

Parish of Central Exeter

Morning Worship and Spiritual Communion

4th Sunday after Trinity, 10 July 2022.

Welcome.

The reflections for today's worship are from Sheila and the intercessions from Caroline. Many thanks to you both.

We begin this act of worship today with a hymn of praise: Jubilate everybody. Words are on the screen.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nukqkr29DP8>

Call to worship

The weeks of Trinity are also known as ordinary time.

It takes little faith to see the sacred in the extraordinary.

To have faith the sacred is in the ordinary, though,
takes courage to believe the mundane can be enough;
that grace can emerge
even through the dull,
the slightly disappointing,
the not quite right,
not quite as we intended,
not really what we hoped;
the clumsy,
the awkward,
and the imperfect.

Let your act of faith be
to let what you do be enough.

Let what you do be enough...

(written by Cheryl Lawrie, and posted on [hold this space])

We seek forgiveness

God of truth,
we know we fall far short of your expectations for us –
sometimes we fail even our own self-expectations.

We wander away from you in our daily routines;
we ignore your commands
and in apathy turn our backs on those who are suffering.

Forgive our short-sighted vision,
our constant focus on ourselves,
and our discounting of future generations in our decision-making.

Help us to deepen our connections with you
through prayer, praise and scripture,
and with others through affirming, supportive relationships.

We pray in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ,
the source of all grace, Amen.

(posted on The Presbyterian Church in Canada website.)

Assurance of forgiveness

“Remember, I am with you always, until the end of the age.”

Christ is with us, now and always.

The Holy Spirit is in our midst, now and always.

God the Creator is creating something new, now and always.

We are always loved, always forgiven, always known to God and cannot be forgotten.

Know this, and share the Good News. Amen.

Collect for Today

Gracious Father, by the obedience of Jesus, you brought salvation to our wayward world: draw us into harmony with your will, that we may find all things restored in him, our Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Worship song

'O for a heart to praise my God' Words are on the screen.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0FyAY9fzcnU>

Reading

New Testament Reading

Colossians 1:1-14

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,

²To the saints and faithful brothers and sisters in Christ in Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

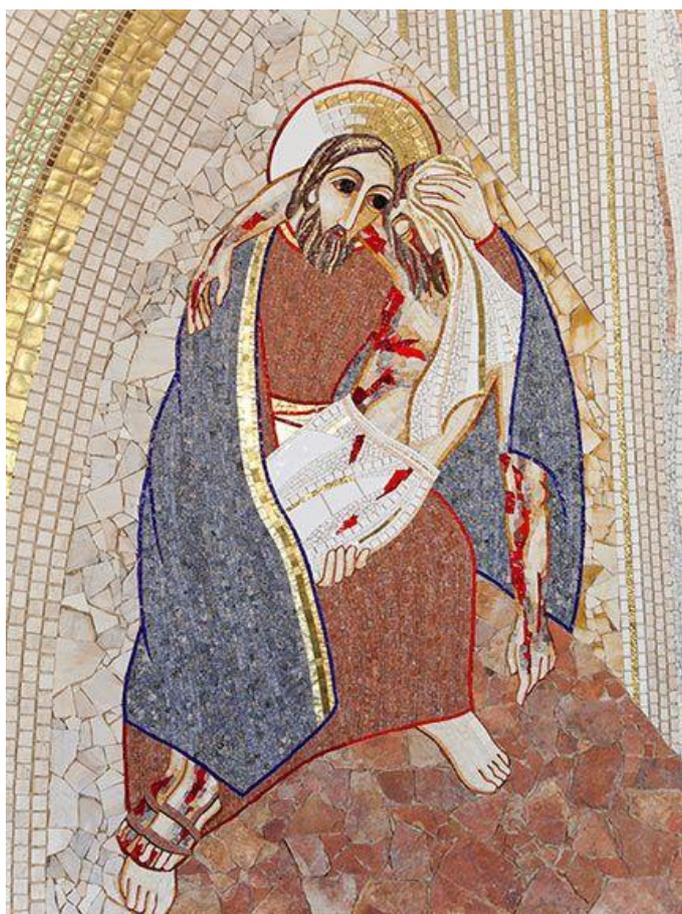
³In our prayers for you we always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, ⁴for we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, ⁵because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. You have heard of this hope before in the word of the truth, the gospel ⁶that has come to you. Just as it is bearing fruit and growing in the whole world, so it has been bearing fruit among yourselves from the day you heard it and truly comprehended the grace of God. ⁷This you learned from Epaphras, our beloved fellow-servant.¹ He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf, ⁸and he has made known to us your love in the Spirit.

⁹For this reason, since the day we heard it, we have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, ¹⁰so that you may lead lives worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, as you bear fruit in every good work and as you grow in the knowledge of God. ¹¹May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully ¹²giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light. ¹³He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, ¹⁴in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Gospel Luke 10:25-37

²⁵ Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. 'Teacher,' he said, 'what must I do to inherit eternal life?' ²⁶ He said to him, 'What is written in the law? What do you read there?' ²⁷ He answered, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself.' ²⁸ And he said to him, 'You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.'

²⁹ But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, 'And who is my neighbour?' ³⁰ Jesus replied, 'A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. ³¹ Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. ³² So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³ But a Samaritan while travelling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. ³⁴ He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. ³⁵ The next day he took out two denarii, gave them



to the innkeeper, and said, 'Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.' ³⁶ Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?' ³⁷ He said, 'The one who showed him mercy.' Jesus said to him, 'Go and do likewise.'

The Good Samaritan

Detail from a mosaic in the church of St Eusebius, Milan, by Marko Rupnik, Slovenian, 2010

Reflection

Growing and bearing fruit

Over the summer we will vary the focus between the New Testament reading and the passage from Luke's gospel. Today we look at the opening prayer for the small community of Christians in Colossae.

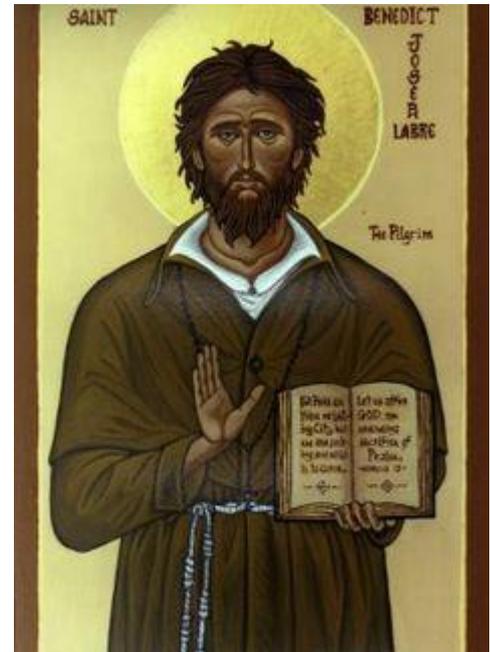
After the opening greeting Paul begins with thanksgiving for the 'faith in Christ Jesus' and the 'love in the Spirit' shown by members of the small community of believers. However, he is aware that such faith and love may not last when difficulties arise, or more exciting ideas are presented so he is unceasing in his prayers for them. He asks that they may have discernment to know God's will and so live in a way that is consistent with their newfound faith. This will be seen in the community as they show love to their neighbours (following the example given in today's parable) and as they mature in their understanding of God's ways. He recognises their need for strength and endurance as he expects that they may face trials. Then with joyful thanks to God, he reassures them of the forgiveness and new life they have received from God.

So how do we grow in this new life? At the service in St Olave's on 26 June the New Testament reading was Galatians 5, 13-25. This begins with the statement that 'Christ made us free', continues with a reminder of the command 'Love your neighbour the same as you love yourself' (another echo of today's parable) and concludes with the fruit of the Spirit 'love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.' I quoted an extract from *When I grow up: Conversations with adults in search of adulthood* by Moya Sarnier as I found similar ideas. One man in his mid-60s said 'If growing up is getting to be at peace with yourself, that has happened'. He was free from all the expectations put on him from work, society, family and had accepted himself. An elderly rabbi, who had been arrested at an Extinction Rebellion protest in 2019 and had gone on to form an eldership group with the organisation, described some of the qualities associated with eldership. These included 'curiosity, kindness, awareness, sensitivity and courage.' He also said that it has 'something to do with wisdom; (and) something to do with humility; (and) that you're working towards it'.

Such attitudes are ones that we can use as a challenge to ourselves and as we pray for other Christians. That with humility we may daily give thanks for all that God has given to us and 'lead lives worthy of the Lord'. As I thought about

this passage, I found again a card by my prayer books which had the following prayer. It is very similar to one I remember which is linked to St Benedict. I then realised that 11 July is the feast day for Benedict so it is appropriate to conclude with this prayer and then his collect.

Gracious and holy Father, give us:
intellect to understand you
reason to discern you
diligence to seek you
wisdom to find you
a spirit to know you
a heart to meditate upon you
ears to hear you
eyes to see you
a tongue to proclaim you
a way of life pleasing to you
patience to wait for you
and perseverance to look for you.
Amen.



Collect for St Benedict of Nursia

Eternal God, who made Benedict a wise master in the school of your service and a guide to many called into community to follow the rule of Christ: grant that we may put your love before all else and seek with joy the way of your commandments; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord. Amen.

Affirmation of Faith

We believe in a loving God
whose Word sustains our lives
and the work of our hands in the universe.
God is life.

We believe in God's son among us
who brought the seed of life's renewal.
He lived with the poor to show the meaning of love.
Jesus Christ is Lord.

We believe in the Spirit of Life
who makes us one with God,
whose strength and energy renews our own.

The Spirit is Love.

Camillo Torres, Colombia, from 'Creed'.

Worship music

When I needed a neighbour – sung by the congregation at Romsey Abbey.
Words are on the screen.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fExR7eOhJ00>

Intercessions

Almighty God, we bring before you our concerns and our hopes in this time of prayer. As we think of our troubled world and consider more local or personal worries, we are reminded of your all encompassing love for creation in which we have but a tiny part. We praise and thank you for the wonder of that assurance knowing we can pray with confidence.

Father God

In this season of the year our young people are leaving school and at the door of decision-making. They stand in need of advice and encouragement from parents and teachers. Bless those who offer this help. At the ending of the academic year there are also those graduating from colleges and universities on the threshold of their careers as they seek their place in the world. Bless them and their advisers as they make important decisions.

We remember with sadness all those for whom this is not that path, for those denied the right to education, and especially we think of girls in Afghanistan. We pray that those who fight for justice may have the courage, strength and wisdom to bring about change and restore equal rights to all young people.

Lord in your mercy hear our prayer

Dear Lord

At this time, many are planning holidays and looking forward to a time of refreshment. We would ask for blessings on all those who make that possible; those who provide the means of travel whether by road, rail or air. We can so easily forget the work of those who maintain tracks and roads, the baggage handlers as well as those who pilot planes; so many who make travel safe. And

we think of the providers of hospitality and accommodation for whom life and business has been very difficult during the time of pandemic. We also pray for those negotiating a settlement to the current rail dispute, and for the families of strikers who may be anxious for their future.

At the same time, we remember all those for whom travel is a necessity not a choice. We hold before you the millions of displaced people making dangerous journeys travelling on foot or perilously by boat. Be with those forced to flee with little hope and for whom there may be no return journey.

Lord in your mercy hear our prayer

Creator spirit

Our lives are frequently enriched by the talents of others. We are grateful for those who engage and entertain us with those gifts whether in words we read, images we look at, musicians we hear or sportspeople we watch. As our senses are lifted and transported with wonder and delight, we understand the joy of creativity and know that art and music can feed our spirits. In this month we shall welcome friends into St Stephens for our summer concerts and we pray that the experience will enhance the lives of those who join us, and we ask a blessing on the musicians who will bring their gifts of music to share.

But we are aware that many, who may have such gifts, often go unrecognised or unfulfilled for lack of opportunity, encouragement or funding. May those who have the vision and influence see that we need to have food for our souls as well as our bodies, and realise that all artists can bring changes to lives through the transformative effect both of the practice of and the exposure to those gifts.

Lord in your mercy hear our prayer

Finally, can we spend some quiet time remembering any known to us who are in need of our prayers whether struggling with illness, bereavement or reaching the end of their lives

.....
We bring all those for whom we have prayed before you Lord in the confidence of our faith, Christ's promise of redemption and the hope of your eternal kingdom. AMEN

A short Spiritual Communion

The Book of Common Prayer reminds us that if we offer ourselves in penitence and faith, giving thanks for the redemption won by Christ crucified, we may truly 'eat and drink the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ', even when we cannot receive the sacrament physically in ourselves.



Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

O God,
help me to trust you,
help me to know that you are with me,
help me to believe that nothing

can separate me from your love
revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

You might like to listen to the Sanctus from Schubert's German Mass, sung here by the choir of St David's, conducted by Nigel. Words are on the screen

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZL8nbLAMKps>

Giving thanks for Christ's death and resurrection you may wish to say

Thanks be to you, Lord Jesus Christ,
for all the benefits you have given me,
for all the pains and insults you have borne for me.
Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally,
I ask you to come spiritually into my heart.
O most merciful redeemer, friend and brother,
may I know you more clearly,
love you more dearly,
and follow you more nearly, day by day. Amen. *(after the Prayer of St Richard of Chichester)*

Post-Communion Prayer

Eternal God,
comfort of the afflicted and healer of the broken,

you have fed us at the table of life and hope:
teach us the ways of gentleness and peace,
that all the world may acknowledge
the kingdom of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Worship Music

'O for a closer walk with God,' sung by the choir of St John's College,
Cambridge. Words are on screen.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-wWVpafJX8A&t=5s>

Closing prayers

Gracious God,
as your beloved children,
we pray that you would give us spiritual insight and understanding,
so that we would know your will in all things,
and so that the way we live would honour and please you,
and bear fruit in the lives of those around us.

We pray that you would strengthen us with your glorious power,
so that we would have the patience and endurance we need
to live with joy and integrity,
always giving thanks for the mercy and love you have shown us
in Jesus Christ our Saviour.

To you be glory, now and forever. **Amen.**

Benediction

May the holy wisdom of God
Guard your ways and guide your paths
May the living truth of God
Enlighten your hearts and open your minds
And may the living Spirit of God
Give you life, and life to the full!
Amen!
(posted on Literature & Liturgy.)



James Keay-Bright (Welsh, 1965–), *Trinity Redemption*, 2013.

It shows God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit standing one behind the other against a black background, facing forward. They are semi-encompassed by a wave of fire that emanates from the foreground figure's outstretched hand. Vigorous and bright, it swells up and around the trio, its branching tip reaching like arms into the darkness.

The young African man in front represents the Holy Spirit sending forth his presence, Jesus Christ is shown as a Middle Eastern boy of about eight years old, while God the Father is modelled after an elderly Aboriginal Australian.