

**Sunday Next before Lent,
Sunday, 27th February 2022**



Dear Friends,

Then from the cloud came a voice that said, “This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!”

Luke 9:35

Revd Jax is away on annual leave this week and Andrew Kent has very kindly allowed me to send out this letter from him instead.

Revd. Jax wrote last week about Jesus calming the storm on the Sea of Galilee – which given the series of storms then sweeping the UK, interrupting power supplies and transport and causing a great deal of inconvenience, was particularly timely. Sometimes, however, these things do have some good outcomes. In our case it was being able to share with friends and neighbours, gathering together around wood burning stoves for warmth, sharing picnic meals of bread and cheese (and an occasional glass of wine), playing word games by candlelight and – above all – talking together. Difficult times remind us of just how much we gain when we depend on each other for mutual support, and how in following Jesus’s teaching we can help those who are not easily able to help themselves.

This week, however, those troubles fade into insignificance in the context of the storm that is now overtaking Europe with the Russian invasion of Ukraine, with the certain loss of life on both sides and the threat to the democratic freedoms of the people of Ukraine and, potentially, other European countries. In Vladimir Putin’s autocratic personal control of Russia we can see the truth of the saying “power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.”

All this was going through my mind as I was reading the Bible passages for this week, which remind us of the glory of God and His power to put human affairs into proper perspective. We are reminded that when we are tired or frightened life sometimes obscures our view and understanding of God, and our faith in Him. But if we can stop for a moment and listen to the voice of God's own Son, our ultimate Saviour, we are able to marvel at the glory of Creation and understand that, whatever happens, there can be salvation - with a purpose and a place for everyone.

I looked at the latest news on Ukraine just as I started to write this, and saw these words from the BBC's correspondent in Kyiv: "There is no safe place anymore." This went straight to my heart, encapsulating the fear that people in Ukraine must be feeling right now. As individuals there is little we can directly do to change the course of this, except to tell our politicians to stand up and be counted in defending the democratic rights of the people of Ukraine. But we can pray for all who are suffering. Putin will have to face his Maker one day - I doubt he will be judged by any of us - but perhaps the best prayer we can offer is to ask God to reveal himself to all who suffer in this conflict, and for those seeking a safe haven remember Paul's words to the people of Corinth – "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom."

Almighty Father,
who through your beloved Son makes all things right,
govern the hearts and minds of those in authority,
and bring the families of the nations who are
divided and torn apart by the ravages of war
to the just and gentle rule of
our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen

A Prayer for Ukraine

God of peace and justice,
we pray for the people of Ukraine today.
We pray for peace and the laying down of weapons.
We pray for all those who fear for tomorrow,
that your Spirit of comfort would draw near to them.
We pray for those with power over war or peace,
for wisdom, discernment and compassion
to guide their decisions.
Above all, we pray for all your precious children, at risk and in fear,
that you would hold and protect them.
We pray in the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace.
Amen.

Archbishop Justin Welby
Archbishop Stephen Cottrell



Collect Prayer for the Sunday Next before Lent

Almighty Father,
whose Son was revealed in majesty
before he suffered death upon the cross:
give us grace to perceive his glory,
that we may be strengthened to suffer with him
and be changed into his likeness, from glory to glory;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.



‘The Transfiguration of Jesus’ by Theophanes the Greek

Luke 9: 28 - 36 – The Transfiguration

Now about eight days after these sayings Jesus took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray.

And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white. Suddenly they saw two men, Moses and Elijah, talking to him. They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.

Now Peter and his companions were weighed down with sleep; but since they had stayed awake, they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. Just as they

were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah” —not knowing what he said.

While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were terrified as they entered the cloud. Then from the cloud came a voice that said, “This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!” When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and in those days told no one any of the things they had seen.

Schedule of Services

This schedule is correct at this time but may be subject to future alterations – please check on our website for the most up-to-date information.

All services start at 10am, unless marked differently on the table below.

We ask that you continue to wear masks and book services by contacting the Benefice Office on 01962 880 845 or office@downsbenefice.org.uk

<i>Date</i>	<i>Ch</i>	<i>Cr</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Sp</i>	<i>Wh</i>
<i>27th Feb</i>			Morning Prayer	Morning Worship	8am – BCP Holy Communion
<i>2nd March ASH WEDNESDAY</i>	12 noon - Holy Communion with Ashes		Holy Communion with Ashes		<i>With Chilbolton</i>
<i>4th March FRIDAY</i>	2pm – Women’s World Day of Prayer Service				
<i>6th March</i>	Morning Prayer	Holy Communion	4pm – Café Church with Karis Kids		
<i>13th March</i>	4pm – Evening Prayer for Lent		Holy Communion		Morning Prayer

<i>20th March</i>	Holy Communion	Morning Worship		8am – BCP Holy Communion	
<i>23rd March</i> WEDNESDAY			Holy Communion		
<i>27th March</i>	Mothering Sunday Family Service	Mothering Sunday Family Service	Mothering Sunday Family Service	Mothering Sunday Family Service	Mothering Sunday Family Service
<i>3rd April</i>	Morning Prayer	Holy Communion	4pm – Café Church with Karis Kids		