



Team Parish of Christ the King St Aidan's, Brunton Park

Sunday 15th January 2023

Second Sunday after Epiphany

The Gospel reading for this Sunday offers John's account of the disciples first meeting with Jesus. It's a wonderfully rich passage, and one that I think might help us to reflect on how we tell the world about Jesus. Because 'evangelism' can be a word that strikes terror into the hearts of good quiet Christians. We see it as pushy, argumentative, adversarial. But this passage might help us explore what evangelism, at heart, is. And I think we discover that all it is, is an invitation.

So first of all, there are several moments in the passage when Jesus is pointed to. John the Baptist, twice, when he sees Jesus, points him out and says: 'look, here is the Lamb of God.' And then, Andrew finds his brother Simon (soon to be Peter), and says: 'We have found the Messiah.' They point towards Jesus, and name who they have discovered him to be. So too, the church is called to no more than pointing to Jesus and naming who we have discovered him to be. The job isn't to convince others to accept our worldview; it's not to ram a set of rules down people's throats; it's not to impose our beliefs or force people into church. All the church is called to in it's witness, in it's evangelism, is to point to Jesus and name who he is to us. So, perhaps we might ask first, how do we name Jesus? Is he Lamb of God? Or Messiah? Saviour? Friend? Advocate? Comforter? Lover of souls? Who is Jesus to you? And then perhaps we might ask how we can point to this Jesus in our lives and our words. Where are the moments when we might say to others, with the excitement of Andrew, or the passion of John: this is who I have discovered, and this is who I found him to be?

But there is another part to this passage. At the centre of the passage is the disciple's first meeting with Jesus, and it's characteristically dual-layered. On the surface, a simple conversation about where Jesus is staying for the night. But, for John, also far more as Jesus asks those who would follow him: 'What are you looking for?'. What searching and longing is it that has brought you, here? And then, deeper still, the invitation to 'Come and see.' Come and see what it means to live with Christ. Come and see what it would be to abide in him, as he abides in us. Come and see the dwelling place of the Lamb of God. Come and see what peace and grace, what joy and fullness of life, reside there. Come and see the goodness of God in this meeting with Jesus. That is the invitation. It is one that we accept each time we gather to worship. And that invitation is at the heart of our evangelism. Not coercion or compulsion; not the force of our arguments or the strength of our personality. Simply an invitation, to come and see. To say, this is who I have found Jesus to be: come and see who he might be to you.

Isaiah 49.1-7

Listen to me, O coastlands,
pay attention, you peoples from far away!
The LORD called me before I was born,
while I was in my mother's womb he named me.
He made my mouth like a sharp sword,
in the shadow of his hand he hid me;
he made me a polished arrow,
in his quiver he hid me away.
And he said to me, 'You are my servant,
Israel, in whom I will be glorified.'
But I said, 'I have laboured in vain,
I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity;
yet surely my cause is with the LORD,
and my reward with my God.'
And now the LORD says,
who formed me in the womb to be his servant,
to bring Jacob back to him,
and that Israel might be gathered to him,
for I am honoured in the sight of the LORD,
and my God has become my strength –
he says,
'It is too light a thing that you should be my servant
to raise up the tribes of Jacob
and to restore the survivors of Israel;
I will give you as a light to the nations,
that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.'
Thus says the LORD,
the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One,
to one deeply despised, abhorred by the nations,
the slave of rulers,
'Kings shall see and stand up,
princes, and they shall prostrate themselves,
because of the LORD, who is faithful,
the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you.'

John 1.29-42

John the Baptist saw Jesus coming towards him and declared, 'Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, "After me comes a man who ranks ahead of me because he was before me." I myself did not know him; but I came baptizing with water for this reason, that he might be revealed to Israel.' And John testified, 'I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water said to me, "He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit." And I myself have seen and have testified that this is the Son of God.'

