronze, stuck in a temple. Even bronze ears don't work very well, so to attract the attention of these gods, a lot of shouting and jumping up and down was called for. Or else they thought their gods lived on Mount Olympus, and only spoke to humans when they had bad news. But the Bible says that God actually wants to speak to us, and it's him trying to attract our attention, not the other way round. And what does he want to say to us, basically? The Bible says, God wants to tell us he loves us. He

also wants to tell us how we should treat other people lovingly, because God loves everybody equally, and cares what we do to other people.

So how can God speak to us? How can he tell us he loves us? He can't come to the door himself. If he did we'd be frizzled up, even if we didn't just shrivel up with shame and fear. So first, he tried speaking through people we call prophets. Read their stories in the Old Testament, and their close encounters of the divine kind are pretty scary. They all came proclaiming "This is what God says - thus saith the LORD" and generally speaking, nobody listened to them. "How do we know you have the authority to speak for God?" they asked. Prophets were a good idea, but not good enough. God always knew he'd have to find another way to tell us he loves us. Actually, Jesus is all the plan God ever had in mind from the very beginning - The Word.

God sends his Son to speak to us for him, to be his representative. Speaking things into creation has always been his speciality, so speaking to us is his natural role. Surely everyone will listen to God's Son, and trust him, that he has the clout to speak for his Father? This time the plan - all the plan there was, mind - worked better. Some people just wouldn't listen. Like John said, he went to his own people, and they wouldn't receive him. But many did, and they formed a great society of people who are willing to listen to the Son of God, and do what he tells us, because we can trust him to lead us right. It's called the church. God, in Jesus, tells us he loves us, and when he tells us to love one another for his sake. We are the ones that he has given the grace, and the power to be called God's children, just because we trust Jesus when he says God is our Father. Does that make sense?

But Jesus isn't just the Word - he's the deed, too. He didn't just come to say God loves us, he came to show us, too. Over the next few weeks - between now and Easter, we're going to have to squeeze in the story of Jesus' life, and especially, his death. By the life he lived, and particularly by the death

he died, he showed us the love of a God who would take our wrongdoing on himself, and die himself sooner than see us die. This is why we need to listen to what he says. He's put his life on the line for us, and he's the best deal we're any of us going to get.

*Ron*

### **Hymn Suggestion**

A hymn which celebrates God and Jesus' ministry both in word and deed is 'Thou whose almighty word.'

### **Vimeo**

We will be recording and uploading a Vimeo service for next Sunday drawing on the assistance and technical expertise of Dan Gruner and his colleagues.

The Diocese has shared a reflection from Bishop Ruth for this Sunday. You will find this by going to the diocesan page on the Vimeo website,

<https://vimeo.com/user131166676>.

### **The Big Church Read**

The Big Church Read is a great opportunity to bring Christians together across the country to read books together. It contains online videos, reading plans and discussion questions to enhance the reading experience. The current book chosen for reading and discussion is Singing in Babylon: Finding purpose in life's second choices by Jeff Lucas. For more information please see:- <https://thebigchurchread.co.uk/>

## **Supporting our community**

### *The Lord's Larder*

The Lord's Larder is one of our local foodbanks based in Yeovil. In many of our villages we have central collection points for food to be taken to the Lord's Larder and to other local foodbanks. They are immensely appreciative of the support and of food which is given in this way.

However, they also need financial contributions so that they can buy additional food as needed. If you would like to contribute in this way you can do so by setting up a Standing Order in favour of the Yeovil Christian Support Trust. Their bank details are Unity Trust Bank Plc, Birmingham, Sort Code 60-83-01, Account No 20211112. It is possible to increase the value of these donations by claiming Gift Aid.

### *North Cadbury Church of England Primary School*

The school also immensely appreciates our prayers and support in this difficult period.

While prayer remains primary, some of us may be wondering whether we can also help in practical ways. The need for all families connected with the school to be able to buy books for use at home is very pressing in this time of home schooling.

So the school would appreciate donations of book tokens or gift vouchers for this purpose. If in the first instance you could send these donations to the Parish Office marking any envelopes 'For the School' they can then be passed on promptly to the school.

## **Points for Prayers**

- The need for the power of God's Word in our lives through Jesus
- The restrictions of the third lockdown and sustaining our common life in this time
- Give thanks for progress in the roll out of the different vaccines in combating coronavirus and for the falling rates of infection
- The need for wisdom in the timing of any easing of restrictions
- Thanksgiving for care, skill and courage of NHS workers and those in care homes
- Those suffering from coronavirus in hospitals, care homes and at home
- Our Bishops (please see notice below)
- For North Cadbury Church Primary School and other local schools as they are unable to open fully at the moment
- Prayers for those affected economically by the lockdown, for businesses and those who have become unemployed
- Prayers and thanksgiving for contributions to the foodbanks and for those helping to take these to the foodbanks.

## **Suspension of services**

Services across the Camelot Group have now been suspended as sadly we concluded that it was not possible to hold them safely in the current circumstances. The suspension of services will be kept under review as circumstances change.

## **Excalibur**

The February edition of Excalibur is now online at [camelotparishes.co.uk](http://camelotparishes.co.uk)

## **The Parish Office**

The Parish Office is closed although Rob does come in regularly. In his absence please contact Rob via email ([office@camelotparishes.org.uk](mailto:office@camelotparishes.org.uk)) or on 01749 850934.

## **An inclusive Communion celebrated on behalf of the benefice**

During the third lockdown as in the others Ron and Pam will be celebrating Communion regularly in their home each Sunday at 10.00 am. Please be aware of this because even though no-one can join them they are praying for us all and hope that you will feel included in this act of Communion.

## **Update on Bishop Peter**

Bishop Peter thanks everyone for all the cards and other expressions of support which he has received. A card was sent to him on behalf of the Camelot Parishes as a whole. He says that he has been lifted on 'eagle's wings' through the love and prayers of others. He has now received a stem cell transplant. Please pray for the new cells to 'do their bit' and for his continued healing. Please continue to pray for him and his family in this challenging time. Please pray also for Bishop Ruth and the rest of the Bishop's Staff as they take on the oversight of the diocese in his absence.

*Growing as a worshipper, a servant and a family*

*We pray that 'we might live in love,  
as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us'*

(Ephesians 5:2)