

# Swaythling Parish

## Sunday 11 October 2020

### Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity

#### Welcome

*Below is a service sheet for you to use at home. You can also find our Sunday morning reflection on YouTube channel, available at 10am on Sunday, (and afterwards). Please search for "Swaythling Parish" on YouTube to find and view it.*

#### Introduction from Rev Peter Dockree

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

This week in church we will be having a service focusing on harvest. A time to think about the wonders of creation and the beauty of the earth, time to be thankful for those who produce the food that we eat, and to God who is the ultimate provider, and to reflect on how we can take good care of the provisions that we have.

#### 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 :

#### Hymn: For the beauty of the Earth

1. For the beauty of the earth,  
for the beauty of the skies  
From the love which from our birth  
over and around us lies  
Lord of all to thee we raise  
this our sacrifice of praise
2. For the beauty of each hour  
of the day and of the night  
Hill and vale and tree and flower,  
sun and moon and flowers of light  
Lord of all to thee we raise  
this our sacrifice of praise
3. For the joy of human love,  
brother, sister, parent, child  
Friends above and friends on earth,  
for each perfect gift of thine  
Lord of all to thee we raise  
this our sacrifice of praise

F S Pierpoint (1863)

#### 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

**Creator God,**

**you made the goodness of the land,**

**the riches of the sea**

**and the rhythm of the seasons;**

**as we thank you for the harvest,**

**may we cherish and respect**

**this planet and its peoples,**

**through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

## Readings:

### Philippians 4: 1-9

*Paul encourages the Christians at Philippi to concentrate on good things and be open to receiving God's peace.*

Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved.

I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. Yes, and I ask you also, my loyal companion, help these women, for they have struggled beside me in the work of the gospel, together with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life.

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen

in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

This is the word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

### Matthew 22: 1-14

*A story of a wedding feast that the invited guests did not want to attend, and how ordinary people were invited in to enjoy the celebration.*

Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying: 'The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come. Again he sent other slaves, saying, "Tell those who have been invited: Look, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding banquet." But they made light of it and went away, one to his farm, another to his business, while the rest seized his slaves, maltreated them, and killed them. The king was enraged. He sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. Then he said to his slaves, "The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet." Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both good and bad; so the wedding hall was filled with guests.

'But when the king came in to see the guests,

he noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding robe, and he said to him, "Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding robe?" And he was speechless. Then the king said to the attendants, "Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." For many are called, but few are chosen.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise to you, O Christ.**

### A Reflection at harvest time from Rev Canon Bruce Hartnell

*"The truth about calories is hard to swallow"* said a big poster in my doctor's surgery with a couple of Friar Tucks stuffing in the foreground in case you didn't get the joke.

The trouble is we actually turn food into flesh and blood and some of it, all too easily, becomes spare tyre. Accepting this, some people come to the conclusion that we are all no more than matter, of limited duration and slight importance. Surprisingly enough some of us go on to lead unselfish lives all the same.

Deeply religious people disagree and propose that we should look for the spiritual banquet of mystical experience and meditation. Through all the troubles the world brings (and they seem quite a few at the moment) we should be concentrating on eternal values and the spiritual dimension. Some might judge this to be side-stepping the material world.

Thankfully, there are those who take food shortage in poorer parts of the world very seriously and urge the rest of us to look wider, showing generous compassion especially in times of emergency needs. What is required is food justice and scientific planning.

You and I know from our own experience how much more there is to eating than munch, munch, munch. Christmas dinner, tea for two, a candlelight supper, the Lord Mayor's Banquet, a family picnic, are all occasions of importance. Each one is more than a time for topping up the calories. They are time we celebrate. A meal is still a rite, a kind of ritual, something more than filling the stomach with fuel at a filling station. In dejection, anguish great or small, what makes a better symbol of comfort and care than a nice cup of tea?

The Christian faith has a lot to offer the famished. From start to finish, the Bible sees realistically what hungry beings humans are. It's like Willy Wonka's chocolate factory – all there for us to enjoy and eat. Ultimately the picture of life as a feast looks forward to the world's goal and our fulfilment in the banquet of God's kingdom.

So what's gone wrong? Why is it a bit like a sinking sponge cake or a soggy Yorkshire? We have failed to see the giver for the gift. Depending, as we do, on the world, being hungry creatures, ought to bring us in touch with the provider of it all, (just as a meal brings us closer to friends and loved ones). But it

seems not. Many have lost the knack of perceiving the world to be shot through with the presence of God.

Human beings love the world but as an end in itself and not as transparent to God. Widely we see the world as opaque, with nothing and no one beyond or behind it.

This Harvest I beg you not to settle for short weight. Don't go for life as no more than matter, atoms, muscles and red corpuscles. Don't hanker either for a spiritual diet which gives up on the world. Instead, look afresh at the world around us and specially food, which is going to become part of you, and see it all as given by God.

Then we begin to catch on to the rightness of thanking God for it all and we gradually start to find our deepest hungers are met.

### **Prayer at Harvest**

Father, we are mindful that whilst we are well fed and nourished there are many who are short of food, whose harvests have failed for lack of rain as climate changes, or whose livelihood has been destroyed by war, inhumanity and exploitation.

Bless the development agencies who are seeking to redress the balance and bring peace and justice where there is want, discord and destruction.

Bless those who work for climate justice so that all countries, rich and poor, will have an equal entitlement per person to create greenhouse gas emissions.

Give us generous hearts that from our riches we may increasingly give our support to those working among the poor and under-privileged in the world, and keep us ever mindful of our Lord's command to love our neighbours – whether close at hand or in the wider world – as ourselves.

We ask this in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

*Prayer at Harvest by Christian Ecology Link*

### **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](http://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**

## Hymn: All my hope on God is founded

- 1 All my hope on God is founded;  
he doth still my trust renew.  
Me through change and chance he guideth,  
only good and only true.  
God unknown, he alone  
calls my heart to be his own.
- 2 Human pride and earthly glory,  
sword and crown betray his trust;  
what with care and toil he buildeth,  
tower and temple, fall to dust.  
But God's power, hour by hour,  
is my temple and my tower.
- 3 God's great goodness aye endureth,  
deep his wisdom, passing thought:  
splendour, light, and life attend him,  
beauty springeth out of naught.  
Evermore, from his store  
new-born worlds rise and adore.
- 4 Daily doth th' Almighty giver  
bounteous gifts on us bestow;  
his desire our soul delighteth,  
pleasure leads us where we go.  
Love doth stand, at his hand;  
joy doth wait on his command.
- 5 Still from earth to God eternal  
sacrifice of praise be done,  
high above all praises praising  
for the gift of Christ his Son.  
Christ doth call, one and all:  
ye who follow shall not fall.

Joachim Neander (1650)

## 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 joyful for the  
abundance of creation, mindful of the misuse of  
creation and hopeful for the future of creation.

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

*Thank you for joining in with us. If we can support you in  
any way, please get in touch. peter.dockree@outlook.com  
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## APCM - Sunday 18 October after Morning Worship at St Alban's

We will be holding our Annual Parochial  
Church Meeting immediately following our  
morning worship service (which starts at  
10.15am) on Sunday 18 October at St Alban's.

This was due to be held in March, but  
postponed due to lockdown.  
Please do join us if you would like to.