

Swaythling Parish

Sunday 27 September 2020

Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity

Welcome

Below is a service sheet for you to use for this week's Sunday morning service. You can also find our service each Sunday morning through the YouTube channel. It will be available on YouTube from 10am on Sunday, (and afterwards). Please search for "Swaythling Parish" on YouTube to find and view it (viewable from any smartphone, tablet or computer, and also from most "smart" TVs). If do not have access to watch the YouTube video, we hope you will be able to use these words and join us too in spirit.

Introduction from Rev Peter Dockree

Welcome to our service today, whether joining online, reading from the sheet, or worshipping in person.

In our online service today, we will be hearing some reflections from different people about their experience of lockdown, and we will send a printed update next week with this – but this week's printed service follows the service that will be happening in Church today.

Greeting

Grace mercy and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you

And also with you.

The Lord be with you

And also with you

Prayer of Thanks

We take a moment to recognise all that is good, in the midst of our lives.

Following on from this our first hymn is a hymn of thanks to God.

Hymn: Now thank we all our God

- 1 Now thank we all our God
with heart and hands and voices,
who wondrous things has done,
in whom his world rejoices;
who from our mothers' arms
has blessed us on our way
with countless gifts of love,
and still is ours today.
- 2 O may this bounteous God
through all our life be near us,
with ever joyful hearts
and blessed peace to cheer us,
to keep us in his grace,
and guide us when perplexed,
and free us from all ills
of this world in the next.
- 3 All praise and thanks to God
the Father now be given,
the Son and Spirit blest,
who reign in highest heaven
the one eternal God,
whom heaven and earth adore;
for thus it was, is now,
and shall be evermore.

Rinkart (1586-1649) trans Winkworth (1827-1878)

Confession

We now take a moment to say sorry, a moment to recognise the time we have caused pain to others, the times we have failed to act in humility and love, the moments we have let ourselves down, in the knowledge that we are held in God's forgiving love.

For the people we have hurt and those we have let down

Lord have mercy
Lord have mercy

For times when bitterness and anger have been our watchword and not love

Christ have mercy
Christ have mercy

For the times when we are beaten by inertia, and cynicism and fail to do what we can and should.

Lord have mercy
Lord have mercy

May the God of love
Bring us back to himself,
Forgive us our sins,
and assure us of his eternal love
in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Collect

Lord of creation,
whose glory is around and within us:

open our eyes to your wonders,
that we may serve you with reverence
and know your peace at our lives' end,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Readings:

Philippians 2: 1-13

Christians are encouraged to follow the example of Christ's humility.

If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

who, though he was in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God
as something to be exploited,
but emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave,
being born in human likeness.
And being found in human form,
he humbled himself
and became obedient to the point of
death—
even death on a cross.

Therefore God also highly exalted him
and gave him the name
that is above every name,
so that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bend,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
and every tongue should confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Matthew 21: 23-32

The religious leaders question Jesus' authority. Then he makes them think about how they need to obey God's will.

When he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, 'By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?' Jesus said to them, 'I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?' And they argued with one another, 'If we say, "From heaven", he will say to us, "Why then

did you not believe him?" But if we say, "Of human origin", we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet.' So they answered Jesus, 'We do not know.' And he said to them, 'Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

'What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, "Son, go and work in the vineyard today." He answered, "I will not"; but later he changed his mind and went. The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, "I go, sir"; but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?' They said, 'The first.' Jesus said to them, 'Truly I tell you, the tax-collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax-collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

A Reflection from Canon Bruce Hartnell

In days gone by it was common for young people to go into the same line of business as their fathers and mothers. A family business even today is admired and respected. Our surnames often come from our trade: Baker, Butcher, Smith, Carpenter. Everything bar Candlestick maker! In recent times this has

become the exception not the rule. Many of us, looking for work today or tomorrow, will be prepared to take just about anything to get some sort of job.

Matthew's gospel is the only one of the four to include a story Jesus told about two sons who re-act differently to their father's question: Who is going to take over the family business?

One says he will and fails to do it. The other says he won't and comes round after a while to doing the opposite. What do you think Jesus is getting at and who?

At this late stage in his life, Jesus has come into the Jerusalem temple and the gloves are off. The conflict between him and the religious authorities is hotting up and he is being asked, point blank, for his credentials. 'Where is your authority for your actions and your message?'

In reply, Jesus bowls back a fast ball with John the Baptist's name on it. Was his baptism inspired by God or man? They decide to be non-committal, for fear of other people's reactions: 'We don't know,' they reply.

Jesus' tale about the two sons and their father makes a new challenge. Around him he sees two groups of people: in the blue corner, priests and elders who make a lot of noise about doing the will of the Father in heaven but, in Jesus' opinion, don't put it into practice and in the red corner, tax-farmers (apologies to any employees of Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs; you are not at all the same) and

sex workers (who are thought by many to have little regard for right behaviour) who do respond to God's offer of respect and love for them and heartily want to share in the commonwealth Jesus is demonstrating as open to them all.

