

Sunday 21st June – Morning Worship for Trinity 3

Led by Sue Nelms, LLM

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

LORDSBRIDGE TEAM
OF CHURCHES



Opening Words

We meet in the name of God:
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Gathering Prayer

Lord, speak to us
that we may hear your word.

Move among us
that we may behold your glory.

Receive our prayers
that we may learn to trust you.
Amen.

Hymn – For all the saints

- 1 For all the saints who from their labours rest,
who thee by faith before the world confessed,
Thy name, O Jesu, be for ever blest:
Alleluia, alleluia!
- 2 Thou wast their rock, their fortress and their might;
thou, Lord, their captain in the well-fought fight;
thou in the darkness still their one true light:
Alleluia, alleluia!
- 3 O blest communion, fellowship divine.
we feebly struggle, they in glory shine;
yet all are one in thee, for all are thine:

Alleluia, alleluia!

4 But lo, there breaks a yet more glorious day:
the saints triumphant rise in bright array;
the King of Glory passes on his way!
Alleluia, alleluia!

5 From earth's wide bounds, from ocean's farthest coast,
through gates of pearl streams in the countless host,
singing to Father, Son and Holy Ghost:
Alleluia, alleluia!

William W How (1823-1897) (CCLI 90590)

Saying Sorry

St Paul says, 'Be imitators of God; love as Christ loved;
do not grieve the Holy Spirit;
put away all anger and bitterness, all slander and malice.'
So let us confess our sins to God, who forgives us in Christ.

**Most merciful God,
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
we confess that we have sinned
in thought, word and deed.
We have not loved you with our whole heart.
We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.
In your mercy forgive what we have been,
help us to amend what we are,
and direct what we shall be;
that we may do justly,
love mercy,
and walk humbly with you, our God.
Amen.**

May the God of love and power
forgive us and free us from our sins,
heal and strengthen us by his Spirit,

and raise us to new life in Christ our Lord.

Amen

Readings by Rick Nelms

Jeremiah 20:7-13

⁷ O Lord, you have enticed me,
and I was enticed;
you have overpowered me,
and you have prevailed.
I have become a laughing-stock all day long;
everyone mocks me.

⁸ For whenever I speak, I must cry out,
I must shout, 'Violence and destruction!'
For the word of the Lord has become for me
a reproach and derision all day long.

⁹ If I say, 'I will not mention him,
or speak any more in his name',
then within me there is something like a burning fire
shut up in my bones;
I am weary with holding it in,
and I cannot.

¹⁰ For I hear many whispering:
'Terror is all around!
Denounce him! Let us denounce him!'
All my close friends
are watching for me to stumble.
'Perhaps he can be enticed,
and we can prevail against him,
and take our revenge on him.'

¹¹ But the Lord is with me like a dread warrior;
therefore my persecutors will stumble,
and they will not prevail.
They will be greatly shamed,
for they will not succeed.
Their eternal dishonour

will never be forgotten.

¹² O Lord of hosts, you test the righteous,
you see the heart and the mind;
let me see your retribution upon them,
for to you I have committed my cause.

¹³ Sing to the Lord;
praise the Lord!
For he has delivered the life of the needy
from the hands of evildoers.

For the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Matthew 10:24-39

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

Glory to you, O Lord.

²⁴ 'A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the master;

²⁵ it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher, and the slave like the master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household!

²⁶ 'So have no fear of them; for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. ²⁷ What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. ²⁸ Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. ²⁹ Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground unperceived by your Father. ³⁰ And even the hairs of your head are all counted. ³¹ So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.

³² 'Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; ³³ but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven.

³⁴ 'Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.

³⁵ For I have come to set a man against his father,
and a daughter against her mother,

and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law;

³⁶ and one's foes will be members of one's own household.

