



Heacham Parish Church

**5<sup>th</sup> July 2020 Sunday Service**  
**Heacham Parish Church at home**

**EXPLORING PRAYER PART 5 – Wonder**

*Adrian plays Darwall's 148 Ye Holy angels bright on the church pipe organ.*

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

As we gather in our homes, together yet apart, we meet in the presence of God

Lord, we seek to meet you through praise and prayer.

**Let our praise be prayer and our prayer be praise.**

We continue our series on Exploring Prayer in our services, which link in with the exploring prayer video series from The Archbishop of Canterbury, this week we are thinking about prayers of Wonder, those Wow moments

Moments, when we are often lost for words, or overwhelmed God's love and beauty. For me these are often when I encounter something or someone beautiful in our world, the fabulous Heacham sunsets, the smell of a sweet pea, the sound of birds singing, the taste of freshly dug new potatoes... so we begin with the words of **Psalm 8.**

O Lord, our Lord,

how majestic is your name in all the earth!

You have set your glory  
in the heavens.

<sup>2</sup> Through the praise of children and infants  
you have established a stronghold against your enemies,  
to silence the foe and the avenger.

<sup>3</sup> When I consider your heavens,  
the work of your fingers,  
the moon and the stars,  
which you have set in place,

<sup>4</sup> what is humankind that you are mindful of them,  
human beings that you care for them?

<sup>5</sup> You have made them a little lower than the angels  
and crowned them with glory and honour.

<sup>6</sup> You made them rulers over the works of your hands;  
you put everything under their feet:

<sup>7</sup> all flocks and herds,  
and the animals of the wild,

<sup>8</sup> the birds in the sky,  
and the fish in the sea,  
all that swim the paths of the seas.

<sup>9</sup> Lord, our Lord,  
how majestic is your name in all the earth!

**Song: There's a wideness in God's mercy** played by Adrian

There's a wideness in God's mercy,  
like the wideness of the sea;  
there's a kindness in his justice  
which is more than liberty.

There is no place where earth's sorrows  
are more keenly felt than heaven:

there is no place where earth's failings  
have such gracious judgement given.

For the love of God is broader  
than the measure of our mind;  
and the heart of the eternal  
is most wonderfully kind.

If our love were but more simple,  
we should take him at his word;  
and our lives would be illumined,  
by the glory of the Lord.

**Bible Reading: Psalm 139 verses 13 to 18** read by Sue  
Turner

### **A Reflection from Peter Murray**

#### **WONDER**

I don't read very much poetry, but of the poems I have read, there's one that stands out. You may be familiar with it. It is called "Little Gidding" and it is the last part of "The Four Quartets" by T S Elliot. The following passage is of particular significance as we consider the theme of Wonder.

"You are not here to verify, instruct yourself, or inform curiosity or carry report. You are here to kneel where prayer has been valid, and prayer is more than an order of words, the conscious occupation of the praying mind, or the sound of the voice praying."

Elliot is describing his visit to the delightful little chapel in the tiny hamlet of Little Gidding not far away from Peterborough. In 1625 members of the Ferrar family moved here from London and set up a small semi – monastic community and dedicated themselves

to worship, spiritual development, education, care for local people and hospitality to visitors. It lasted for only 32 years but the spirituality of the place exerted a profound influence which continues to this day. For Elliot the experience moved him to a great sense of wonder. That experience is and has been shared by countless numbers of people as they have drawn closer to God through Jesus.

Prayer was central to their life as a community and contemplation of the reality of God's presence sustained and renewed them. It was and is a very special place in which to encounter the wonder of God's salvation and creation. Little Gidding is most definitely a place "where prayer has been valid". That is by no means a denial of the fact that God's presence is everywhere ("Every place is hallowed ground" as William Cowper's hymn puts it)

What Eliot is saying is that there are certain places that are sacred because they have become so through the prayers and worship that has been offered in them by generations of Christian people. In them prayer has been valid – truthful, well grounded – and through the worship a sense of wonder and awe in God's presence – "more than an order of words" -is conveyed.

This is an essential part of worship – thanking God for his "Godness", acknowledging him primarily for who he is before asking him to meet our needs. As we do so we can say with the psalmist in Psalm 139:14, " I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well". All true prayer is saturated with adoration in which, says a writer on spirituality, Richard Foster, " we ask for nothing but to cherish him. We seek nothing but his exaltation. We focus on nothing but his goodness".

If we are honest, most of us find prayer difficult .Perhaps an occasional visit to a place "where prayer has been valid" could provide a helpful environment, and it is always encouraging to

know that in these special places, as well as in our ordinary location, we join our prayers with all who have gone before us – the communion of saints. As the book of common prayer order of Holy Communion puts it: “Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious name; evermore praising thee...”

What powerful words they are in which to express our wonder!

**Song: Rock of ages** sung by Terry and Karen

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in thee.  
Let the water and the blood  
From your wounded side which flowed  
Be of sin the double cure,  
Cleanse me from its guilt and power.

*My Rock*

*My Rock*

*My Jesus my Rock*

Not the labours of my hands  
Can fulfil your law's demands.  
Could my zeal no respite know,  
Could my tears for ever flow,  
All for sin could not atone.  
You must save and you alone.

Nothing in my hand I bring,  
Simply to your cross I cling.  
Naked, come to you for dress,  
Helpless, look to you for grace.  
Foul, I to the fountain fly.  
Wash me, Saviour, or I die

While I draw this fleeting breath,  
When my eyelids close in death,  
When I soar to worlds unknown,  
See you on your judgment throne,  
Rock of Ages cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in thee.

