



Connecting faith and daily life

# Walls come tumbling



Caroline Hodgson *reflects on* Psalm 48 and Luke 2:22-40

Psalm 48 is one of the psalms known as the Songs of Zion, which glorify God's presence in, and protection of, Jerusalem. It is attributed to the Korahites, or sons of Korah, who were descended from Abraham through the Levite line and had duties associated with the Temple.

The psalmist's conviction is as solid as the stone from which the Temple was constructed, celebrating a God who is firmly located "in the city... His holy mountain... Within its citadels... a sure defence... the city of the Lord... the city of our God, which God establishes forever". It's almost as though he's trying to prove to himself, his listeners, and indeed God, that God belongs in the Temple, in the Holy City, firmly on the side of the people of Israel.

In the reading from Luke we see a baby brought to this great building by his parents to be presented "according to the law". Yet for all he was steeped from birth in religious tradition, this baby would grow to prophesy the unthinkable, certainly for the psalmist – that these stones would fall and the Temple would become rubble. As it would turn out, God cannot be walled in.

So, with respect to the psalmist, aware of our own shortcomings, let's sing this psalm with gusto, understanding it as an expression of human yearning and a reminder of the human folly of believing that God could be confined to a temple, a city, or a nation. 🙏

Lord God, we ask for the courage and strength of faith not to try to confine you within our human concerns, and we pray for and work towards the day when the walls tumble, and heaven and earth are filled with your glory. Amen.

## Walking with Poppy

by Gillian Cooper

Poppy is not enjoying her walk. It's windy and wet, and there are puddles. She trails behind me, showing her displeasure. Then under a tree a large drip falls on her. She jumps in alarm and heads for home at high speed. She's like Chicken Licken in the children's story, who when an acorn falls on

her head runs off to tell the king that the sky is falling in.

"It's just a drip," I tell Poppy, but to no avail. She is convinced there is danger falling from the sky.

She reminds me of myself, when I think small troubles are the end of the world. But in today's reading St Paul reminds me of the wider perspective: "now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face" (1 Corinthians 13:12). Eventually I will understand that even if the sky falls in, God's love for me remains. 🙏

## The Presentation of Christ

by Julian Smith

Obedient to the demands of the Jewish Law, Mary and Joseph bring Jesus to Jerusalem. In the Temple they learn disturbing things about their son and his destiny from the lips of two old people. Simeon and Anna have

lived close to God – upright, faithful and expectant – and the coming of the child in their midst is a fulfilment and a catalyst. The presence of the child allows them to speak God's word to parents and bystanders.

The presence of a baby in the Temple is a catalyst for God's word. What effect does the presence of children have on the congregations to which we belong? It is not enough to see children as the future of the Church. A child in church is both fulfilment and catalyst, and we must cope with their unsettling presence now and be prepared for the divine truths that spring from that experience. 🙏

“We have a God who delights in impossibilities.”  
Billy Sunday (1862-1935), American athlete and evangelist

## Prayer

### Prayer and Healing Ministry

As a Church Family, God calls us to “pray without ceasing” for one another and for our neighbourhood. With this in mind, a Calendar of Prayer covering the whole of The Parish Of Three Saints has been drawn up. Each Sunday we will be highlighting a particular road or street, plus an organisation or group of people in our Parish or Diocese and encouraging you to pray for them during the week. The Calendar of Prayer will also be available in the prayer corners of each of our church buildings.

This week please pray for....

- Those living in Lymsham Road, Lymsham.
- Local engineering companies - Haley Engineering, Chestnut Engineering, The Forge and Brent Engineering.
- Kevin and Chris, as they make preparations to move into our parish.

### Don't be afraid to ask for Prayer!

If you or a loved one are going through a difficult time and would like prayer, please contact our Prayer Group Co-ordinator Gwen Hatton 01934 750416. The Friday Prayer Group will support you in prayer for as long as you need it and everything is absolutely confidential.

Alternatively, if you or a loved one would like to be included in this public prayer list in the Sunday Link and prayed for by the whole Church Family, please contact Carole in the Church Office 01278-769082 or Ginnie Soffe 01278-769117. Please ask for the person's permission beforehand.

Please also contact us if you would like to remain on this list as we are currently looking to update it. Many thanks.

At present please continue to pray for Mervyn, Nathan, Luke, Iona, Ben, David, Carole, Kathryn, Peter, Silla, Carol, Sue, David, Pam, Di, Bob, Richard, Jodie and Marcus.

## Diary

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>3rd February</b> 08.00 St Michael's Worship of the Word 10.00 St Michael's Parish Eucharist	<b>4th</b>	<b>5th</b> 10.30 Toddlers Brent Knoll Methodist Church	<b>6th</b> 08.45 Coffee Time St Mary's	<b>7th</b>   19.30 All Sorts Choir	<b>8th</b>	<b>9th</b>
<b>10th February</b> 08.00 St Michael's Worship of the Word 10.00 St Mary's SONGS OF PRAISE	<b>11th</b> 09.00-10.30 Emmaus Brentcombe House, East Brent	<b>12th</b> 10.30 Toddlers Brent Knoll Methodist Church	<b>13th</b> 08.45 Coffee Time St Mary's	<b>14th</b>   19.30 All Sorts Choir	<b>15th</b> Prayer Group 2 The Worthings, Lymsham	<b>16th</b>
<b>17th</b> 08.00 St Christopher's Worship of the Word 10.00 St Michael's Parish Eucharist	<b>18th</b> 16.00-17.30 Alzheimer's and Dementia Carers Group Brentcombe House, East Brent.	<b>19th</b> 10.30 Toddlers Brent Knoll Methodist Church	<b>20th</b> 08.45 Coffee Time St Mary's	<b>21st</b> 14.30 Comfort Group  19.30 All Sorts Choir	<b>22nd</b>	<b>23rd</b>

## Contacts

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For further contact information please see our parish website - [www.theparishofthreesaints.org.uk](http://www.theparishofthreesaints.org.uk)

If you would like to submit anything for the Sunday Link please email it to Carole at [office.tpots@gmail.com](mailto:office.tpots@gmail.com) by **Thursday**. Please also send anything for **The Parish of Three Saints** website to the same address.

