

# *In & around the Benefice....*

*27th September | Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity*



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*Benefice Worship and Praise is live online at 10am on Sunday 27th September*

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82092461688> Meeting ID: 820 9246 1688 Passcode: 061256

**Today's Worship Services in our churches:**

10am	Castle Ashby	Holy Communion
10am	Denton	Harvest Festival
3pm	Whiston	Harvest Festival

*We request that you only attend the services in your usual church, as numbers are limited due to social distancing*

***It is mandatory that face coverings should be worn by all those attending a place of worship***

**Service Schedule for October:**

4 Oct	10am	Grendon	Holy Communion
4 Oct	10am	Yardley Hastings	Morning Praise
11 Oct	10am	Castle Ashby	Holy Communion
11 Oct	10am	Denton	Holy Communion
<b>11 Oct</b>	<b>3pm</b>	<b>ZOOM</b>	<b>Licensing of Revd Morna Simpson</b>
18 Oct	10am	Yardley Hastings	Holy Communion
18 Oct	4pm	Grendon	Service of the Word
25 Oct	10am	Castle Ashby	Holy Communion
25 Oct	10am	Whiston	Holy Communion
25 Oct	4pm	Denton	Service of the Word

**What did you say?**

Eliza Doolittle said it: "Words, words, words, I'm sick of words. If you're in love, show me!"

Now, I believe that words have the power to touch us, move us, delight, heal, and encourage us. But here's the thing: without corresponding actions, our words 'are just noisy gongs, or clanging cymbals' (as S Paul says).

Martin Luther King is remembered for his artistry with words, speeches that moved people intensely. But King said no speech compares to the poetry of a deed shaped by love and sustained by courage.

In our gospel story today, Jesus tells a tale of two sons. A father asks them for help in his vineyard. The first replies, 'no, I'm not doing it' – but later on, he thinks about it and shows up. The second son says, 'of course I will, yes Father!' – but doesn't actually do anything.

Jesus spells it out: "If you say you love God, don't tell me, show me."

What Jesus opposed through the story of the father and his sons was all religion that stops at empty words and doesn't move us into concrete action on behalf of justice, mercy, equality, love, and compassion. All forms of Christianity that sound good in our words on Sunday morning, but then fade out between Monday and Saturday.

"In the beginning was the Word" ; St John calls Jesus the Word of God. But he goes on, *'the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth'*. An action, without words, that fills us with hope and makes all things new.

Christ doesn't tell us about the heart of God, He shows us. In the same way, our faith is meant to be active. In the realm of God, words — even the most beautiful words — are not enough. Let's make our actions speak of our love for God and God's love for the world.

**Please hold in your prayers this week:**

- ◇ The Revd Morna Simpson as she prepares to take up her role as our Rector, and for us all as we enter a new chapter in the life of the Benefice
- ◇ The schools in our Benefice, the headteachers John Wayland and Louise Brown and the staff as they endeavour to make school a welcoming and safe environment for all the children
- ◇ The young people from our Benefice who are living away from home, that they keep safe in these uncertain times.
- ◇ The health and well-being of our nation, that all who are fearful and anxious may be at peace and free from worry.
- ◇ Those suffering from, affected by or working to prevent the spread of Coronavirus
- ◇ NHS staff caring for Covid-19 patients, that they may have strength and resilience for their task, and be kept safe
- ◇ Persecuted Christians across the world, especially in North Korea
- ◇ Those in residential care and the housebound, among them: Audrey Desborough, Ruth Williams, Gwen York, Ann and Colin Dix
- ◇ Those who suffer in body, mind or spirit, among them: Tom Stock, Nicholas Vaughan, Freddie Hogan, Mandy Bates, Fabienne Godfrey, Muriel Coulson
- ◇ The recently departed, amongst them Chris Sayles, and all who grieve at this time

### **The Collect**

Lord of creation,  
whose glory is around and within us:  
open our eyes to your wonders,  
that we may serve you with reverence  
and know your peace at our lives' end,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen**

### **Old Testament Reading**

*Exodus 17: 1-7*

From the wilderness of Sin the whole congregation of the Israelites journeyed by stages, as the Lord commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. The people quarrelled with Moses, and said, 'Give us water to drink.' Moses said to them, 'Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the Lord?'

But the people thirsted there for water; and the people complained against Moses and said, 'Why did you bring us out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?' So Moses cried out to the Lord, 'What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me.' The Lord said to Moses, 'Go on ahead of the people, and take some of the elders of Israel with you; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. I will be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so that the people may drink.' Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. He called the place Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarrelled and tested the Lord, saying, 'Is the Lord among us or not?'

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### **New Testament Reading**

*Philippians 2: 1-13*

If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others.

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross.

Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### **Gospel Reading**

*Matthew 21: 23-32*

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

When Jesus entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, 'By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?'

Jesus said to them, 'I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?' And they argued with one another, 'If we say, "From heaven", he will say to us, "Why then did you not believe him?" But if we say, "Of human origin", we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet.' So they answered Jesus, 'We do not know.' And he said to them, 'Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, "Son, go and work in the vineyard today." He answered, "I will not"; but later he changed his mind and went. The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, "I go, sir"; but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?' They said, 'The first.' Jesus said to them, 'Truly I tell you, the tax-collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax-collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

### **Post Communion Prayer**

Almighty God, you have taught us through your Son that love is the fulfilling of the law: grant that we may love you with our whole heart and our neighbours as ourselves; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen**