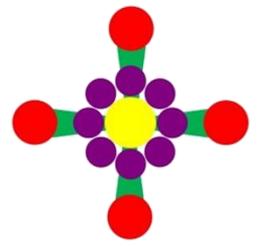


**The Benefice of  
Harden, Wilsden, Cullingworth, Denholme  
7 August 2022  
TRINITY 8**



*Our Service today was put together by Anna*

**The Greeting**

This is the day that the Lord has made.  
**Let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

Loving God, we have come to worship you.  
**Help us to pray to you in faith,  
to sing your praise with gratitude,  
and to listen to your word with eagerness;  
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**Almighty God,  
to whom all hearts are open,  
all desires known,  
and from whom no secrets are hidden:  
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts  
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,  
that we may perfectly love you,  
and worthily magnify your holy name;  
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

God shows his love for us in that,  
while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.  
Let us then show our love for him  
by confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

What God has prepared for those who love him,  
he has revealed to us through the Spirit;  
for the Spirit searches everything.  
Therefore, let us, in penitence,  
open our hearts to the Lord,  
who has prepared good things for those who love him.

Call to Worship

Opening Prayer

Prayer of Preparation

Prayers of Penitence

**Father eternal, giver of light and grace,  
we have sinned against you and against our neighbour,  
in what we have thought,  
in what we have said and done,  
through ignorance, through weakness,  
through our own deliberate fault.  
We have wounded your love  
and marred your image in us.  
We are sorry and ashamed  
and repent of all our sins.  
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,  
who died for us,  
forgive us all that is past  
and lead us out from darkness  
to walk as children of light. Amen.**

### **Assurance of Forgiveness**

Almighty God, our heavenly Father,  
who of his great mercy  
hath promised forgiveness of sins  
to all them that with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto him:  
have mercy upon you;  
pardon and deliver you from all your sins;  
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness;  
and bring you to everlasting life;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **The Collect**

Almighty Lord and everlasting God,  
we beseech you to direct, sanctify and govern  
both our hearts and bodies  
in the ways of your laws  
and the works of your commandments;  
that through your most mighty protection, both here and ever,  
we may be preserved in body and soul;  
through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

### First Reading: Hebrews 11: 1-3, 8-16

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. Indeed, by faith, our ancestors received approval. By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible.

By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to set out for a place that he was to receive as an inheritance; and he set out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he stayed for a time in the land he had been promised, as in a foreign land, living in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God. By faith he received power of procreation, even though he was too old—and Sarah herself was barren—because he considered him faithful who had promised. Therefore from one person, and this one as good as dead, descendants were born, ‘as many as the stars of heaven and as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore.’

All of these died in faith without having received the promises, but from a distance they saw and greeted them. They confessed that they were strangers and foreigners on the earth, for people who speak in this way make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. If they had been thinking of the land that they had left behind, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; indeed, he has prepared a city for them.

**Thanks be to God for the gift of his word.**

### Gospel reading: Luke 12: 32-40

‘Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near, and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

‘Be dressed for action and have your lamps lit; be like those who are waiting for their master to return from the wedding banquet, so that they may open the door for him as soon as he comes and knocks. Blessed are those slaves whom the master finds alert when he comes; truly I tell you, he will fasten his belt and have them sit down to eat, and he will come and serve them. If he comes during the middle of the night, or near dawn, and finds them so, blessed are those slaves.

‘But know this: if the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.’

**Thanks be to God for the gift of his Holy Word.**

### Reflection from Liz Maitland

Yesterday I have had the privilege of presiding at the marriage of my eldest son Joe and his fiancé Reiltin. It was a day of promises and commitment; of sunshine; of family and friends and, later on, of music, laughter, and dancing. It was a day that had been in the planning for years and when it finally came it was worth all the effort.

Alongside the promises made, we looked back and gave thanks for all that had led to this moment in time. The service also reminded us that these promises are for the good days and the inevitable difficult days that are to come. Life gives us these golden moments, but also delivers hard times and these are when our faith in one another can be tested. Joe and Reiltin can't predict or control the future, but they can control their responses to the ups and downs of life. They can't know what is around the corner, but they can set out on the right road and keep moving forwards together. This is what they have promised to do.

In our reading from Hebrews, we read about the need for faith in God, just like Abraham who set off on his journey into the desert as directed by God, even though he didn't know where he was going. This life of faith in God is characterised by being prepared to move forwards, out of our comfort zones, uncertain of our destination, but sure that God will be with us. God does know our future and that is enough to give us the confidence we need.

Sometimes in our lives of faith we find it hard to let go of our control and go with God's flow. When we do let go and allow God to truly guide us, exciting things can happen. The writer of Hebrews reminds us that Abraham could not have made his journey if he had been looking back to the country he had left. Clearly, if we want to move forwards, that is the direction we need to face, or risk tripping up! We do well to carry with us the learnings of the past, but not to be weighed down with them. They have brought us to this point in time, but the journey continues.

I have always loved singing the hymn 'One more step along the world I go'; 'From the old things to the new, keep me travelling along with you'. Our lives of faith are not static and Jesus' call to us is to follow him. Where is God leading you today? What adventures and challenges are around the corner? We won't know unless we set out.

As we are recovering from yesterday's celebrations and looking at each other's photos, we are already looking back on the amazing day we shared. It is now in the past, although we are still basking in its glow. We are also mindful that this was just another step in a journey forward for all of us.

'Faith is confidence in what we hope for' it says in Hebrews. The God who loves us wants to walk with us, helping us navigate the road ahead. How amazing is that? That is the greatest reassurance we can ever hold.

May God bless you today, wherever you find yourself on your journey. Keep going with God and know that God will always keep going with you.

### The Creed

**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.**

### The Peace

We are the body of Christ.  
In the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body.  
Let us then pursue all that makes for peace  
and builds up our common life.  
The peace of the Lord be always with us all.

## Prayers of Intercession with Michael Richardson

The newspapers and television seem to be full of bad news – war, killings, strikes, shortages, rising prices and falling services.

However, the tides of fortune ebb and flow. They bring good times and bad. Life is like an ever-moving sea – sometimes we are happy, at other times we are sad. High tide; low tide – turning ceaselessly.

So if your luck is out today, don't think it is the end. Search life's empty shore and you will find a pool of hope; a gleam of faith; a helping hand; a friend – something that the tide has left behind.

Fix your eyes on the far horizons. Though you may not yet discern a change, all the things you thought were lost are flowing back to you. Keep on hoping, keep your faith – and the tide will turn.



Lord, we come to you for guidance. We ask for your blessing on all who are seeking to extend their vision and knowledge of you, particularly all who are new to the faith and who are just starting to learn of you. Lord, guide all in the church who are leaders and teachers, especially the clergy and readers in our United Benefice. We give thanks for their faith; their service; their industry; their support, and their encouragement.

Whilst many physical congregations have not returned to pre-pandemic levels, we thank you Lord that through other means of communication, even more people are being reached and touched and brought to you. We pray for, and thank, all in the Benefice who are involved in these particular forms of worship.

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

Lord, you have declared that all humanity, whatever their colour or race, are equal in your sight: break down the hatred between people, especially hatred due to national differences. We ask you Lord to help those in whose hands are the various governments of the world. Reconcile them to one another, so that

each may respect the rights of the other. And we pray that whoever becomes our new Prime Minister will have the ability and wisdom to lead us justly. We pray for peace in all the actual or potential trouble spots in the world - Ukraine and Russia; China and Taiwan; North and South Korea. We ask all this in the name of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

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

We give you thanks Lord, for our world, and for the people who have built upon it and developed it. We pray for city planners; surveyors, architects, builders, plumbers, and electricians. And having built up our world, help us to find the right balance in developing its infrastructure, without further damaging the fabric of the planet. We need houses for people to live in, but this has sometimes caused damage to open spaces. We need increasing supplies of energy, but this has sometimes caused damage to the environment. We need more hospitals, schools, and roads, but how do we pay for them? We would like to welcome more asylum seekers, but where do we house them and how can we support them? O Lord, help us to pray about these things with generous thoughts in our hearts so that our government and politicians can find just and right solutions.

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

We pray for all those people whose vision and abilities are restricted through illness or weakness. We remember all who are losing mobility or agility; all who suffer from a stroke, especially those who find it hard to communicate, and those who cannot look after themselves. We pray for loved ones who are ill; those in hospital, and those who are awaiting – or recovering from - operations or treatment. In a moment of silence we pray especially for those known to each one of us.

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

Lord, we believe that you will bring us to the Promised Land where sorrow and pain are no more, but life and joy are everlasting. We come to you and ask that your blessing may be upon our loved ones who have departed this life and who have entered into the fullness of your peace.

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

Gathering our prayers together we say:

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

**Our Father in heaven  
Hallowed be your name.  
Your kingdom come,  
your will be done  
On earth as it is 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 Prayer

Strengthen for service, Lord,  
the hands that have taken holy things;  
may the ears which have heard your word  
be deaf to clamour and dispute;  
may the tongues which have sung your praise be free from deceit;  
may the eyes which have seen the tokens of your love  
shine with the light of hope;  
and may the bodies which have been fed with your body  
be refreshed with the fullness of your life; glory to you for ever.  
**Amen.**

Blessing

May the Father from whom every family  
in earth and heaven receives its name  
strengthen you with his Spirit in your inner being,  
so that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith;  
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.  
**In the name of Christ. Amen.**