

Swaythling Parish

Sunday 12 July 2020

Fifth Sunday after Trinity

Welcome

Below is a service sheet for you to use for this week's Sunday morning service. This is based on a service that is being broadcast as a video on 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 everyone worshipping with us today. Many of us have said for years that worship and prayer does not need to be done in a specific place. Church is a gathering of people and, as wonderful as our buildings are, we can worship without them; but these last few months have put that reality to the test in a way that none of us could have predicted.

We have been able to go to church in our living rooms or kitchens, vicars like me have been able to worship with family in a way that we haven't for years, and some, who for example because of disability and illness, often struggle to make it to church in person, have been able to access a choice of worship that was never previously possible. Something too has been lost, the familiarity and spiritual presence that we feel in a building, and

most centrally the connections with people. Some are now worshipping together in person in church buildings again and we will be too, as soon as we feel it is safe and sustainable to do so within the current guidelines. But even when that day comes, I pray some of what has been positive about worship in this time, can remain. Today, we welcome you wherever you are and whatever your circumstances as we meet in virtual togetherness.

Greeting

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

Alleluia. Christ is Risen
He is Risen indeed. Alleluia

Prayer of Thanks

Those who know me will know I am not always very observant. I remember one time when I was on a silent retreat. I had been in this remote place in Wales for several days already and was walking back from my daily hour of talking when I met my guide and as we walked back, she said aren't the snow drops beautiful. Until that moment, I hadn't noticed them at all, and suddenly I realised that the place we were in was covered in the beautiful white flowers, huge beds of them, but I amazingly hadn't noticed. You may be better at noticing the details of your environment than I am, but perhaps many of us can be bad at noticing something. Noticing the kindness that is done to us, noticing the beautiful things we have in our lives, noticing the things that go well. So let's notice. Let's notice together something good and let's thank God for it.

Thank you Lord for all you have given us – for the people that brighten our days, the love that you

surround us with, your presence with us and the beauty in the creation around us. Help us in all the joys and sorrows of our week to find causes to be thankful.

Amen

Hymn: Take this moment

- 1 Take this moment, sign and space;
Take my friends around;
Here among us make the place
Where your love is found.
- 2 Take the time to call my name,
Take the time to mend
Who I am and what I've been,
All I've failed to tend.
- 3 Take the tiredness of my days,
Take my past regret,
Letting your forgiveness touch
All I can't forget
- 4 Take the little child in me
Scared of growing old;
Help me here to find my worth
Made in God's own mould.
- 5 Take my talents, take my skills,
Take what's yet to be;
Let my life be yours, and yet
Let it still be me.

J Bell, G Maule ©1988 WGRG, Iona Community

Confession

There are so many things that stop us from being the people we are made to be, but one of them is guilt, when we are held back by the mistakes we have made. I believe in a God who wants us to be

released to our potential and free from all that holds us back. For that reason we are going to give our mistakes, our failings, our sins to God now, holding onto the promise of forgiveness.

From a need for order and control,
From the need to insulate ourselves from doubt,
From the need to appear invulnerable,
From that need for security which closes our minds:
Good Lord, release us.

From intolerance of others' views,
From fear of others' beliefs,
From fear and rejection of those who are not like us,
From letting our faith hinder our expression of humanity:
Good Lord, release us.

From scepticism of reason and argument,
From disregard of scientific exploration,
From fear of questions and discoveries,
From fear of research and experiment:
Good Lord, release us.

From fear of freedom,
From fear of the responsibility of free will,
From false humility which dishonours your creation,
From hypocrisy and any exaggerated sense of self worth:
Good Lord, release us.

From fear of any challenge to our faith,
From the certainty which blinds us to other possibilities,
From any attempt to claim all truth,
From fear of using all our gifts in worship:

Good Lord, release us.

Dorrie Johnson

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

Almighty God,
send down upon your Church
the riches of your Spirit,
and kindle in all who minister the gospel
your countless gifts of grace;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

Readings:

Our first reading today builds on that promise of forgiveness that we just spoke out, by reminding us that there is no condemnation in Jesus.

Romans 8.1-11

Life in the Spirit: It is God's Spirit within us that enables us to live in God's way

Read by Scott in the video

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and to deal with sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according

to the Spirit. For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed it cannot, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Let us take a moment to own all the ways in which condemn ourselves and remind ourselves of the forgiveness, spoken just before the reading allowing ourselves to be held in God's love.

Our second reading is the moment where Jesus told the parable of the sower. After that Bruce will share some thoughts on the passage.

Matthew 13.1-9

The Parable of the Sower

Read by Julie in the video

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the lake. Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he told

them many things in parables, saying: 'Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Let anyone with ears listen!'

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

A Reflection from Bruce Hartnell

'My, you've grown!'

The youngest in our family were here, first sight since Christmas, and the almost 7-year-old has definitely shot up. You can't actually watch them growing but comparing how far she comes up to now with how much last time proves the obvious.

