

Swaythling Parish

Sunday 25 October 2020

Twentieth 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 worshipping in person. Today Ann will be reflecting on music and thankfulness.

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.

Hymn: New Every Morning

- 1 New every morning is the love
our wakening and uprising prove;
through sleep and darkness safely brought,
restored to life and power and thought.
- 2 New mercies, each returning day,
hover around us while we pray;

new perils past, new sins forgiven,
new thoughts of God, new hopes of heaven.

- 3 If on our daily course our mind
be set to hallow all we find,
new treasures still, of countless price,
God will provide for sacrifice.
- 4 Old friends, old scenes, will lovelier be,
As more of heaven in each we see;
Some softening gleam of love and prayer
Shall dawn on every cross and care.
- 5 The trivial round, the common task,
will furnish all we need to ask,
room to deny ourselves, a road
to bring us daily nearer God.
- 6 Only, O Lord, in thy dear love
fit us for perfect rest above;
and help us, this and every day,
to live more nearly as we pray.

John Keble (1792-1866)

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 times when we have been silent or
failed to notice the struggles of others.

Lord have mercy

Lord have mercy

For times when we have either by omission or
action contributed towards an unjust world.

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

**God, our light and our salvation:
illuminate our lives,
that we may see your goodness in the
land of the living,
and looking on your beauty
may be changed into the likeness of
Jesus Christ our Lord.**

Readings:

Colossians 3: 12-17

*Encouragement to live lives full of generosity and
faithfulness. (Jerusalem Bible Translation)*

You are God's chosen race, his saints; he loves you, and you should be clothed in sincere compassion, in kindness and humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with one another; forgive each other as soon as a quarrel begins. The Lord has forgiven you; now you must do the same. Over all these clothes, to keep them together and complete them, put on love. And may the peace of Christ reign in your hearts, because it is for this that you were called together as parts of one body. Always be thankful.

Let the message of Christ, in all its richness, find a home with you. Teach each other, and advise each other, in all wisdom. With gratitude in your hearts sing psalms and hymns and inspired songs to God; and never say or do anything except in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

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

Matthew 24: 30-35

*A vision of the coming of the Son of Man in judgement.
(Jerusalem Bible Translation)*

And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven; then too all the peoples of the earth will beat their breasts; and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet to gather his chosen from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. The time of this coming 'Take the fig tree as a parable: as soon as its twigs grow supple and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. So with you when you see all these things: know that he is near, at the very gates. I tell you solemnly, before this generation has passed away all these things will have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

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

A Reflection from Ann Lewin

Let the message of Christ in all its richness, find a home with you. Teach each other and advise each other in all wisdom. With gratitude in your hearts, sing psalms and hymns and inspired songs to God; and never say or do anything except in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him Col 3: 12-17

With gratitude in your hearts, sing psalms and hymns and inspired songs to God. For the last seven months that is what we have not been able to do together, whatever we may have done at home. Closing church buildings didn't close the church down: Christians went on praying, alone or with others on line, and much energy went into making sure that we kept in touch with each other, and that people in the wider community as well as in the church family were provided for when they couldn't get out to take care of their own needs.

When people were asked what they missed most about not being able to go to church, after saying that it was the people they used to meet there whom they missed, a very common response was to say that they missed being able to sing with others, and that has remained true even though services have begun in church again: we are still not allowed to sing in the congregation, though we can now have a cantor to sing for us.

It is not only churches where music plays an important role. Churches have a particular repertoire of music ancient and modern, but think of all the crowds who go to Festivals in muddy fields every year; who sing or chant at football matches; who join in patriotic songs at the Last Night of the Proms. Music is in our DNA.

Personally, music has been integral to my life. I grew up hearing my mother sing about the house as she did the chores. I was only three, when WW2 began. Churches who couldn't arrange blackout in their buildings moved Evensong to daylight hours. My brothers were in the church choir, and this change of timing made it possible for all the family to go to church together, instead of one parent having to stay at home to look after me. I'm told that I sang *All things bright and beautiful* whatever other people were singing....We were a musical family, and when my brothers' voices changed, we could manage four part singing round the piano. Most Sundays we got all the hymn books out, and sang along with Sunday Half Hour, the wireless precursor to Songs of Praise. Gradually more structure was introduced into my musical life. I joined choirs, one of them was the Junior Southampton Philharmonic Choir, which joined the main choir for parts of major performances. In 1951, I was one of those chosen to be part of a representative choir to enter the Southampton Music Festival. Rather to the annoyance of other local choirs we won, and went on to take part in the national Music Festival in the Festival Hall with 20 other similar choirs. We almost had the honour of singing the National Anthem as Princess Elizabeth arrived, representing the Queen, but she was held up on the stairs, and we were ushered off the stage to let the next choir do the honours. It was a great experience, and we didn't come last!

In adult life, I continued to sing with choirs large and small, and had the joy of singing in many of the great oratorios, with famous orchestras, soloists and conductors, as well as making music with friends. I still have a tune in my head most of the time, unless I have to concentrate on something else.

So what does music contribute to our lives?

1. It creates, or gives expression to community, allowing us to give reign to a whole range of emotions and experiences. Think of the Spirituals sung by African slaves, voicing lament and longing as well as hope for a better future. Think of the Psalms, expressing many of the same emotions for the Jewish people, with an added emphasis on singing praise to God as well as asking questions about the meaning of life. Think of all the people who listen to Songs of Praise each week, and find resonances in their own lives with what is expressed by those taking part.