³⁷ Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me;

³⁸ and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹ Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Reflection by Rev Priscilla Slusar

People exploring their faith or newly baptised Christians are often given a copy of one of the gospels to read to help them to learn about the teachings of Jesus and understand the basis of Christianity. It may be the gospel of Mark because it is the shortest one, and probably the most straight forward. It is not usually Matthew's gospel. Matthew's gospel is challenging!

It is a gospel written by a Jew for Jews. For Matthew belief in Jesus belongs within a Jewish heritage and outlook. There are many references to the Hebrew scriptures and the promise of the Messiah. It highlights the complex relationship between Judaism and Christianity. All of this makes it a challenge for us nowadays but the whole of this year's lectionary is dedicated to Matthew's gospel because it demands study and leads us to a deeper faith.

Today's portion of Matthew's gospel is based on the words of Jesus as he sends the disciples out on their first missionary excursion. They have been following him, watching him, and listening to him – now they are to take on the lead in their own task. Jesus is trying to prepare them for this challenge and Matthew uses it as an opportunity to remind all of us that discipleship is not an easy role. Jesus starts with relationships – the connection between disciple and teacher, or between slave and master. He says "If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his

household!” We might say that the disciples will be “tarred with the same brush” as their teacher. Jesus was already in conflict with the authorities and knew that he would be persecuted for this. The disciples may expect the same fate.

Later in this reading we hear Jesus say “Whoever loves father and mother more than me is not worthy of me” and “whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me.” Both of these phrases make it quite plain that discipleship is not an easy role. But, in this passage we also hear the phrase “do not fear” several times. Jesus tries to reassure the disciples that God will be with them throughout this challenging journey. There is an emphasis on the love and care of God for each individual – “even the hairs of your head are all counted. So do not be afraid you are of more value than many sparrows.”

I am sure there were times when the disciples found it difficult to believe this. There are times in life when we all experience the fear that God has abandoned us, or God seems far away from us. The disciples must have experienced this after Jesus’s death or when they were facing persecution for their faith. We may feel this when a loved one dies or we face serious illness or major disappointments in life. Discipleship means that we have to keep returning to that phrase “Do not fear” and learn to trust in God.

Jesus returns to the challenge of discipleship when he says “I have come not to bring peace, but a sword.” It is hard for us to hear this phrase and understand it. We think of Jesus as the embodiment of love and peace; in our communion services we pass the peace of the Lord amongst us. So, how can we relate this phrase to the rest of our gospel teaching? Jesus is bringing in a new order, a new way of living in relationship with God and with other people. The new order will obviously challenge the old order - bringing conflict, division and pain. It is another warning from Jesus that the gospel may divide rather than unite people.

Matthew's gospel is a long commentary on what it means to acknowledge or deny Jesus. There are stories of faithfulness versus unfaithfulness, and parables highlighting devotion or defiance. There are characters who say "yes" to Jesus and those who deny him. It is easy to see that Jesus's words were important to the early disciples in warning them about what was to come. But what does Matthew's gospel and Jesus's message mean for us? Is it relevant to us today?

There are areas of the world where Christians are persecuted for their faith and will be able to relate directly to this passage. Perhaps our challenge is to overcome complacency in our discipleship. It is all too easy to accept that we are facing an easier task, that we are committed Christians without "taking up our cross." Matthew emphasises what is involved for all of us.

I like the Methodist prayer of Covenant which is a reminder of what a challenging task discipleship is. So let us finish with this prayer of total commitment:

I am no longer my own but yours.
Put me to what you will,
rank me with whom you will;
put me to doing, put me to suffering;
let me be employed for you, or laid aside for you,
exalted for you, or brought low for you;
let me be full, let me be empty,
let me have all things, let me have nothing:
I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things
to your pleasure and disposal. Amen

Anthem - Take, O take me as I am – John Bell

Take, O take me as I am;
summon out what I shall be;
set your seal upon my heart
and live in me.

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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 prepared by Dona McCullagh

As we have heard God's word proclaimed, and as we seek to follow Christ in our daily lives, let us pray for the Church, the world, and those in need.

