

**Swaythling Parish**  
**Sunday 8 November 2020**  
**Remembrance Sunday**  
(Third Sunday before Advent)

**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 or reading from the sheet.

Today we gather online to remember. The online Sunday service will be followed by a pre-recorded short act of remembrance, which was filmed earlier this week (before lockdown started) from the Memorial at St Albans.

**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: Guide me O thou great Redeemer.**

1. Guide me, O thou great redeemer,  
Pilgrim through this barren land;  
I am weak, but thou art mighty,  
Hold me with thy powerful hand;  
Bread of heaven, bread of heaven  
Feed me till I want no more;  
Feed me till I want no more.
  
2. Open now the crystal fountain  
Whence the healing stream doth flow;  
Let the fire and cloudy pillar  
Lead me all my journey through:  
Strong deliverer, strong deliverer;  
Be thou still my strength and shield;  
Be thou still my strength and shield.
  
3. When I tread the verge of Jordan,  
Bid my anxious fears subside;  
Death of death, and hell's destruction  
Land me safe on Canaan's side:  
Songs of praises, songs of praises,  
I will ever give to thee;  
I will ever give to thee.

Arglwydd, arwain trwy'r anialwch  
William Williams, 1717-1791,  
translated Peter Williams, 1723-1796

**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 times when we have either by omission or action contributed towards a divided world

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 refuge and strength,  
bring near the day when wars shall cease, and poverty and pain shall end, that earth may know the peace of heaven  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

## Reading:

### Matthew 25: 1-13

*The first of three parables about Judgement, this one emphasizing the need to be on the watch.*

‘Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a shout, “Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.” Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish said to the wise, “Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.” But the wise replied, “No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.” And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut. Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, “Lord, lord, open to us.” But he replied, “Truly I tell you, I do not know you.” Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

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

## A Reflection from Peter

I am someone who has a tendency to leave things till tomorrow. Perhaps things that worry me, or that I don't know how to tackle, I leave and hope they will somehow revolve themselves, even if I know they won't. Our reading is a challenge not to do this, a call to be alert.

We read a story about bridesmaids not ready for the banquet. This is a story about judgement, about end times, but it is also a message for all times. In the run up to both world wars there were some who ignored the portents of the time and others who were wise to them. Those who chose to ignore the signs of darkness and hate and those who were wise to them.

In our times today there are signs of light and hope and signs of darkness. There are people sowing division and despair and those seeking to unite and hold together. Being alert to the master in our midst is not just about holding some sort of purity code until Jesus comes again, in fact it may have very little to do with that, it is about looking out for justice, standing up for peace, promoting love in everything. The sacrifices made by many both in ways long ago and those of recent times, come to nothing, if we don't all do our bit to promote peace. Peace in our communities, peace in our families and peace in the world that we impact. There are many things we cannot change, but that does not excuse silence and inaction on the things we can.

## Prayers

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

We pray for those who have fought in wars both in the past and in the present. We give thanks for the courage and sacrifice made by so many. For all those impacted by war, civilians caught in crossfire, refugees fleeing home as a result of war. Child soldiers pressured to fight.

For all those working for justice and peace around our world. Give them the wisdom to know when and how to act.

For all those suffering the effects of lockdown in our locality, our nation and our world. For those grieving and those sick at this time. For places and spaces of despair and hopelessness, may your hope be live and real.

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](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: Lead us heavenly Father lead us**

1. Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us  
O'er the world's tempestuous sea;  
Guard us, guide us, keep us, feed us,  
For we have no help but Thee;  
Yet possessing every blessing  
If our God our Father be.
2. Saviour, breathe forgiveness o'er us;  
All our weakness Thou dost know;  
Thou didst tread this earth before us,  
Thou didst feel its keenest woe;  
Lone and dreary, faint and weary,  
Through the desert Thou didst go.
3. Spirit of our God, descending,  
Fill our hearts with heavenly joy,  
Love with every passion blending,  
Pleasure that can never cloy;  
Thus provided, pardoned, guided,  
Nothing can our peace destroy.

James Edmeston (1821)

**Closing Blessing**

Merciful God, we offer to you the fears in us  
that have not yet been cast out by love:  
may we accept the hope you have placed  
in the hearts of all people,  
and live lives of justice, courage and  
mercy;  
through Jesus Christ our risen redeemer.  
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.*

**Note from Rev Peter Dockree  
At the start of the Second Lockdown**

If you have ever been on a roller coaster and you sometimes find sections in the middle where things slow down or flatten off, and then suddenly you go again, round more hairpin bends or loop the loops. Perhaps it can feel a little like that now. We have just had the hiatus of the Summer (I write this cautiously because I know that for some of you that hiatus never really happened), and now we are entering another lockdown, and facing a second wave of Covid 19. It can feel like we are just waiting for the loop the loop to start again, but this is not a thrilling rollercoaster but rather a frustrating, sometimes lonely, sometimes uncertain period. There are so many unknowns in the next month or so. So many things that can't be pinned down. Or perhaps you are secretly/ or not so secretly (!) looking forward to lockdown two.

Whatever your emotions right now, please know this, the church may not be open for Sunday worship for at least the next four weeks, but we are not closing. We are open if you need someone to talk with or listen to you. We are open if you are struggling with anything and need support. We are open if you want to worship (either via our online content or written service sheets which we can send you or share online), we are open if you or anyone you know is in hardship, and we are open to say that you are loved and God is love.