



Heacham Parish Church

4th October 2020 Sunday Service Online

Peter plays as we gather

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

The Lord be with you **and also with you.**

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

(those of us gathering in church this week are celebrating Holy Communion, so today we are using some of the Communion liturgy for those of us at home)

**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**

Song : As the deer pants played and sung by Hilary, Lesley, Sue, Richard, Colin and Rosie.

**As the deer pants for the water,
So my soul longs after you.
You alone are my hearts desire
And I long to worship you.**

Chorus

**You alone are my strength, my shield,
To you alone may my spirit yield.
You alone are my heart's desire
And I long to worship you.**

**I want you more than gold or silver,
Only you can satisfy.
You alone are the real joy-giver
And the apple of my eye.**

**You're my friend and you are my brother,
Even though you are a king.
I love you more than any other,
So much more than anything.**

Repeat Chorus

Our Lord Jesus Christ said:

The first commandment is this:

'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is the only Lord.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,
with all your soul, with all your mind,
and with all your strength.'

The second is this: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.'

There is no other commandment greater than these.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Amen. Lord, have mercy.

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son Jesus Christ
to save us from our sins, to be our advocate in heaven,
and to bring us to eternal life.

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith, firmly resolved to
keep God's commandments and to live in love and peace with all.

Confession

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, we have sinned against you and against our neighbour in thought and word and deed, through negligence, through weakness, through our own deliberate fault. We are truly sorry 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 grant that we may serve you in newness of life to the glory of your name. Amen.

Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and keep you in life eternal; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Bible Reading: Matthew 21: 33-46 read by Lynn Shannon

A Reflection from Penny Sutton

Today we look at the second of three parables that Jesus told when confronted by the Jewish hierarchy questioning his legitimacy. They spell out for us God's judgment on the leaders of Israel for rejecting God's many messages. Last week Pip told us how they failed to obey God by their lack of action. Today we see how they were disloyal to God who had entrusted them with a privileged position. All this happened in the courtyard of the Jerusalem temple where Jesus was teaching.

How dare he? This was their cherished territory and had been for centuries. This country boy from Galilee walking in to Jerusalem's holiest shrine as if he owned the place! And all they dared do was enquire what right he had to be there. However, that wasn't what they most wanted to ask at all. They wanted to ask 'Do you

think you are Messiah?’ The only person whose authority might exceed that of the chief priest was Messiah – if he ever appeared! Others had made false claims in the past which had been easily refuted but now they cannot answer the question Jesus puts to them. A reminder too that when Jesus was baptised by John the Baptist he was “Messiahed” by God whose voice was heard announcing ‘this is my beloved Son’.

The parable of the tenants presents us with several problems because we are not 1st century Jews living in or near Jerusalem and most of us do not understand Hebrew. Let’s do the easy bits first. We are all familiar with ‘buy to rent’ housing in this country. It is an investment. Well ‘buy to rent’ vineyards were the 1st century, middle eastern equivalent. A procedure familiar to everybody, and the rent was payable in kind i.e. fruit from the vineyard. We can easily identify the roles within the parable. God is the landowner, the vineyard is Israel, the tenants are the religious leaders and the servants are the prophets the last of which is the Son. They have been given in trust, a wonderful fertile vineyard with all the necessary equipment BUT they stole the goods, rejected the prophets, denied the owner’s rightful claims and killed the Son. They were disloyal to God who had entrusted them with a privileged position. That’s pretty explicit! These men were supposedly the scholars of Israel who studied the scriptures in depth. Jesus challenges their expertise asking “Haven’t you ever read the scriptures?”

Jesus has identified himself as Son of God, Messiah and uses a quotation from Psalm 118 which was often used in Jewish Messianic discussions. This would have been crystal clear to his challengers but this is where the references become obscure to us. The Son becomes the cornerstone. In Hebrew ‘ben’ means son and ‘eben’ means stone. Thus, there is a play on words which passes most of us by. There are further references to the prophecies of Isaiah and Daniel which should have been very familiar to the Jews but not so obvious to us. We don’t need the detail we just need to accept that the Son, the stone that the

builders rejected has become the cornerstone. A cornerstone is the foundation upon which a solid structure is built but it is also a stumbling block to those who attempt to oppose him. To defy him is to have life crushed out of us.

That solid structure is the Church of Jesus Christ, made up of Jews and Gentiles. All who will respond and loyally obey. This is a community characterised by their ability to bear fruit. Remember, the rent for the vineyard was payable in fruit! By the time Matthew wrote his gospel that process was well under way. He has recorded how God took from Israel the position of responsibility which they had abused and gave it to 'other tenants' i.e. Gentiles. Matthew emphasised the 'new people' who inherited the promises and position of apostate Israel. We, the Church, as those new tenants must obey and be loyal to God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit as we continue to bear fruit.

Prayers of intercession led by Ren Fargher-Smith

Gracious and loving God, we come to you now, as your children seeking your response to our intercessions .

The world is in trouble Father and we ask for your mercy. The Covid Virus continues to ravage many countries and there are numerous sacrificial and courageous response to it by people of all backgrounds and beliefs. Grant our Christian brothers and sisters in those situations the faith, empathy and courage to be your servants there. Help them to bring your love and peace into the bleakest of places.

Here in our country grant strength to those who work in difficult situations, hospitals, schools, hospitality, transport and so many others where the virus has impacted so badly, in health and welfare.

We pray for children in schools and students at university, for their physical and mental health and for the resilience to come through this situation optimistic, unharmed and with hope in the future.

We pray for our communities here in Heacham and elsewhere. Grant peace Father to those who are afraid, lonely, losing hope or faith, and for those who are ill and for those who do not want to live.

We bring to you those who are bereaved and those who are anticipating loss as they watch someone they love die. Hold their broken hearts and agony in your compassionate hands and bring them the comfort they need.

As we think about all these situations and bring individuals we know to mind we ask you, Holy Spirit, to hold them in your loving presence and bring them healing as you know is best.

Bring wisdom please to our government and all those with the power to influence decisions. Every day requires decisions to be made, some by leaders with great responsibility, some by individuals, some truly desperate, some more practical. Teach us all to share decisions with you and grant us all the ability to choose wisely.

And Lord we bring to you our friends and families. For those who are suffering for whatever reason, grant them peace of mind and comfort of body. As we bring to mind those we know in great need at the moment we ask you for healing as you know is best. For them and their families we pray for the knowledge that you are always with them Lord and that your loving arms surround and hold them.

Mercifully accept our prayers dear Lord, those we have spoken aloud and those known only to each of us in the secret places of our hearts.

Lord in your great mercy, hear our prayers. Amen

We pray together the Lord's Prayer lead by Simon Wilson

Song: Jesus Stand among us played and sung by Hilary, Lesley, Sue, Richard, Colin and Rosie

**Jesus, stand among us
At the meeting of our lives;
Be our sweet agreement
At the meeting of our eyes.
O Jesus, we love You, so we gather here;
Join our hearts in unity and take away our fear.**

**So to You we're gathering
Out of each and every land;
Christ the love between us
At the joining of our hands.
O Jesus, we love You, so we gather here;
Join our hearts in unity and take away our fear.**

Final Prayer

May we live in faith, act in righteousness,
always be loved and make Jesus, the Christ,
the cornerstone of our lives.

Amen.

Blessing

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep
your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God,
and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you, and remain with you always.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

In the name of Christ. Amen.

Peter plays as we finish

Church Open for private prayer

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

Please use this time for quiet reflective prayer. Thank you to our welcomers who allow this to take place.

HEACHAM PARISH CHURCH online service will be on

YouTube from 8am on Sunday am

Watch out for the email link.

Morning Prayer continues via Zoom Monday-Friday. Contact Penny Taylor for the link heacham.church@gmail.com.

The Prayer Course- Peter Greig- Via Zoom

John Whitbread and Gordon Taylor's homegroup continue via Zoom this Thurs at 7.00pm. This week we looked at Adoration and have been sharing music we find helpful to use when we pray. Its not too late to join us for one or all the remaining 6 sessions.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5124168831?pwd=dWVsR3EzTk01OEV3WUZUY1A4dUxJdz09>

Meeting ID: 512 416 8831

Passcode: 051396

Changes in Church jobs

Some of you may have heard Penny Taylor is leaving the job as Church Administrator to work at the Kings Lynn Winter Night Shelter. Val Fisher our book-keeper is also looking to leave in the near future. We are working hard to find a suitable person to take on these roles.

Trevor Shannon Books to buy

My father in law, Rev. Canon Trevor Shannon has just had 2 books published. One is called Stories for the Seasons, (a fresh look at familiar stories in the Christian year) £6.95.

While the other is called Mary's Boy, (an imaginative look at the yawning gap in the gospel accounts of Jesus's life from age 12, to about 30 when he was baptised) £9.95.

I am happy to deliver copies to anyone who would like to purchase them. Socially distanced of course. I can be contacted by email or phone, both in the church prayer directory. Many thanks, Lynn Shannon.

Podcast: 'Sunday Hope'

The Diocese of Norwich has a weekly audio podcast called 'Sunday Hope'.



It is available on [Apple Podcasts](#), [Google Podcasts](#), [Spotify](#), [Overcast](#), and more.

The podcast can also be listened to from any landline telephone: call **01603 537577** (local rate) to hear the latest edition.

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** – has been set up particularly with those unable to join online church services during the period of restrictions in mind.

