

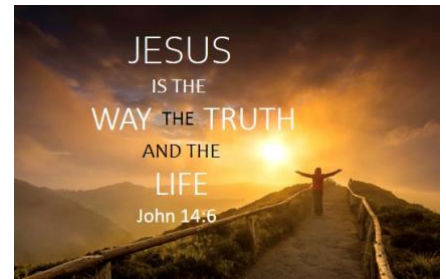


The Central Norfolk Methodist Circuit

Sunday 3rd May 2026

Theme "The way and the truth and the life"

Prepared by Elsie Warby Local Preacher



Opening Prayer:

As we come before you today, guide us and hear our prayer. In our times of testing and sorrow, be our rock and salvation, and shine your love upon us. Amen.

Hymn 94: To God be the glory <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2CeBoSQsBR0>

To God be the glory, great things He hath done,
so loved He the world that He gave us His Son,
who yielded His life an atonement for sin,
and opened the life-gate that all may go in.

*Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,
let the earth hear His voice!*

*Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,
let the people rejoice!*

*O come to the Father through Jesus the Son,
and give Him the glory, great things He hath done.*

O perfect redemption, the purchase of blood,
to ev'ry believer the promise of God;
the vilest offender who truly believes,
that moment from Jesus a pardon receives.

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,

Great things He hath taught us, great things He hath done,
and great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son;
but purer, and higher, and greater will be
our wonder, our transport, when Jesus we see.

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,

Prayer

Lord, as we come to you, we wait on your Word, the living Word; we wait on the Spirit, your truthful Spirit; fill us with hope that we might be built up, and be strong, and know that we are your holy people. By your powerful word the whole universe came to be. All of nature finds its home in your creation, that sustains all living things in harmony. By your power you created us in your own image, so that we might know you, and walk with joy in your presence. By your calling, we are made holy, yet we know that we do not always live up to this holy calling. Forgive our harsh words and thoughtless acts, our forgetfulness and pride. Forgive us and have mercy on us through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hymn: 252 Jesus the Lord said <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jFmBruVQ36M>

Jesus the Lord said: 'I am the Bread,
the Bread of Life for the world am I.
The Bread of Life for the world am I,
the Bread of Life for the world am I.'
Jesus the Lord said: 'I am the Bread,
the Bread of Life for the world am I.'

Jesus the Lord said: 'I am the Vine,
the true and fruitful Vine am I.
The true and fruitful Vine am I,
the true and fruitful Vine am I.'
Jesus the Lord said: 'I am the Vine,
the true and fruitful Vine am I.'

Jesus the Lord said 'I am the Way,
the true and living Way am I.
The true and living Way am I,
the true and living Way am I.'
Jesus the Lord said 'I am the Way,
the true and living Way am I.'

Jesus the Lord said 'I am the Light,
the one true Light of the world am I.
The one true Light of the world am I,
the one true Light of the world am I.'
Jesus the Lord said 'I am the Light,
the one true Light of the world am I.'

Jesus the Lord said: 'I am the life,
the resurrection and the life am I.
The resurrection and the life am I,
the resurrection and the life am I.'
Jesus the Lord said: 'I am the life,
the resurrection and the life am I.'

Bible reading: John 14: 1 – 14

Reflection

The disciples of Jesus were troubled and anxious; distraught that he was going away, after all they had been through together. Jesus is more upbeat though, as he gives a different perspective on his leaving. The disciples do not understand, and they try to draw out a more practical aspect of what he is saying. Thomas wants to know where he is going, and how they can know the way. Philip wants Jesus to show them the Father, for then they will be satisfied. They are desperate to hang on to some kind of solid foundation for their lives. We may find ourselves in troubling situations, or lose our way. If we get lost, we can use a map, or technology to show us. If all else fails, we just ask someone who knows. These are practical solutions, but Jesus of course is talking about a different kind of Way; a spiritual relationship, rather than a physical journey or practical solutions. I'm not very good at giving directions, but if I am asked where something is, that is close at hand, then I may be able to say, 'Come with me, I'll show you'. That is far better. The disciples are not satisfied with Jesus' verbal instructions, but he adds, that he will 'show' them the way – because he 'is' the Way.

But he does not need to show them the Father, because he is closer than they realise. "I am in the Father, and the Father is in me". The bad news is good news. From deep despair, Jesus has led them to life – life in him. Jesus is our living signpost, not by directions, but because we live in his way. And as he promised, we can do greater things for God, if we follow him. In a world that leads people away from the kingdom of God, where peace is fragile, love is fickle and joy is not always easy to find, let's not forget the words – "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life".

Hymn 346: Christ is the world's light

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WgJkQ3WE2vs&t=39s>

Christ is the world's light, Christ and none other;
born in our darkness, he became our brother.
If we have seen him, we have seen the Father:
Glory to God on high!

Christ is the world's life, Christ and none other;
sold once for silver, murdered here, our brother.
He who redeemed us, reigns with God the Father:
Glory to God on high!

Christ is the world's peace, Christ and none other;
no one can serve him and despise another.
Who else unites us, one with God the Father?
Glory to God on high!

Give God the glory, God and none other;
give God the glory, Spirit, Son and Father;
give God the glory, God with us, our brother:
Glory to God on high!

Prayers of Intercession

Lord God, we pray for the needs of your world. We pray for those in positions of authority; that they may seek peace, and show compassion and care instead of hatred and greed. We remember people and places where there is warfare, suffering, violence and corruption, especially in the spreading conflict in the Middle East, and in Ukraine, also in many other lands where ongoing unrest goes unnoticed.

We pray for our own communities; for those who are lonely and afraid, and for people who are suffering and overwhelmed by the world around them. We think of all who are troubled at heart, and in need of peace, that they may know the comfort and strength of the one who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Hymn 563: O Jesus, I have promised

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QrooaJ56dvc>

O Jesus, I have promised
to serve Thee to the end;
be Thou forever near me,
my Master and my Friend;
I shall not fear the battle
if Thou art by my side,
nor wander from the pathway
if Thou wilt be my Guide.

O let me feel Thee near me,
the world is ever near;
I see the sights that dazzle,
the tempting sounds I hear;
my foes are ever near me,
around me and within;
but, Jesus, draw Thou nearer,
and shield my soul from sin.

O let me hear Thee speaking
in accents clear and still,
above the storms of passion,
the murmurs of self-will;
O speak to reassure me,
to hasten or control!
O speak, and make me listen,
Thou Guardian of my soul!

O Jesus, Thou hast promised
to all who follow Thee
that where Thou art in glory
there shall Thy servant be;
and, Jesus, I have promised
to serve Thee to the end;
O give me grace to follow,
my Master and my Friend!

Blessing

May the blessing of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be with us always.

Amen