Prince Charles the other day said young people are asking what we are doing about the damage we have inflicted on the environment, on the variety of creatures threatened with extinction and global pollution. What they want, he says, is action not words. And I feel uneasy about which side I am standing. Am I more concerned with words than actions, seeming on the side of the angels but doing nothing effective to help? What is the Father calling us to do? Will we do it?

Let us pray that we shall have the humility to do just that.

Prayers

In the video, Karen leads us in prayers for our world and our community.

We pray to the Lord, to the God who is our shelter and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble.

Father God we pray for those areas of your world which are dominated by the darkness of war, terror, pain and suffering, thinking of the on-going suffering in Syria, Venezuela and South Sudan. We pray for all refugees, who risk their lives for a new start free from fear and war, and

for world leaders that they will work to tackle the root causes of the refugee crisis. We think particularly of the troubled refugee camp on Lesbos.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

We pray for our Government and local leaders that they will make informed and wise decisions as they seek to help manage the challenge of coronavirus. Help them to balance competing threats and priorities. May each one of us do what we can to prevent the spread and be mindful of the effects of our actions on others. We pray for those going to University for the first time, or returning to campus, that you will be with them in this unusual situation and help them to settle, find friends to support them, and feel safe.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

We pray in love and concern for people in a dark place today, for the victims of violence and hatred, for those who are lonely, uncertain or afraid, who feel they aren't coping or who dread the future; and for those in quarantine. We pray that they will find your strength and peace and that they will all have access to support and people to listen. We ask for your healing power for those who are facing with pain and illness, and for your strength for those who care for them. We share the grief of people close to us, who've recently lost loved ones, and we weep with them, May your light and love shine on them in their sadness.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Father God of love as our world seems more and more chaotic, help us open our hearts and minds to your peace and your presence. May we live as examples of your active forgiving and healing, love. We offer up our hopes and fears, our joys and sorrows to you, our refuge and strength.

Merciful father, accept these prayers for the sake of your son our saviour Jesus Christ, Amen.

Prayer of thanks for Gifts

Let us have a moment to acknowledge again all that we have as individuals and as a church community, not what would be but what is. If you would like to give to the life and work of this church then you can send a cheque made payable to Swaythling Parish, or give online :

www.give.net/SwaythlingParish

Let us take a moment now to give thanks to God: We thank you Lord for all the gifts we have received, financial and in so many other ways. Help us to use them wisely to share your love in this place. **Amen**

We end the service with the hymn Brother, Sister, let me serve you.

Hymn: Brother, sister, let me serve you

1. Brother, sister, let me serve you;
let me be as Christ to you;
pray that I may have the grace to
let you be my servant, too.

2. We are pilgrims on a journey,
Fellow travellers on the road;
we are here to help each other
walk the mile and bear the load.

3. I will hold the Christlight for you
in the night-time of your fear;
I will hold my hand out to you,
speak the peace you long to hear.

4. I will weep when you are weeping;
when you laugh I'll laugh with you;
I will share your joy and sorrow,
till we've seen this journey through.

5. When we sing to God in heaven,
we shall find such harmony,
born of all we've known together
of Christ's love and agony.

6. Brother, sister, let me serve you;
let me be as Christ to you;
pray that I may have the grace to
let you be my servant, too.

R Gillard (b. 1953) © 1977 Scripture in Song

A Closing Prayer

God of our pilgrimage,
you have fed us with the bread of heaven.
Refresh and sustain us
as we go forward on our journey,
to live and work to your praise and
glory. **Amen**

Closing Blessing

Thank you to everyone for joining us today.
May we go out and live the lives we have been

given and not the ones we may wish to be given.

May we go from this moment as radicals, as travellers, as change makers, as those who maintain the spaces of love, as people of prayer, sometimes as people called to be, sometimes as people called to do but always as people called to love.

And the blessing of God almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be with you now and always.
Amen.

APCM - Sunday 18 October at 10.15am

We will be holding our Annual Parochial Church Meeting as part of our morning worship on Sunday 18 October at St Alban's, at 10.15am. This had been due to be held in March, and had to be postponed due to lockdown. If you are not already on the electoral roll (which enables you to vote at the meeting), and would like to be added, forms can be found at the back of both churches, or we can email or post one out to you. We did a full revision of the roll last year, so if you filled in a form last year, then there is no need to fill it in again this year.

*Thank you for joining in with us. If we can support you in any way, please get in touch. 023 8055 4231
peter.dockree@outlook.com*

Songs reproduced under CCLI Licence No 159376. Streaming Licence (for video) No 101226. Scripture quotations are from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible, Anglicized Edition, copyright © 1989, 1995.