(Rock of ages) Words: A M Toplady (1740-1778)

Revised & adapted Graham Kendrick.

Melody: Graham Kendrick (b.1950)

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### **Prayers of intercession** led by Sue Bird

Let us pray, thanking God for his loving faithfulness, bringing to him our own concerns, and the needs of the world around us.

Lord in your Mercy... **hear our prayers**

Heavenly Father we praise and thank you for your church here in Heacham, for all those who have been part of its congregation, past and present. We especially thank you for those who have played a part in helping us on Our journey with you through the years.

We pray for all those who have been called to live and work for you elsewhere. We, with them praise you for all that is past, and trust you for all that is to come.

Lord in your Mercy... **hear our prayers**

Guard and guide our Bishops, Archbishops and Ministers, that they may seek to do your will in all things. We especially pray for our own Veronica and the ministry team as they face the challenges of keeping church together whilst social distancing is in place. We thank you Lord for computers and for the hours spent reaching out to others via Zoom.

Lord in your Mercy... **hear our prayers**

Lord, we pray for our world, and thank you for the many good and encouraging things that have happened this week, in particular that the number of cases of coronavirus is decreasing, leading to the easing of lockdown and the good news that our church building is able to open for prayer and reflection. We thank you again for all the key workers putting themselves at risk every day in our community.

Yet, there is still much to be mindful of. We are saddened when we learn of the desolation and fear spread through parts of the world where human rights mean very little and racism is rife in all its ugliness. Where war and natural disasters devastate communities and countries and food and medicine is scarce. We ask that your voice is heard above the chaos Lord, and peace may be restored in your name.

Lord in your Mercy... **hear our prayers**

Bless Elizabeth our Queen, thank you for all the years of service she has given our country. May she continue to be an instrument of your peace and justice.

Lord in your Mercy... **hear our prayers**

Bless all those who are sick in mind, body or spirit, may they know your love for them, and feel the warmth of your presence in their hearts. Strengthen the fearful, calm the anxious, bring peace to all who are troubled.

Be very close to those who are terminally ill Lord, and in your tender mercy take them ever so gently.

Father, you know our hearts and share our sorrows. We are hurt by our parting from those we loved. When we are angry at the loss we have sustained. When we long for words of comfort, yet

find them hard to hear. Hold us close Lord and comfort us by your presence. Breathe your spirit of comfort around all those who mourn, stir hearts hardened by despair to new life and hope.

In the castle of my Soul there is a little postern gate, where, when I enter I am in the presence of God. In a moment, in the turning of a thought, I am where God is. When I meet God there all life gains a new meaning. Small things become great and great things small. Lowly and despised things are shot through with glory. My troubles seem but the pebbles on the road, my joys like the everlasting hills. All my fever is gone in the great peace of God, and I pass through the door of time into eternity. Father God, help us all to find the gate. Amen.

Heavenly Father accept these prayers for the sake of Your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen

## **We pray together the Lord 's Prayer lead by John Whitbread**

### Final Prayer

Be bold in prayer, and courageous.

Be gentle in prayer, and compassionate.

Be honest in prayer, and weep.

Be silent in prayer, and speak out.

Be sorry in prayer, and be forgiven

Be grateful in prayer, and say thank you

Be amazed in prayer, and wonder

In Jesus' name.

**Amen.**

### Blessing

May the Lord bless you and keep you, may he make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you, may he look kindly on you and give you peace. And the blessing of and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you and those you love always.  
*All Amen.*

*Adrian plays Chorale prelude on 'Leoni' (The God of Abraham praise' C S Lang*

**HEACHAM PARISH CHURCH online service** will be on YouTube from 8am on Sunday morning  
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCefWbBrE77u7MPpdjWtwzoW>

**PRAYER MEETING- 10am Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> July focussing on Prayers of Wonder** (a time of extempore prayer)

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/9960936343?pwd=TIerVHp3UHBzZHNTSm16QzdCNUY0Zz09>

Meeting ID: 996 093 6343

Password: 150936

**CHURCH, COFFEE and CHAT Tuesday 7th July at 10am**

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/9960936343?pwd=TIerVHp3UHBzZHNTSm16QzdCNUY0Zz09>

Meeting ID: 996 093 6343

Password: 150936

**NEXT WEEK: Morning Prayer: Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday**

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/9960936343?pwd=TIerVHp3UHBzZHNTSm16QzdCNUY0Zz09>

Meeting ID: 996 093 6343

Password: 150936

## **Morning Prayer Thursday and Friday**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8252343468>

Meeting ID: 825 234 3468

At the joint PCC and ministry team meeting on Monday 29th we agreed that we needed time to look carefully at all the guidelines for public worship (they were not available for the meeting) before we made a decision about when we reopened and what services we offered. We also agreed that online (and on paper) worship would continue even when building -based worship began. Please continue to pray that we hear what God is saying to us and act on it. Church will be different when we reopen for public worship, but like online worship, it will still be church!

This is the link for those who want to read the details of the revised church

guideines: <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-churches#na>

## **Church Open for private prayer**

Saturday afternoons 2-4pm and Wed 10-12noon.

## **For those without access to the internet:**

The telephone worship service: **Daily Hope**, offers music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England at the end of a telephone line.

The line – which is available 24 hours a day on **0800 804 8044**.

This is a freephone service. Also The Diocesan weekly podcast **Sunday Hope** can be listened to via your phone by calling **01603 537577**- calls for this are charged at a local rate.