



**The Benefice of
Harden, Wilsden, Cullingworth, Denholme
Sunday 9 August 2020 Trinity 9**

Preparation

We meet in the name of God:

All Father, Son and Holy Spirit

From the rising of the sun to its setting

All the Lord's name is greatly to be praised.

Give him praise, you servants of the Lord.

All O praise the name of the Lord!

The Greeting

Silence is kept

The Lord is here

All His Spirit is with us.

Bless the Lord all you works of the Lord:

Sing his praise and exalt him for ever

Bless the Lord you heavens:

Sing his praise and exalt him for ever

Bless the Lord you angels of the Lord:

Sing his praise and exalt him for ever

Bless the Lord all people on the earth:

Sing his praise and exalt him for ever

O people of God bless the Lord:

Sing his praise and exalt him for ever

Bless the Lord you priests of the Lord:

Sing his praise and exalt him for ever

Bless the Lord you servants of the Lord:

Sing his praise and exalt him for ever

Bless the Lord you of upright Spirit:

Sing his praise and exalt him for ever

Bless the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit

Sing his praise and exalt him for ever

Hear the words of comfort our Saviour Christ says to all who truly turn to him:
“Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Confession

Come, let us return to the Lord and say:

All **Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
We have sinned against you
Through our own fault,
In thought and word and deed,
And in what we have left undone.
We are heartily sorry and repent of all our sins.
For your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ’s sake,
Forgive us all that is past;
And grant that we may serve you in newness of life
To the glory of your name. Amen.**

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 Gloria

All **Glory to God in the highest
And peace to his people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King,
Almighty God and Father;
We worship you, we give you thanks,
We praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
You take away the sin of the world. Have mercy on us;
You are seated at the right hand of the Father:
Receive our prayer.
For you alone are the Holy One,
You alone are the Lord
You alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
With the Holy Spirit,**

In the glory of God the Father. Amen.

The Collect

Almighty God,
Who sent you Holy Spirit
To be the life and light of your Church:
Open our hearts to the riches of your grace
That we may bring for the fruit of the Spirit
In love and joy and peace;
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Readings

The First Reading: Romans 10:5-15

Moses writes concerning the righteousness that comes from the law, that ‘the person who does these things will live by them.’ But the righteousness that comes from faith says, ‘Do not say in your heart, “Who will ascend into heaven?”’ (that is, to bring Christ down) ‘or “Who will descend into the abyss?”’ (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? ‘The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart’ (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); because if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved. The scripture says, ‘No one who believes in him will be put to shame.’ For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. For, ‘Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.’ But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? As it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!’

This is the word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

The Gospel: Matthew 14:22-33

Immediately he made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, but by this time the boat, battered by the waves, was far from the land, for the wind was against them. And early in the morning he came

walking towards them on the lake. But when the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified, saying, 'It is a ghost!' And they cried out in fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, 'Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid.'

Peter answered him, 'Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.' He said, 'Come.' So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came towards Jesus. But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, 'Lord, save me!' Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, 'You of little faith, why did you doubt?' When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. And those in the boat worshipped him, saying, 'Truly you are the Son of God.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All Praise to you, O Christ.

Reflection from Chris Wilcock

Recently we have found ourselves having to resort to the use of subtitles when watching TV. It's either because with age we are becoming hard of hearing or the quality of the way actors nowadays deliver their lines. I like to think it is the latter!

You could say that there are basically just two forms of verbal communication, all other forms being modifications of these two. The first is loud and harsh and consists of the shout. Many people put their faith in this method. It is generally used for giving commands. You hear it a lot on parade grounds and on football match touchlines. You have noticed the volume increases whenever there is an advert break on TV.

Now it has to be said that the shout does have its uses, but it is also often counter-productive. Loud sounds can deafen. They force us to close our ears, or to switch off altogether, as in the case of some TV commercials. Besides, we don't like it when people shout at us. It usually means that we are being given no choice in the matter. 'Come here!' 'Stand up straight!', 'Don't touch that!', 'Get out!' We feel under threat, and our spontaneous reaction is to defend ourselves.

The second method is soft and gentle. It consists of the whisper. Sometimes a whisper can be more effective than a shout. It is very personal, very individual. If you want to get someone's attention, whisper. When someone whispers to us,

we have to strain our ears. A whisper disarms us because we don't feel under threat. It doesn't force its way into our consciousness, it respects our freedom. By adopting such a gentle approach we know the person wishes us well. Thus we are more open to what he or she has to say. In some cases the whisper is the only approach. For example, what other way can one convey a message of love and peace?

But a whisper is a very fragile thing. We have to really concentrate to hear it. It can be easily ignored, and it doesn't take much to drown it out.

