

Sunday 16th August – Morning Worship for Trinity II

Led by Sue Nelms, LLM

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

LORDSBRIDGE TEAM
OF CHURCHES



Opening Words

Grace, mercy and peace
from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ
be with you
and also with you.

cf I Timothy 1.2

Gathering Prayer

We come from scattered lives to meet with God.
Let us recognize his presence with us.

Silence is kept.

As God's people we have gathered:
let us worship him together.

Hymn – Praise to the Holiest in the height

- 1 Praise to the Holiest in the height,
and in the depth be praise:
in all his words most wonderful,
most sure in all his ways.
- 2 O loving wisdom of our God!
when all was sin and shame,
a second Adam to the fight
and to the rescue came.
- 3 O generous love! that he, who smote
in man for man the foe,

the double agony in man
for man should undergo;

4 And in the garden secretly,
and on the Cross on high,
should teach his brethren, and inspire
to suffer and to die.

5 Praise to the Holiest in the height,
and in the depth be praise:
in all his words most wonderful,
most sure in all his ways.

John Henry Newman (1801-1890) (Public Domain)

Saying Sorry

God the Father forgives us in Christ and heals us by the Holy Spirit.
Let us therefore put away all anger and bitterness,
all slander and malice,
and confess our sins to God our redeemer.

cf Ephesians 4.30,32

Father, you come to meet us when we return to you:
Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Jesus, you died on the cross for our sins:
Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Spirit, you give us life and peace:
Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

The Lord enrich us with his grace,
and nourish us with his blessing;
the Lord defend us in trouble and keep us from all evil;
the Lord accept our prayers,
and absolve us from our offences,

for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Saviour. **Amen.**

Readings by Rick Nelms

Isaiah 56:1, 6-8

56 Thus says the Lord:

Maintain justice, and do what is right,
for soon my salvation will come,
and my deliverance be revealed.

⁶ And the foreigners who join themselves to the Lord,
to minister to him, to love the name of the Lord,
and to be his servants,
all who keep the sabbath, and do not profane it,
and hold fast my covenant—

⁷ these I will bring to my holy mountain,
and make them joyful in my house of prayer;
their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices
will be accepted on my altar;
for my house shall be called a house of prayer
for all peoples.

⁸ Thus says the Lord God,
who gathers the outcasts of Israel,
I will gather others to them
besides those already gathered.

For the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Matthew 15:21-28

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

Glory to you, O Lord.

The Canaanite Woman's Faith

²¹ Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon.

²² Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, 'Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon.' ²³ But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, 'Send her away, for she keeps

shouting after us.’²⁴ He answered, ‘I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.’²⁵ But she came and knelt before him, saying, ‘Lord, help me.’²⁶ He answered, ‘It is not fair to take the children’s food and throw it to the dogs.’²⁷ She said, ‘Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters’ table.’²⁸ Then Jesus answered her, ‘Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.’ And her daughter was healed instantly.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Reflection by Rev Clare Coates

Prayer: Lord God, help us to be bold and persistent in our prayers – to bring everything to you, no matter how big or small. Thank you for your promise to help us. May we draw closer to you today. Amen.

Our first family dog was a yellow Labrador called George. A big character! And Harry's best friend. George came into our lives when Harry was a toddler of about 14 months old and the two became big pals, doing everything together. George particularly loved Harry at mealtimes! I have a vivid memory of Harry sitting in his highchair, happily eating his meal. And every so often dropping bits of this and bits of that to the expectant George who was waiting patiently right underneath the table in pole position for any scraps and crumbs. Labradors have quite the reputation when it comes to food, and George was no exception!

In our Gospel reading today, Jesus uses an analogy about throwing scraps to dogs when he encounters a Canaanite woman who'd come to him for help. This mother came to Jesus out of her desperation. She crossed cultural boundaries, endured public humiliation and accepted being compared to a dog in order to save her child. Jesus was uncharacteristically dismissive of her and uses these seemingly harsh words to send her away: It's not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs. (v26) And yet the woman shows incredible inner strength as she kneels before Jesus and says, Lord, help me. (v25)

Her words and her persistence challenges Jesus and forces him to pay attention to her. She profoundly disagrees with him and takes issue with his answer. And maybe beats him at his own game in her reply: Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall under the table. (v27). Her evocative reply surprises Jesus. He is awed by her great faith (v28) to such an extent that he points to her as an example of unwavering and persistent faith.

This Mother's courage teaches us several important things which can help us to grow in faith. The first thing we learn is don't give up. Keep on asking. The woman's example of bold persistence is a good one for us to follow. She kept on asking despite the many barriers and obstacles in her path. I wonder whether Jesus intentionally ignored her so that he could teach his followers about the importance of persistence. Of keeping going. And never giving up. To keep on praying. To keep on trusting. To keep on believing. To keep on asking. Initially, the woman didn't get the answer she was expecting. But it didn't put her off. This may be our own experience too. We too may feel there are times when God seems silent, absent, or won't answer in the way we want. Or expect.