I was given an olive in a pot some birthdays back and transplanted it into a larger pot and then into a spot in the garden. Anyone can see it has grown and even has the hint of fruit forming after flowers. I can't wait - being very fond of olives myself.

Getting unusually active in the garden this year, I have tried for the very first time sowing grass. I was impressed with the instructions: rake the soil, then scatter as evenly as possible in a criss-cross pattern, sowing half the seed from left to right and the rest from top to bottom.

I kept it watered especially on the hotter days and I

waited. And I waited. I couldn't hear anything, I couldn't see anything. Was it growing? The instructions promised superfast germination. Any time from four days, grass would start to appear.

Well, quite a few weeks on, it has been carefully cut once by hand – I felt scissors might be the right tool but settled for shears. There is some weed in with the grass, clover or something like it. There were some small stones which escaped the rake and were not found until I was giving it first cut. The best of it looks reassuringly green and is doing really well.

When Jesus spotted a farmer sowing seed it was not for the look of the thing; it was about growing crops, feeding people and animals and making a living for the farmer's own household. This was serious and essential work. The three main money-earners for people in Galilee were fishing, farming and tending animals. 'Countryfile' then on Palestine television would have covered much the same topics as 'Countryfile' today.

Frequently, Jesus in his stories picks on something they have all seen, time and again. But he will focus on something many might have missed; the glory of a wild flower, the large number of sparrows, or this time the almost overwhelming harvest, against all odds, from grain thrown on the fertile soil. Not just thirty times the outlay, not even sixty but a hundred times over. That is the richness God offers in the harvest-prospect of his Kingdom, growing unseen, unheard, but unstoppable. Who would not jump at the chance to be part of it? May it grow in you, in me in every one. Amen.



Prayers

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

Thank you, Lord, for loving us, caring for us and all you do for us.

We pray for the world as it faces this pandemic, for some countries it is getting easier and for others harder. We pray for the world's leaders making big decisions and pray that they would have wisdom.

We pray that all forms of racism and prejudice would be wiped from our country and our world – please challenge our own prejudices and help us to see how we can be part of the solution.

We pray for people who are ill or for people whose families are ill. We pray for people who have lost relatives or friends during this time. Comfort those who need it for whatever reason.

We pray for the church as it continues to serve the community in many ways and we also pray for things happening in the world such as homelessness, poverty that continue no matter what else is happening.

Finally we pray for all of us and hope that we will find strength in our doubts. We pray that we will feel safe as for some the world starts to get back to a kind of normal.

Thank you for hearing our prayers

Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Prayer of thanks for Gifts

As a church we are hugely grateful for all those who give of their time, money and prayer to further the work of the church. Now, as always, there are many people working, some visibly and others not so, to ensure the church remains active and relevant during these challenging times.

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 at:
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**

Notices

Now where would a service be without notices! Next Saturday, the 18th July, we will be holding a “virtual” summer fete. As different as this will be to the usual outdoor event, we hope you will feel able to join in just the same. If you would like a cream tea delivered to your home, or someone else’s, for a suggested donation of £6 just drop an email to peter.dockree@outlook.com or ring 02380 554231.

Hymn: God is working his purpose out.

I God is working his purpose out,
as year succeeds to year,
God is working his purpose out,
and the time is drawing near;
nearer and nearer draws the time,
the time that shall surely be,
when the earth shall be filled with the glory of God
as the waters cover the sea.

2 From utmost east to utmost west,
wherever feet have trod,
by the mouth of many messengers
goes forth the voice of God,
'Give ear to me, ye continents,
ye isles, give ear to me,
that the earth may be filled with the glory of God
as the waters cover the sea.'

3 What can we do to work God's work,
to prosper and increase
the love of God in all mankind,
the reign of the Prince of peace?
What can we do to hasten the time?
the time that shall surely be,
when the earth shall be filled with the glory of God
as the waters cover the sea

4 March we forth in the strength of God,
with the banner of Christ unfurled,
that the light of the glorious gospel of truth
may shine throughout the world;
fight we the fight with sorrow and sin,
to set their captives free,
that the earth may be filled with the glory of God
as the waters cover the sea.

5 All we can do is nothing worth
unless God blesses the deed;
vainly we hope for the harvest-tide
till God gives life to the seed;
yet nearer and nearer draws the time,
the time that shall surely be,
when the earth shall be filled with the glory of God
as the waters cover the sea.

A C Ainger. 1894. Adapted by M Forester (1945) ©
1996 Kevin Mayhew Ltd

Closing Blessing

Thank you to everyone for joining us today. May God's Kingdom grow in you, and bring you freshly to the week ahead.

A Closing :

Enjoy beauty
Forgive recklessly
Accept forgiveness
Stand up
Tear down
Be heard
Don't be afraid.

Be a sister
Be a brother
Cry
Pay attention
Listen
Be released
Be reborn
Welcome
Be known
Be loved
Love
Remember.

We are dust and shadow
And God's ok with that

© Emma Major, Liturgy in a Dangerous Time.

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. 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.