## Bible Readings

### Hebrew Scripture

#### Malachi 3. 1-5

The Coming Messenger

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight - indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years.

Then I will draw near to you for judgement; I will be swift to bear witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired workers in their wages, the widow, and the orphan, against those who thrust aside the alien, and do not fear me, says the Lord of hosts.

### Gospel Reading

#### Luke 2. 22-40

Jesus Is Presented in the Temple

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, 'Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord'), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, 'a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons.'

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

'Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word;

for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.'

And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, 'This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.'

There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband for seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

The Return to Nazareth

When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favour of God was upon him.

### Christian Scripture

#### Hebrews 2. 14 - end

Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death. For it is clear that he did not come to help angels, but the descendants of Abraham. Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

### Blessed Thought

"To bless the people who have oppressed our spirits, emotionally deprived us, or in other ways handicapped us, is the most extraordinary work any of us will ever do."

(Elizabeth O'Connor in  
'What's so amazing about Grace'  
by Philip Yancey)

### Psalm

#### Psalm 24

Entrance into the Temple

Of David. A Psalm.

The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it,  
the world, and those who live in it;  
for he has founded it on the seas,  
and established it on the rivers.

Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord?

And who shall stand in his holy place?  
Those who have clean hands and pure hearts,  
who do not lift up their souls to what is false,  
and do not swear deceitfully.

They will receive blessing from the Lord,  
and vindication from the God of their salvation.

Such is the company of those who seek him,  
who seek the face of the God of Jacob.

Lift up your heads, O gates!  
and be lifted up, O ancient doors!  
that the King of glory may come in.

Who is the King of glory?  
The Lord, strong and mighty,  
the Lord, mighty in battle.

Lift up your heads, O gates!  
and be lifted up, O ancient doors!  
that the King of glory may come in.

Who is this King of glory?  
The Lord of hosts,  
he is the King of glory.

## What's On



### Our Vision for the Parish of Three Saints

*Our desire is to deepen our spiritual awareness and relationship with God so that we can serve our communities more effectively as His hands and feet, and also to develop our sacred spaces to make them welcoming, flexible and suited to the broad ranging needs of our communities.*

(Taken from The Parish Profile 2018)



office.tpots@gmail.com

www.theparishofthreesaints.org.uk



The Parish of Three Saints welcomes  
you to a

## Songs of Praise

Service

at 10am

Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> February  
St Mary's Church,  
East Brent

Everyone is very welcome.  
Come along and sing some of your  
favourite hymns.

Please note: there will be no communion  
at this service.



### Thank you !

to all those kind volunteers who have  
been working hard re-decorating the  
Rectory in preparation for Rev Kevin

Wright's arrival in March. He and his wife, Chris, are  
extremely grateful for all that we are doing.

We have had 2 productive Saturday morning sessions  
so far and people have been popping in to paint  
during the week.

If you would still like to help, please give your name  
to Mike Smith (01278 760691). Many thanks.

Blessed are you, Lord God of all Creation; through your goodness we have this money to offer.....  
to do your work in the world.

During our worship an offering will be collected. If you wish to join with our offering there is a yellow envelope nearby for your contribution or you can, of course, simply add your donation to the bag that will be passed along the pew during our first hymn. Many of our Church Family make a regular contribution to the running and work of the Parish by Standing Order. If this is something you would like to find out more about, please see one of the Stewards or a Churchwarden.



### We Need Your Help

We are seeking two people of faith to take on the  
ministry of Churchwarden in both St Mary's and  
St Christopher's.

Are you a person of gentleness, but firm when necessary,  
able to lead others and organise well?

Are you endowed with a sense of humour and welcoming  
smile?

Are you prepared to cope with the vagaries of your priest,  
your fellow Churchwardens, in fact the whole Church family?

Do you flourish working as part of a team and like to say,  
'We achieved that'?

Might you discern (through prayer and listening to others)  
God calling you to this Godly responsibility?

If the answer is yes to some or all of the above, please speak  
to our Reader Nikki, or to our Churchwardens, Mike, Gwen,  
Frances or Kathryn. They'll tell you more and can give you an  
application form.

You can be a Churchwarden of any of our three buildings,  
no matter where you live.

We are also looking for a Deanery Synod representative and  
PCC members. Please prayerfully consider whether you could  
take on one of these roles.

Thank you.

### Interregnum Update

A Welcome and Licensing service will be held for  
our new priest, Rev Kevin Wright,  
at 7pm on Thursday 21st March  
at St Christopher's, Lympsham.

It would be lovely if we could have a full church  
to make it a special occasion for Kevin and his  
wife, Chris, as we welcome them into our church  
family.

Refreshments will be served in the Manor Hall  
afterwards.

Kevin's first service will be on Palm Sunday,  
14th April, at 10.00 am  
at St Mary's, East Brent.