

9/9/2018 Trinity 15. Totland MP(CW) Readings: OT. Isaiah 35, 1-7a & 10. NT. Mark 7, 24-end(37).
NAM:810-Thou whose almighty word. EW 48-Great is the darkness.NAM 678-In Christ alone. 742-O for a 1000 tongues.719 – Shine J shine.

Faith in Jesus, Light of the World.

Intro.

An extract from my diary March 6th 1965, the day after I returned from the tropical medicine course in Belgium: a wonderful surprise! Mr Ralph visited & says the church wants to support me in Africa. Freddie is a man of prayer & faith. – In fact I can add here that he gave us a book on prayer for Christmas 1973 after his visit to the Needles lighthouse in the lifeboat seen in the window– Days later the MU, under Dorothy Ralph gave me a farewell send off at their meeting. They later formed a Dorcas group which sent out parcels of 1st aid items for the health workers we trained & woolly vests for kwashiakor clinic toddlers.

At my valedictory in the church hall on April 7th 1965, I met Myra Chilvers, a member of St Mark`s, Nottingham, Mr Ralph`s previous church. She became an enthusiastic mission supporter, & St Mark`s became a centre for “Burundi Sundi”, still an annual event there.

Years before in 1961, I was an exhausted student m/w in Poplar. We were short-staffed, & averaged 3 – 4 hours sleep a night. The phone rang constantly & we were called out to deliver every 3rd baby. In Poplar, St Matthias` church is in a quiet leafy spot off the High St. It has pillars made from the masts of ships of the East India Co. I attended this lovely evangelical church in dockland where Peter Berry`s father was the Vicar. His parents saved my sanity by enabling me to sleep round the clock in the vicarage on my day off.

Both these connexions with Totland & Poplar came together on April 15th 1965. A group from Christ Church came up to London with bunches of primroses for my cabin. They came to see me off at Waterloo onto the ship`s coach. That night the “Kenya Castle” set sail from King George Vth dock in Poplar.

Here today, 53 years later, let`s consider God`s message to us in our readings relating to this **beautiful memorial window.**

Along the base God`s voice commands: fiat lux – let there be light! – we sang in our 1st hymn. In the beginning of creation, God`s Spirit was hovering over deep dark waters, then God`s voice sounded out into the chaos & darkness of the universe, & the 1st day of the new world dawned.

OT. Isaiah saw God`s radiant light in a glorious vision of the LORD enthroned in the temple when he was called to be a prophet. Isaiah was a light in the darkness of the nation`s disobedience to God. In Ch.34 *his* voice sounded warnings both to the nations surrounding Israel as well as to the kingdom of Judah where he lived. The Needles` light & foghorn also give warnings of danger to shipping. Isaiah called people to turn back to God else disaster would come. It did – in **586 BC** when Judah was conquered & exiled in Babylon.

Page 719. In our reading today in Ch 35, Isaiah prophetically hears into the future, the voices of the Jews who have been saved & released from captivity, redeemed, ransomed v10 by God. They are exulting in their return – the whole land rejoices with them as it is refreshed & renewed & it sees the light of the glory of the LORD, the splendour of our God v.2. It bursts into bloom, like the purple heather we see on the Warren in the window, the fresh green of Tennyson Down where Freddie exercised his dog, & the green pasture where John Osman`s cows feed high on the coloured cliffs above the swimmers & yachts in the sparkling sea. Amazingly the glory & splendour of the renewed land of Israel will reach the deaf, the dumb, the blind, & the lame with

joyful healings v.5&6 as God comes & saves v.4. They will enter Zion v10, with singing, crowned with everlasting joy & gladness – no more sorrow & sighing back in their beloved land.

NT. Mark 7, 24-37. Page 1010

Faith as a beam in the darkness of pagan Phoenicia, brought the foreign woman to Jesus. Jesus was challenged by her faith, & his voice brought healing to her daughter.

Miles away, in the Decapolis, Jesus` voice was the 1st thing the healed deaf & dumb man heard.

Earlier in Mark`s gospel Jesus healed all diseases, including the lame & the blind of Isaiah`s prophetic vision. Jesus, the Christ, fulfilled all messianic prophecy.

The **Holy Spirit** is God`s active agent at all times: there in creation, inspiring scripture esp. giving courage to prophets in dire situations. Jesus Himself was conceived by the H.Sp., anointed & baptized in the Spirit, & was led & empowered by the HSp. in signs & miracles to bring in God`s kingdom on earth. After his death for us on the cross, & resurrection, His Holy Spirit at Pentecost filled his disciples: they had new voices, new tongues! They told the joyful good news, the wonderful works of God, that God`s glorious new kingdom has come.

Like Marconi`s air waves, the light & sound of the gospel has spread out down the ages & across the world reaching us here in West Wight. All those with faith in Jesus, the Light of the World, are welcome in His kingdom. I was 21 when I met Jesus as a student nurse. A Christian cricketer, a local curate, David, spoke to the CU. This year at the Soul Survivor youth camp, over 1500 young people came to Christ. In Uganda last week, many South Sudanese also became committed Christians in their refugee camp. Jesus said angels rejoice as the lost are found - imagine it +++!

To Conclude.

In the power of the Holy Spirit: God`s voice spoke - & there was light

Isaiah`s voice spoke – the nation was warned of disaster, & given the light of hope of a Messiah
Jesus` voice spoke - & healings & miracles changed dark lives to the glory of new life with Him
Jesus is still the Light of the World, Lux Mundi, the Alpha & Omega at the top of the window. He is the beginning & the end & He doesn`t change. He forgives all our wrongdoings, however bad, when we bring them to Him. Whoever believes in Jesus, like dear Ros, will receive the joy of eternity with Him.

Do you know Him? Is He LORD of your life?

Let`s Pray.

Heavenly Father,

We gladly praise you for this beautiful world that You have made; give us grace to care for it.

Thank you for inspiring Peter Berry to show us how Your Light from the beginning is Jesus, the Light of the World.

Thank you that Your 7 lights in the chapters of the book of Revelation are still brilliantly shining in churches across the world. Grant Christ Church to be a lighthouse for you in our community.

Give each one of us Your Holy Spirit to be Your voice & Your light to our neighbours. We ask that all our local churches may still be the hope of our nation.

Meanwhile we look forward with joyous anticipation to hearing the sound of the eschatological trumpet & to seeing Jesus returning in glorious light to reign for ever & ever. **Amen.**