We pray for the Church

Lord Jesus Christ, you call your disciples not to be comfortable but to be faithful, not to be fearful but to trust. Strengthen your Church throughout the world, especially where Christians face persecution, discrimination, or danger because of their faith. Give courage to all who proclaim your gospel and wisdom to those who lead your people. We pray for our bishops, our clergy, and all who minister in your name. We pray especially for the parishes of Comberton and Toft as they prepare for the upcoming interviews for a new Team Vicar. Give all those involved wisdom and humility to discern your will. We pray also for the two candidates coming for interview, that you would fill

them with your Spirit as they seek the right path forward for their ministries. And today we pray for this our Zoom congregation. Renew in us the grace of our baptism, that we may take up our cross with confidence, knowing that we are held in your love and care.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the World

God of justice and peace, we pray for the nations of the world. Where there is conflict, division, and hatred, bring the healing power of your love. Where leaders exercise authority, grant them wisdom, integrity, and compassion. We remember places where people live in fear, where war has displaced communities, and where violence threatens daily life. May your Spirit strengthen all who work for reconciliation, peace, and the dignity of every human person.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the Community

Loving God, we pray for our local community and for all among whom we live and work. We give thanks for the people who serve others quietly and faithfully, often without recognition. Bless our schools, businesses, voluntary organisations, and all who care for the vulnerable. Help us to be neighbours who reflect your generosity and kindness. As we have sung this morning of the communion of saints, teach us to recognise Christ in one another and continue to build a community marked by welcome, friendship, and hope.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for those who are suffering

Compassionate Father, your Son reminded his disciples not to be afraid, for each one is precious in your sight. We pray for all who suffer in body, mind, or spirit; for those living with illness, chronic pain, anxiety, loneliness, grief, or uncertainty. We remember especially those known to us personally and those for whom we have promised to pray. In a moment of silence, we bring before you those on our hearts today.

Silence

Surround them with your healing presence, strengthen those who care for them, and grant them courage and hope in the midst of their trials. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for those who have died and those who mourn

God of resurrection and eternal life, we remember before you all who have died, and especially those we have known and worshipped alongside here in our Zoom congregation. We give thanks for the faithful departed, for the saints who have gone before us, and for all whose lives have reflected your love.

Comfort those who mourn, especially those whose loss is recent or whose grief remains heavy. Assure them that neither death nor life can separate us from your love in Christ Jesus.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for ourselves

Faithful God, you know us completely; even the hairs of our heads are counted. Take us as we are and shape us into the people you call us to be. When discipleship is demanding, give us perseverance. When we are fearful, give us trust. When we are tempted to complacency, renew our commitment to follow Christ. Help us to echo the prayer of those who have gone before us, offering ourselves afresh to your service. May we leave this place ready to confess Christ in word and deed, confident that he walks with us wherever we may go.

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

Collect

Almighty God,
you have broken the tyranny of sin
and have sent the Spirit of your Son into our hearts
whereby we call you Father:
give us grace to dedicate our freedom to your service,

that we and all creation may be brought
to the glorious liberty of the children of God;
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 – I come with joy, a child of God

- 1 I come with joy, a child of God,
forgiven, loved and free,
the life of Jesus to recall,
in love laid down for me.

- 2 I come with Christians far and near
to find, as all are fed,
the new community of love
in Christ's communion bread.

- 3 As Christ breaks bread, and bids us share,
each proud division ends.
The love that made us, makes us one,
and strangers now are friends.
- 4 The Spirit of the risen Christ,
unseen, but ever near,
is in such friendship better known,
alive among us here.
- 5 Together met, together bound
by all that God has done,
we'll go with joy, to give the world
the love that makes us one.

Brian Wren (b.1936)

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Notices

Blessing

The Lord bless us and keep us:

Amen.

The Lord make his face to shine upon us
and be gracious to us:

Amen.

The Lord lift up his countenance upon us
and give us peace:

Amen.

Numbers 6.24-26

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ.