

**Sunday 19th July –
Morning Worship for
Trinity 7**

Led by Sue Nelms, LLM

<https://zoom.us/j/82311473640>

LORDSBRIDGE TEAM
OF CHURCHES



Opening Words

Let everything be said and done in the name of the Lord Jesus,
giving thanks to God through Jesus Christ.

Sing psalms, hymns and sacred songs:
let us sing to God with thankful hearts.

Open our lips, Lord:
and we shall praise your name.

cf Colossians 3.16,17

Gathering Prayer

Be with us, Spirit of God;
nothing can separate us from your love.

Breathe on us, breath of God;
fill us with your saving power.

Speak in us, wisdom of God;
bring strength, healing and peace.

(Silence is kept)

The Lord is here.
His Spirit is with us.



Hymn – Come, ye thankful people, come

I Come, ye thankful people, come,
 raise the song of harvest-home:
 all be safely gathered in,

ere the winter storms begin;
God, our maker, doth provide
for our wants to be supplied:
come to God's own temple, come;
raise the song of harvest-home.

2 All this world is God's own field,
fruit unto his praise to yield;
wheat and tares together sown,
unto joy or sorrow grown;
first the blade and then the ear,
then the full corn shall appear:
grant, O harvest Lord, that we
wholesome grain and pure may be.

3 For the Lord our God shall come,
and shall take his harvest home;
from his field shall purge away
all that doth offend, that day;
give his angels charge at last
in the fire the tares to cast,
but the fruitful ears to store
in his garner evermore.

4 Then, thou church triumphant, come.
raise the song of harvest-home:
all be safely gathered in,
free from sorrow, free from sin,
there for ever purified
in God's garner to abide:
come, ten thousand angels, come,
raise the glorious harvest-home.

Henry Alford (1810-71) and others (CCLI 50200)

Saying Sorry

Human sin disfigures the whole creation,
which groans with eager longing for God's redemption.
We confess our sin in penitence and faith.

cf Romans 8.22,23

**God of mercy,
we acknowledge that we are all sinners.
We turn from the wrong that we have thought and said
and done,
and are mindful of all that we have failed to do.
For the sake of Jesus, who died for us,
forgive us for all that is past,
and help us to live each day
in the light of Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

May God our Father forgive us our sins
and bring us to the eternal joy of his kingdom,
where dust and ashes have no dominion.
Amen.

Readings by Rick Nelms

Isaiah 44:6-8

- ⁶ Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel
and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts:
I am the first and I am the last;
besides me there is no god.
- ⁷ Who is like me? Let them proclaim it,
let them declare and set it forth before me.
Who has announced from of old the things to come?
Let them tell us what is yet to be.
- ⁸ Do not fear, or be afraid;
have I not told you from of old and declared it?
You are my witnesses!
Is there any god besides me?

There is no other rock; I know not one.
For the Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew
Glory to you, O Lord.

²⁴ Jesus put before them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field; ²⁵ but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. ²⁶ So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. ²⁷ And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, "Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?" ²⁸ He answered, "An enemy has done this." The slaves said to him, "Then do you want us to go and gather them?" ²⁹ But he replied, "No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them.

³⁰ Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.'"

³⁶ Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, 'Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.' ³⁷ He answered, 'The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; ³⁸ the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, ³⁹ and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. ⁴⁰ Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. ⁴¹ The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, ⁴² and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³ Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!

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

Reflection by Rev Priscilla Slusar

There have been some shocking news stories over the last couple of weeks – I don't mean the football news, or results at Wimbledon. I mean the news of the death of Ann Widdecombe, the continued drone strikes in Ukraine and the middle east, and the earthquake in Venezuela.

When we watch scenes on television or listen to the news, we may be tempted to think “Where is God in all of this?” We may wonder what is happening to our world. We hear about world leaders who seem to be focussed more on personal power than on the people they have responsibility for. We hear about people who show little respect for human life.

We may wonder what the future will be like for our children, grandchildren and future generations. It is all too easy to be negative and to lose hope.

But we are Christians and our faith is built on hope – and trust in God. I don't often preach on the readings from the Old Testament or Hebrew scriptures, but today's reading from Isaiah is a short and powerful one which justifies further consideration. These are the words of God presented by the prophet, Isaiah. It is important and relevant to us to understand the context. At this time, the people of Jerusalem were living in exile. They had been conquered by the Babylonians, they lost their homes and their land, and their Temple had been destroyed. They were effectively slaves in a foreign land. It was also a pagan land, where a variety of gods and idols were worshipped. They must have felt total despair.

In this passage from Isaiah God declares his absolute eternity, “I am the first and the last; beside me there is no god.” God reassures the Israelites, telling them not to be afraid. God's final phrase in this passage is “There is no other rock.” This draws comparison between

the strength and stability of God and the carvings of the false gods or idols.

It is a powerful passage, giving hope to the people of Israel and encouraging them to trust in the one eternal God when life seems desolate.

There seems to be very little to link this passage from Isaiah to our gospel reading from Matthew. But the link is Jesus – the Son of God, who also brings the reality of God to people through his life and teachings.

Today's reading is the parable of the wheat and weeds. It appears to be a story about farming but it is not an image that farmers of Jesus's day would recognise. They may well have laughed at this system of growing wheat. It is a parable about the Kingdom of God. Weeds have been sown in the field of wheat by an evil trespasser, threatening to destroy the crop. The slaves on the farm want to dig up the weeds, to root out the evil, but they are only seeing the short-term solution. The master has a different idea because he takes a long term view. He says that the weeds should be left to grow with the wheat and then they will be harvested together. After the harvest, the weeds can be destroyed.

