



COLLECT, READINGS AND REFLECTION
SUNDAY 2 MARCH 2025 – St Chad

COLLECT

Heavenly Father,
whose son our Lord Jesus Christ
took the form of a servant for the sake of his brothers and sisters:
Strengthen us with the prayers and example of your servant Chad,
who became the least of all to minister to all;
through the same Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns, with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Psalm 100

- 1 O be joyful in the Lord, all the earth; ♦
serve the Lord with gladness and come before his presence with a song.
- 2 Know that the Lord is God; ♦
it is he that has made us and we are his;
we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.
- 3 Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; ♦
give thanks to him and bless his name.
- 4 For the Lord is gracious; his steadfast love is everlasting, ♦
and his faithfulness endures from generation to generation.

A reading from the prophecy of Isaiah, chapter 52, verses 7-10.

How beautiful upon the mountains
are the feet of the messenger who announces peace,
who brings good news,
who announces salvation,
who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns.'

Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices,
together they sing for joy;
for in plain sight they see
the return of the LORD to Zion.

Break forth together into singing,
you ruins of Jerusalem;
for the LORD has comforted his people,
he has redeemed Jerusalem.

The LORD has bared his holy arm
before the eyes of all the nations;
and all the ends of the earth shall see
the salvation of our God.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

For Eucharists/ Communion people stand to hear the Gospel.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia!

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I am the good shepherd, says the Lord; I know my sheep and my own know me.

Alleluia!

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew, Chapter 9, verses 35-38.

And then at the end:

This is the Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you, O Christ.

Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and curing every disease and every sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest.'

A Reflection from Peter

What a blessing it is that one of our churches is dedicated to St Chad, giving us a close link with a real hero. Even better of course, Chad came to be the first bishop of Lichfield from Yorkshire, having been abbot at Lastingham where much of the original Saxon church survives in the form of the crypt of the present church – and a very holy and special place it is too.

With this promising beginning we turn to our readings. The first, from Isaiah, seems absolutely on message: “How beautiful upon the mountains...” This is the one who proclaims, “Your God reigns!” and there is joy and singing. But turn to the Gospel and what a difference! Here are miserable people, harassed and helpless. You can almost feel the scene as Jesus fights his way through this wretched crowd with the disciples: he’s trying to talk to them, but it’s not easy with all the noise and the crush. He says, “You can see the problems! But no-one here is doing anything to help...” “the harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few...”

I sometimes hear the echo of this passage when I find myself somewhere like Cheshire Oaks, battling my way through crowds of people who look more miserable than joyful, desperately seeking a bargain. I also know that setting up a soap box and trying to preach as the crowds rush past would do no-one any good! Yes, Jesus preaches – but he does so in the synagogue; yes, he heals sickness – but that is when people come to him and ask for healing. In this moment, as the crowds rush past, he has compassion – but this is not the moment for action. Compassion: spending time understanding the deepest needs and anxieties of one another; reflecting on real ways to connect and help; finding the small gestures that can transform a situation – there is an urgent need for such deep attention to the present moment in order that we may be faithful disciples of the Gospel.

Chad was a pretty energetic, get-stuck-in kind of guy. He had travelled a fair bit and had broad experience. But he also had the capacity to be still, to pay attention, to wait. This gave him humility and an ability to know where he needed to be – and we’re thankful that he knew he needed to come to Lichfield!