The next day John again was standing with two of his disciples, and as he watched Jesus walk by, he exclaimed, 'Look, here is the Lamb of God!' The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, 'What are you looking for?' They said to him, 'Rabbi' (which translated means Teacher), 'where are you staying?' He said to them, 'Come and see.' They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon. One of the two who heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first found his brother Simon and said to him, 'We have found the Messiah' (which is translated Anointed). He brought Simon to Jesus, who looked at him and said, 'You are Simon son of John. You are to be called Cephas' (which is translated Peter).

TODAY

9:30am: Epiphany 2: Ordinand Clair Lewis presides as Rev'd Gerard Rundell preaches from Isaiah 49.1-7 , Corinthians 1.1-9 , John 1.29-42

THE WEEK AHEAD

Wed 10.00am, Church: **BCP Midweek Eucharist**

Fri 20th 1:15pm: **Funeral Service of Margaret Pitkethly**

Sat 10am-12pm, Community Room: **Saturday Café**

Sun 15th 9:30am **Epiphany 3:** Rev'd Gerard Rundell presides as Ordinand Clair Lewis preaches from Isaiah 9.1-4, 1 Corinthians 1.10-18, Matthew 4.12-23

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Sun 22nd 3:30pm: **Messy Church at Great Park Community Centre**

Thurs 26th 2:00pm: **Chat and Craft**

Thurs 2nd Feb 2:00pm: **Prayer and Praise**

8:00pm: **Men's Group:** Talk by David Down 'Good Lord, Mayor'

Wed 8th 12:30pm: **Lunch Group**

Thurs 9th 2:00pm: **Film Club**

NOTICES

SUNDAY SERVICE – today's live broadcast link <https://bit.ly/2Epiphany23>

LUNCH GROUP - will meet on February 8th at the Rugby Club. Lunch will be served at 12:30 pm. Please contact Pauline or Pat if you would like to join us.

CHRISTMAS COLLECTIONS – thank you to everyone who has supported and donated to our recent collections, these are the amounts: Crisis £275, Medicins Sans Frontieres £275, Saturday Cafe: Retina UK. Parkinsons UK, Myaware, Swiss Kenya Development (Orphanage) £350 each, Children's Society £225 includes £100 from Chat and Craft, Salvation Army £150 from Carols on the Green, Gifts for Ukraine Children £1100. The Children's Society box money also amounts to £802 so far Thank you to everyone for their generosity and support.

ZOOM CODES – all our Zoom sessions will use only the following details:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7573778713?pwd=NGVjcTRLQjBEaStqYjFDSm1KOURtQT09> Meeting ID: 757 377 8713 Passcode: StAidan

BOOKING ZOOM MEETINGS: if you would like to use the St Aidan's Zoom account for a church meeting, please contact Janice

USED STAMPS – if you have any used stamps, please save them and put them in the box at the back of church to raise fund for St Oswald's Hospice.

CHURCH OPENING – church is open during the day, every day. Please come in at any time for some quiet time or prayer.

FOOD BANK – any items placed in the box at the back of church will be donated to Kenton Foodbank.

DONATIONS - to make a donation to St Aidan's, please use the following link

<https://givealittle.co/campaigns/8a599239-a9bd-4136-8b4b-1dcabb0a2c65>

For Our Prayers: St Aidan's Cycle of Prayer

For the church – Churches in our Deanery: Gosforth Parishes. DCC members and officers

For the community – Snakes & Ladders Playgroup, Brunton Babies, Nursery & Toddler Groups

For the world – for Ukraine, Pakistan and all countries facing hardship and conflict. For our own national and political life

For those in need - Gladys Johnston, Esther Wooler, Joan Miller, Lindsay Miller, Alan Gregg

For those who have died – Mary Atwell, John Jeffery, Florence Kirkby, Margaret Staniland, Rosemary Edwards, Audrey Jordison, Alma Thompson, Joan Routledge, Winifred Heal, Jeff Robinson, Eric Quenet, Joy Crute, John Edwards

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