That's how it is with God. God's voice is more like a whisper than a shout. In fact, God's voice is the quietest, gentlest voice of all. God's voice is a voice of love. God did not make himself heard to Elijah in the sound of the mighty wind or the earthquake, but in the whisper of a gentle breeze. God speaks to us in the most hidden parts of our being and in the promptings of our conscience.

Since we live in a very noisy world, if we want to hear the voice of God we need to create some stillness and quietness. (Elijah had to go to a cave to hear it.) Many voices clamour for our attention, voices that are loud, strident and seductive. But the voice that presents the greatest threat to the gentle voice of God is the voice that comes from within ourselves – the strident voice of our outraged self-esteem.

Yet, for those who know how to listen, then God's gentle voice can make itself heard even in the midst of a storm. Over the roar of the wind and the waves, the disciples heard the gentle voice of Jesus saying to them, 'Courage! It is I! Do not be afraid.'

To live by faith means to trust in God and to rely on his power. God won't carry us, but he will uphold us if we let go. We have to take the risk, only then can God help us. Modern life with its emphasis on security, and its distrust of the unknown, doesn't make faith easy. In fact, it makes it seem foolish.

We are God's children. There is an unbreakable bond between us and God. With this conviction our prayer should produce a kind of lightness in us that makes it possible for us to walk over the waves of danger.

The last two verses of that great hymn 'Dear Lord and Father of mankind' encapsulate the essence of God's whisper to us :

Drop thy still dews of quietness,
till all our strivings cease;
take from our souls the strain and stress,
and let our ordered lives confess
the beauty of thy peace,
the beauty of thy peace

Breathe through the heats of our desire
thy coolness and thy balm;
let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
speak through the earthquake, wind and fire,
O still small voice of calm!
O still small voice of calm!

Affirmation of Faith

Let us declare our faith in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ

All Christ died for our sins
In accordance with the Scriptures
He was buried;
He was raised to life on the third day
In accordance with the Scriptures;
Afterwards he appeared to his followers,
And to all the apostles:
This we have received,
And this we believe. Amen

Praise response

The love of God has been poured into our hearts
Through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us
All We dwell in him and he in us.
Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his name,
All Make known his deeds among the peoples.
Sing to him, sing praises to him,
All and speak of his marvellous works.
Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty
All who was and is and is to come!

Prayers of Intercession led by Astrid Hansen

We praise you O God, we acclaim you as the Lord;
All creation worships you, the Father everlasting.

We rejoice that our church buildings are beginning to re-open and we ask your blessing and your peace on all who join in worship in the Hewenden Benefice today, in church or at home, looking at a screen or a printed page.

We praise you, we thank you for all the goodness by which we are surrounded even in these difficult times, for the beauty of our surroundings, fields and moors and woodland, for the services and supplies available in our villages and for the family, friends, neighbours and volunteers giving so much help wherever it is needed.

Lord help us to be good neighbours, within our own communities, and to those who share our world today. For the sake of those who will inherit our world in generations to come, make us wise and faithful stewards of your creation, living lightly on the Earth so that it may blossom and flourish now and in future .

Lord in your mercy: **Hear us and help us**

As the pandemic continues we pray for those most at risk, those in this country living in crowded conditions and where it is hard to separate those who must go out to work from more vulnerable members of their households, all who face risk through the nature of their work, medical staff, carers and those providing essential services.

We pray for those in our communities who are ill, anxious, lonely or mourning, for those who have had plans altered and hopes dashed by changes in regulations here.

Lord in your mercy: **Hear us and help us**

We pray for national and local leaders as they balance risk to health against economic considerations on which jobs and incomes at all levels of society depend, and we pray for all who are working to find treatments and vaccines to bring this infection under control.

Lord in your mercy: **Hear us and help us**

We pray for people in countries far less able than our own to cope with this situation, remembering particularly the government and people of Sudan. Our Christian partners are among the poorest and most vulnerable there and we pray for them, even as we know that they are taking time in the midst of their own troubles to pray for us.

Lord in your mercy: **Hear us and help us**

For all these we hold before you today, and for ourselves as we look to you for help and guidance in our words and actions,

Lord show us your love and mercy, for we have put our trust in you. Amen.

All **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 for ever. Amen.**

Closing Prayers

Holy Father,
Who showed in Jesus Christ your love for the people of the world,
And established the household of God.
In that new world where you reveal the fullness of your peace,
Gather together people of every race and language
To share in his eternal banquet, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Blessing

May God give you his comfort and his peace
His light and his joy, in this world and the next
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Sending Out

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord:
All **in the name of Christ. Amen.**