



Heacham Parish Church



**Sunday 15th November 2020 Sunday Service –
Heacham Parish Church**

Peter Murray plays 'Lift every voice and sing' as we gather

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; the God who is the same, today, yesterday and tomorrow; the God who is with us today, during this lockdown and always; the God who loves us.

God of all time,
you made time and you entered time to be with us.
We move from ordinary time to extraordinary time,
and in all this, we wait for you.
Keep our hearts aflame with the things that please you:
mercy, humility, justice.
And as we turn to worship you,
we worship you in time, in spirit, and in truth.
Amen.

Prayer of confession:

You call us to a life of mercy, justice and humility –
but we do not always live like this.
You call us to a life of welcome –
but we do not always welcome.
You call us to a life of solidarity –
but we do not always offer a helping hand.
Have mercy on us, O God, for the times we have failed,
and for the times we have failed to care.
For your name's sake, and your mercy's sake.
Amen.

Almighty God have mercy upon us, pardon and deliver us from all our sins, confirm and strengthen us all in goodness, and keep us in eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Song: O give thanks to the Lord

played & sung by the choir with Adrian

O give thanks to the Lord, all you His people,
O give thanks to the Lord, for He is good.
Let us praise, let us thank,
Let us celebrate and dance;
O give thanks to the Lord, for He is good.

Bible Reading: **Matthew 25: 14-30** read by Sue Turner

A Reflection from Penny Sutton

Are you ready?

This is the second Sunday before Advent. Advent is the season when the Church prepares for Christmas, a calendar date which rolls inexorably towards us. In our everyday lives how can we prepare and be ready to celebrate Christmas amid so many unknowns?

Our reading this morning is from a series of five parables all with the same theme – are you ready? and all with the same warning: “Keep watch, because you do not know the day nor the hour”.

What event is this warning talking about?

This is the second coming of Jesus to this world. Yes, that child who was born in Bethlehem, whose birth we are about to celebrate came to this earth for a purpose. Having told people of God’s love and care for them he died an horrific death on the cross to offer eternal life to every human being who will put their trust in him. While he walked this earth, he trained a group of followers, his disciples, to teach others the good news. This group became the Christian Church which currently takes many forms worldwide. As part of that Church we too are charged with spreading the gospel either by word or by deed.

Why is Jesus coming again?

He has some unfinished business and that is what Matthew has been writing about in the last three chapters of his gospel. Some of it makes for pretty uncomfortable reading. Jesus will come again, this time in glory accompanied by the angels, and the whole world will be aware of his arrival. This marks the end of the age. Just like the Stone Age or the Iron Age this is the 'Age of the Church'. Jesus instituted the Church at his first coming and we are still living in that age. At his second coming he will bring this age to an end. So far, this age has lasted 2000 years. It could end tonight, or it could continue for many more years. This is a date known only to God the Father.

Last week Pip talked about the parable of the wise and foolish virgins. The foolish were not prepared for a long wait and were turned away from the banquet. This week we read about a man who went away leaving his servants in charge. They were given sums of money according to their abilities. Two worked hard and doubled the master's money while the third hid what he had been given. On his return the man commended the two servants and offered them more responsibility. The other was called 'lazy and wicked' and relieved of what responsibility he had. All he did was preserve the status quo.

As with all parables this story has a parallel meaning. For the 1st century hearers of Matthew's gospel, a scenario involving master and servants equates immediately to God and Israel. This is a parable about God-given gifts and how his followers respond and use them. Jesus challenged the religious structures of his day by using the third servant to represent the Jewish establishment. Israel had been given the Law of Moses, the Temple - a sign of God's presence and promises to bless the nation and through the nation the whole world. They hid those gifts. Instead of being a light to the world they practised exclusivism keeping that light for themselves.

The other two servants represent those Jews and gentiles who respond to Christ's call and work to develop what Israel had already been given. They are the Church. As members of that Church God assigns to each of us work and opportunity according to our abilities. It is our privilege to

serve the Lord and multiply his goods. We have each been given tasks and the ability to fulfil them. If we do not use those abilities for the Lord, we are in danger of losing them.

We need to remain faithful to our absent master because when he returns, we shall each be called to account for our life actions.

Jesus **will** come again. This is a certainty BUT we do not know when.

I ask again – are you ready?