2. Music is one of the great creative outlets alongside art and dance. As well as the classical store of great compositions and performers, in the last sixty years there have been hundreds of pop-groups, some achieving greatness, others simply giving pleasure to those who take part in making music. The Corona virus couldn't stifle that creativity, there are lots of examples of groups using modern technology to record individuals playing or singing alone and then amalgamating all the individual contributions into amazing ensembles. Church choirs became adept at using this skill – and the internet is full of recordings made, including skits on the efforts of the virtual choirs. There was fun as well as a lot of hard work involved.

3. Music has a therapeutic value as well – it lifts the spirits in a way that other treatments or interventions can't. Think of songs like *It's a long way to Tipperary*, and *Pack up your troubles in your old kit bag and smile, smile, smile*, which kept soldiers going in the First World War, and lived on in the Second, alongside the songs Vera Lynn made popular. The general public sang along with them

and felt a sense of solidarity in difficult times. Many living now with dementia, and their carers, have been grateful for the opportunity to join with others in choirs which awaken memories which have been lost, and help those living with the condition to feel that they are not alone. I used to sing to my mother as she moved further into the mists of Alzheimer's, singing hymns was a way of praying with her, and she sometimes mouthed the words along with me, though she couldn't then sing.

4. Music involves the whole of our physical selves, and singing is a way of offering back to God in worship the life God has given us. William Byrd, composing church music in the sixteenth century wrote that everyone should learn to sing:

The exercise of singing is delightfull to Nature, and good to preserve the health of man. It doth strengthen all parts of the brest, and open the pipes . It is a singular good remedy to a stutting and stamering in the speeche.....There is not any Musicke of Instruments whatsoever, comparable to that which is made of the voyces of Men, where the voyces are good and the same well sorted and ordered. The better the voyce is the meeter it is to honour and serve God therewith: and the voyce of man is chiefly to be employed to that ende.

Even earlier than that, in the late fourth century, St Augustine of Hippo, in Africa, said *He who sings prays twice*. We offer ourselves, soul and body to God, as we pray with song.

That takes us back to St Paul who links everything we do to offering ourselves to God in thanksgiving. Even when we can't sing aloud, we can always give thanks, thanks for God's faithfulness, thanks for the wonders of creation, thanks for the love of friends and strangers.

Thanksgiving is the practice we need when the demands and restrictions of life threaten to be overwhelming. It is impossible to give thanks *for* everything but we can learn to give thanks *in* everything - but we have to practise. If we are not already in the habit of doing it, perhaps being thankful is something we could set ourselves to do as we go through the next phase of dealing with life as we have to live it, establishing a habit of looking back at the end of the day and giving thanks for what has been good, even if all we can say is that we have survived. Being thankful doesn't mean denying that there are things that are hard, real losses and difficulties to lament over. Being thankful means that we don't let lament have the last word, holding us close to despair. Thanksgiving is an expression of our will, not necessarily of our feelings. Remembering God's goodness in the past gives us hope for the future, and hope is what we all need to hold on to as we move forward.

George Herbert wrote:

*Thou who hast given so much to me,
Give one thing more, a grateful heart.*

.....
*Not grateful when it pleaseth me,
As if thy blessings had spare dayes
But such a heart whose pulse may be
Thy praise.*

Prayers

Let us pray for our world, our community and those in need around us.

In the quietness,
aware that we are only part of a great multitude,
on earth and in heaven,
who share in the Church's offering of worship,
let us join ourselves with them

and bring to God in prayer our own hopes and needs,
together with those of all his children.
Through silence, spoken word and music,
let us be open to the God who both listens and speaks to us.

For your holy catholic Church,
seeking the renewal of her unity,
drawing men and women to Christ,
and proclaiming your love in all the world.....
Let us pray to the Lord.

For the leaders of the churches, for our Bishops,
and for all who share Christ's ministry in this place,
and especially for those who order the worship of your people,
that many may draw close to you in prayer and praise.....
Let us pray to the Lord.

For all whom you inspire to compose music,
for all to whom you give skill and devotion to perform it,
and for all your children who are enriched and renewed by it.....
Let us pray to the Lord.

For the nations of the world,
seeking the path to peace and justice:
for this country,
for Elizabeth our Queen,
and for all who strive to build here a society that is Christian and free.....
Let us pray to the Lord.

For those who suffer in mind and body,
and for those who dedicate their lives to caring for their neighbours.....

Let us pray to the Lord.

For all who have gone before us in the faith of Christ,
for those who in past generations have enriched your Church with fine music,
and for all who have served as musicians in this church / parish.....

Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord of the Church,
**hear our prayer,
and makes us one in heart and mind
to serve you with joy forever. Amen.**

Adapted from Let all the world (© RSCM, 1987)

Prayer of thanks for Gifts

Let us have a moment to acknowledge again all that we have as individuals and as a church community, seeking an attitude of thankfulness. 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**

Hymn: Give me joy in my heart

I Give me joy in my heart, keep me praising
Give me joy in my heart, I pray
Give me joy in my heart, keep me praising
Keep me praising till the break of day

*Sing hosanna, sing hosanna
Sing hosanna to the Servant King*

*Sing hosanna, sing hosanna
Sing hosanna, let us sing*

2 Give me peace in my heart, keep me loving...

3 Give me love in my heart, keep me serving...

4 Give me light in my heart, keep me shining...

Traditional

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.
As we go now, from this moment
As we leave behind our time together.
May we walk with, one another.
May we help each other on the way.
As we go now, from this moment
As we go into the future together.
May we treasure one another,
May we realise how precious we are

© Fischy Music.

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 023 8055 4231 Songs reproduced under CCLI Licence No 159376. Streaming Licence No 101226. Scripture quotations from NRSVA version of the Bible, © 1989, 1995.