The other important thing we learn is we all need Jesus. The mother was desperate for help and broke all the rules to get that help. Not only approaching a man from a different faith and interrupting him as he was with his friends but also arguing with him. Openly and boldly. Despite the possibility of rejection, ridicule and humiliation. She shows great faith because she sees and understands Jesus is the only one who can help her. Only Jesus is able to save her child. Her faith in him never wavered. She believed Jesus would help and trusted that he would act. It's human nature to think we can do everything on our own steam.

But the woman's example illustrates the importance for us to acknowledge we need Jesus. We can't do everything in our own strength. Jesus is the only one who can give us true peace and joy.

This short story is ultimately about a very brave and desperate mother doing the best for her child. She wouldn't take no for an answer. Jesus recognised this. He listened to her and he changed his mind, responding to her persistence and love with his own. This story shows us God hears us. God listens. As God acts out of love. So let's be greatly encouraged today. Do not be afraid to ask. Jesus for help. And to continue asking. Because he promises to listen and answer when we ask him.

Chant: God of hope and Lord of healing – Margaret Rizza

Refrain:

(O) God of hope and Lord of healing, we come to you in prayer.
In our living and our dying, you promise to be there.

For the weak we ask your courage, and your patience for the strong;
stay with those whose pain is sharpest and those enduring long.

Refrain

O provide for all the weary your precious gift of sleep;
with the glad let us be joyful, and weep with those who weep.

Refrain

Come to meet your praying people, be with us as we kneel;
come to help us, God our Saviour, for you alone can heal.

Refrain

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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.**

**Prayers of Intercession prepared by Revd Valerie Kilner and
read by John Crang**

We pray for the church – today's followers of Jesus
Lord God, help us to love those whom we find it difficult to love.
Give us a heart that reaches out to those we would otherwise ignore.
This will not be easy, Lord. It is not in our nature.
We spread our love thinly -
among those we can relate to, those who share our values
and those who do not threaten our comfortable lifestyle.
It's not easy, Lord and on our own we shall fail.
But with your help all things are possible.
You led the way, and it is your example that we look to.
You turned the values of this world upside down.
Do the same with us, Lord.
Help us live the reality of your love.
Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

We pray for our troubled world
For people dealing with the effects of so-named natural disasters
earthquakes, cyclones, floods, droughts and fires;
for people caught up in man-made conflicts bringing death and
destruction;
for people suffering and coping with the uncertainties of ill health,
broken relationships and death.
Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

We remember Jesus saying:

Blessed are those who mourn – those who feel the pain of the world -
for they shall be comforted - given help, given hope Lord,

we bring to you our fears,

we bring to you our pain,

we bring to you our anxieties,

we bring to you our weaknesses,

we bring to you our despair,

we bring to you our doubts and lay them all at your feet.

With empty hands we reach out to you

and ask for overwhelming love and peace and joy

in our world and in our lives;

to sustain, cleanse, calm, revive, and heal.

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

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

Collect

O God, you declare your almighty power

most chiefly in showing mercy and pity:

mercifully grant to us such a measure of your grace,

that we, running the way of your commandments,

may receive your gracious promises,

and be made partakers of your heavenly treasure;

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 – Jesus Christ is waiting

- 1 Jesus Christ is waiting,
waiting in the streets;
no one is his neighbour,
all alone he eats.
Listen, Lord Jesus,
I am lonely too.
Make me, friend or stranger,
fit to wait on you.
- 2 Jesus Christ is raging,
raging in the streets,
where injustice spirals
and real hope retreats.
Listen, Lord Jesus
I am angry too.
In the Kingdom's causes
let me rage with you.
- 3 Jesus Christ is healing,
healing in the streets;
curing those who suffer,
touching those he greets.
Listen, Lord Jesus,
I have pity too.

Let my care be active,
healing, just like you.

4 Jesus Christ is dancing,
dancing in the streets,
where each sign of hatred
he, with love, defeats.
Listen, Lord Jesus
I should triumph too.
Where good conquers evil
let me dance with you.

5 Jesus Christ is calling,
calling in the streets,
'Who will join my journey?
I will guide their feet.'
Listen, Lord Jesus,
let my fears be few.
Walk one step before me;
I will follow you.

John L Bell (born 1949) and Graham Maule (1958-2019)

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Notices

Conclusion

God the Father,
who first loved us and made us accepted in the beloved Son,
bless us.

Amen.

God the Son,
who loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood,
bless us.

Amen.

God the Holy Spirit,
who sheds abroad the love of God in our hearts,
bless us.

Amen.

The blessing of the one true God,
to whom be all love and all glory for time and for eternity,
come down upon us and remain with us always.

Amen.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. Amen

In the name of Christ. Amen