Prayers of Intercession, led Chris Murray

Invocation of the Holy Spirit -

Most powerful Holy Spirit come down upon us and subdue us. From heaven, where the ordinary is made glorious, and glory seems but ordinary, bathe us with the brilliance of your light like dew. **Amen.**

Father we come to you this morning in a world full of worry and fear. Help us to trust you for the future, to work towards a better time to come, a resolution to the current crisis that has in a strange way united this world.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We bring before you the leaders of our nation and all other nations - give them wisdom in the decisions they make. We pray that the turmoil of the U.S.A. leadership race will be overcome peacefully so that things can be worked out in the best way for all.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Jesus, as we approach Advent, let us remember your coming to earth and your teachings given to us in the Bible. Help us to live our lives as you ask us to do, to use our resources properly, and to care for your creation as it should be cared for.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We name before you in our hearts all those known to us who are suffering illness, distress, or loneliness. May they find healing, peace, companionship, and an awareness of your Holy Spirit with them.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We pray for guidance for all involved with the arrangements over the coming weeks; leading up to what is normally a very busy time in church life. For all in church leadership everywhere as they seek ways to bring the joy of your birth to others, in a different way this year.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

As the hand is made for holding, and the eye for seeing, you have fashioned us for joy. Share with us the vision that shall find it everywhere. And when our song of joy dies down to silence, come hold our powerlessness with love! Then shall our fear be gone, and our feet set on a radiant path. **Amen.**

We pray together the Lord's Prayer, led by Janet Flickling

Song: **'The Servant King'** sung & played by Terry, Karen, Colin, Rosie, Lynda, Lesley, Richard C, Hilary, and Richard G

From heaven you came, helpless babe,
Entered our world, your glory veiled;
Not to be served but to serve,
And give your life that we might live.

*This is our God, the Servant King,
He calls us now to follow him,
To bring our lives as a daily offering
Of worship to the Servant King.*

There in the garden of tears
My heavy load he chose to bear;
His heart with sorrow was torn,
"Yet not my will, but Yours" he said.

This is our God

Come see his hands and his feet,
The scars that speak of sacrifice,
Hands that flung stars into space
To cruel nails surrendered.

This is our God

So, let us learn how to serve
And in our lives enthrone him;
Each other's needs to prefer,
For it is Christ we're serving.

This is our God

Final Prayer

May you flourish as you use your gifts.
May you grow in faith and wisdom.
And may "Well done, good and faithful servant"
be your joy to hear as you work, rest, and pray, day by day.

Amen.

Blessing

sung & played by Adrian Flower and Val Fisher

May God's blessing surround you each day, as you trust him and walk in his way.

May His presence within guard and keep you from sin, go in peace, go in joy, go in love. **Amen.**

A Meditation, by John Henry Newman

God has created me to do Him some definite service; He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another.

I have my mission – I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next. I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons. He has not created me for naught. I shall do good. I shall do His work.

I shall be an angel of peace, a preacher of truth in my own place while not intending it – if I do but keep His commandments.

Therefore, I will trust Him. Whatever, wherever I am, I can never be thrown away. If I am in sickness, my sickness may serve Him; in perplexity, my perplexity may serve Him; if I am in sorrow, my sorrow may serve him. He does nothing in vain. He knows what He is about. He may take away my friends. He may throw me among strangers. He may make me feel desolate, make my spirits sink, hide my future from me - still He knows what He is about.

Zoom Church Coffee and Chat will be on Sunday morning at 10am this week.

Come and join for virtual '**Church, Coffee and Chat - on Sunday at 10am** this is the zoom link:

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/9960936343?pwd=TIerVHp3UHBzZHNTSm16QzdCNUY0Zz09> Meeting ID: 996 093 6343 Passcode: 150936

Contact Veronica at heacham.vicar@gmail.com to invite you.

Church Open for private prayer

Saturday afternoons 2-4pm and Wednesday mornings 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 morning. Watch out for the email link.

Morning Prayer continues Monday-Friday via Zoom.

Please ask Veronica if you want to join, tel. 01485 570697

The PCC will be meeting, via Zoom, on Monday 16th November. Please pray for them and their deliberations.

Contacts:

Rev. Veronica Wilson Tel: 01485 570697
or email: heacham.vicar@gmail.com

Church Office email: heacham.church@gmail.com

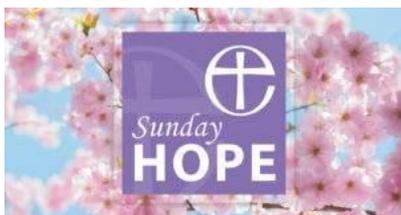


The Archbishops Call to Pray for our Nation

We call upon the Church of England to make November 2020 a month of prayer for our nation. We know that we are in the faithful hands of the risen Christ who knows our weaknesses, tiredness, and struggles and whose steadfast love endures forever. Anyone who wishes to do so is invited by the Archbishops to **join them in daily prayer at 6pm during lockdown** using resources published on the Church of England's website and social media channels.

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 to help those unable to join online church services during the period of restrictions.