The slaves would like to see a neat and tidy field with no weeds intruding on the picture. The master's view may not be so neat and tidy but he can see that the crop may be damaged if the slaves continue to rid the field of the weeds. The slaves may destroy good plants in the process. The slaves are being challenged to trust the master's judgement.

How does this relate to our reading from Isaiah?

God in Isaiah has a plan for the people of Israel and tells them not to fear but to trust him. The master represents God just like God in the passage from Isaiah.

The master in the parable tells the slaves to trust to his plan. We are like the people of Israel in the passage from Isaiah in that we may feel a lack of hope when we look at the world around us. We may feel that evil is flourishing and feel despair about the future. But the prophet Isaiah reminds us, like the people of Israel, that God is eternal, solid as a rock, aware of our needs and concerns. God tells us not to fear, to place our trust in him.

In the same way in the parable, the master wants us (the slaves) to trust to his plan. He has the long term view and knows that the harvest will be plentiful if we can accept his wisdom and guidance. The kingdom grows in spite of the weeds.

In both of these scenarios God gives hope to people and, therefore, gives hope to us in a challenging world. Our faith as Christians is based on hope – hope of salvation, hope of eternal life, hope in God’s love and grace. We cannot see the future, for ourselves or for the world in which we live. God wants us to have faith in his plan and not fear for the future. We know from history that there are often surprising acts of goodness that develop in the most challenging circumstances – perhaps this is God working through people in the most difficult times. Our aim should be to live as best we can as strong and healthy “wheat” and trust in God’s plan. Amen

Affirmation of Faith

Let us declare our faith in God.

**We believe in God the Father,
from whom every family
in heaven and on earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son,
who lives in our hearts through faith,
and fills us with his love.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens us
with power from on high.**

**We believe in one God;
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Amen.**

cf Ephesians 3

**Prayers of Intercession written by Canon Jan Payne, LLM,
5folds Benefice and read by John Crang**

Almighty God, we give thanks for the Church and for all who lead, serve and work in it. We pray today for Sarah, Archbishop of Canterbury, Sarah, Bishop of Ely and for Alex, Bishop of Brixworth, formally Archdeacon of Cambridge, as he prepares to take up his new calling, following his consecration in London this week. Bless our churches and all who minister there, both ordained and lay. We give thanks for the faithful service of those who keep our buildings open, our graveyards and gardens tidy and offer hospitality and welcome to those attending worship regularly and occasional visitors – and we pray for them all.

Lord in your mercy - **Hear our prayer**

Heavenly Father, we pray for our troubled world. We hold before you those nations so badly affected by on-going conflict in the Middle East, Ukraine, Africa, and Myanmar. We pray for all world leaders as they continue to seek solutions to bring wars to an end and relief to those who suffer as innocent casualties, especially today remembering all children and young people caught up in the violence. Give wisdom to all in authority that they may strive to build a better and peaceful world, one that values human lives and the world you created.

Lord in your mercy - **Hear our prayer**

As our schools and colleges begin their summer vacation, we pray it will be a time of rest and refreshment for all staff and students. We pray for those who are anxiously awaiting exam results next month

and for the decisions that will be taken about their future. We lift to you our local communities that, over this summer period, it will be a peaceful place, which all residents can relax in and enjoy, and we give thanks for all those who will provide holiday activities for younger residents and places of meeting for those who are more elderly, disabled or lonely.

Lord in your mercy - **Hear our prayer**

Loving God, we lift to you all who are troubled in body, mind or spirit, that you will meet them in their need and surround them with your comfort and healing at this time. We pray for all who exercise care in our community as GPs, nurses, pharmacists, social and care workers. Bless them all as they go about their daily work and may all that they do, strengthen and guide those to whom they offer care.

Lord in your mercy - **Hear our prayer**

Comforting God, as we seek to bring your Kingdom on earth to this place, so we pray for We remember all those whose years mind falls at this time and pray for all who have been recently bereaved or watch and wait with the dying.

Lord in your mercy - **Hear our prayer**

Finally, a prayer for ourselves: Heavenly Father, search our hearts today for we know that, within each of us, there is a mix of both seeds and weeds in our character. Forgive us for the times we have allowed doubts, worries, or selfish attitudes to grow within us. Help us to put aside all that hinders our faith, and, in their place, nurture the good seeds of love, joy, and peace you have planted within us. Help us to grow, bear good fruit, and yield a harvest that honours you.

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

Collect

Lord of all power and might,
the author and giver of all good things:
graft in our hearts the love of your name,
increase in us true religion,
nourish us with all goodness,
and of your great mercy keep us in the same;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. **Amen**

The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray:
Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours now and forever.
Amen.

Hymn – The kingdom of God is justice and joy

I The kingdom of God is justice and joy,
 for Jesus restores what sin would destroy;
 God's power and glory in Jesus we know,
 and here and hereafter the kingdom shall grow.

- 2 The kingdom of God is mercy and grace,
the captives are freed, the sinners find place,
the outcast are welcomed God's banquet to share,
and hope is awakened in place of despair.
- 3 The kingdom of God is challenge and choice,
believe the good news, repent and rejoice!
His love for us sinners brought Christ to his cross,
our crisis of judgement for gain or for loss.
- 4 God's kingdom is come, the gift and the goal,
in Jesus begun, in heaven made whole;
the heirs of the kingdom shall answer his call,
and all things cry 'Glory!', to God all in all!

Bryn Rees (1911-1983) © Alexander Scott (One License 28013)

Notices

Conclusion

Creator God,

you give seed for us to sow,

and bread for us to eat;

make us thankful for what we have received

and generous in supplying the needs of others

so all the world may give you thanks and glory,

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

And may the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit
be among us and remain with us always.

Amen

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. Amen

In the name of Christ. Amen