



Heacham Parish Church



Sunday 26th September 2021 – Trinity 17

Opening music – Alison plays 'Verset' by Felix Guilmant
(1837-92)

Welcome to Heacham Parish Church on-line. This is our Service of Worship for 17th Sunday after Trinity.

In church today we are celebrating Holy Communion, so we are using some of the liturgy from the Communion service to unite us in church, online, and those reading this from printed sheets as one body, the Church of Jesus Christ.

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

Hymn: Christ triumphant

Christ triumphant, ever reigning,
Saviour, Master, King,
Lord of heaven, our lives sustaining,
hear us as we sing:

*Yours the glory and the crown,
The high renown, the eternal name.*

Word incarnate, truth revealing,
Son of Man on earth!
power and majesty concealing
by Your humble birth:

Yours the glory.....

Suffering servant, scorned, ill-treated,
victim crucified!
death is through the cross defeated,
sinners justified:

*Yours the glory and the crown,
The high renown, the eternal name.*

Priestly King, enthroned for ever
high in heaven above!
sin and death and hell shall never
stifle hymns of love:

Yours the glory.....

So, our hearts and voices raising
through the ages long,
ceaselessly upon You gazing,
this shall be our song:

Yours the glory.....

Prayer of preparation

**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.**

Prayers of Penitence

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 us,
pardon and deliver us from all our sins,
confirm and strengthen us in all goodness,
and keep us in life eternal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Bible reading – Ephesians 6:1-9 read by Penny T

A reflection – by Penny Sutton

You may remember a sketch, first broadcast in 'The Frost Report', which featured John Cleese, Ronnie Barker and Ronnie Corbett lined up in order of height. Ronnie B says, "I look up to him because he is upper class, but I look down on him because he is lower class." Finally, Ronnie C gets the 'pay-off' line as he looks up at both the others and says, "I get a pain in the back of my neck." This satirises the British class system and makes the same points as Paul makes in our passage from his letter to the Church in Ephesus. Both deal with relationships, respect, and responsibility. Paul has three pairs of directly related people to whom these three Rs can be applied. Before he starts looking at these individually, at Ch 5 v 21 he states the overriding principle governing Christian relationships.
"Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ."

John looked at Wives and Husbands last week so today we move on to Children and Parents. There appears to be an expectation that families will worship together in this Church. The fact that children are included and addressed reflects the influence that the early Church and the teaching of Jesus was already having in this area. Across the Roman Empire unwanted babies were abandoned. The weak or deformed were killed and even healthy children were regarded as a nuisance because they inhibited promiscuity and complicated divorce.

Now Paul defines that new relationship. He requires children to obey parents for three reasons.

- (i) Nature: - This is what happens in every society.
- (ii) God's law: - Paul quotes the fifth Commandment from Deuteronomy Ch 5 which, he reminds us, contains a promise. During childhood parents represent God to their offspring practising both his authority and his love. The child is to 'honour' their parents by giving them obedience, love, and respect. The attached promise is of long life and prosperity.
- (iii) The Gospel: - The promise we've just looked at concerned material prosperity. This dated from the time of Theocracy when God ruled his chosen people, Israel. Then blessings were usually associated with the 'promised land'. Now the situation has changed. God deals with his people, the Church, differently. Paul adjusts the promise to read "long life on earth". God's covenant people, the Church, is an international community and the blessings are spiritual blessings in Christ.

The responsibility here lies with the parents as Paul urges restraint of parental authority. In stark contrast to the Roman norm where a father had absolute, tyrannical power over his family he portrays parents as self-controlled, gentle, patient educators. This echoes the overarching theme of the Letter to the Ephesians: - Through Christ's reconciling work there is now one multinational, multicultural family of God. Thus, human fathers should care for their families as God the Father cares for his family.

Does the relationship between slaves and masters have any relevance for us today when we led the world to abolition of slavery, passing an Act of Parliament in 1833? Thirty years later clergyman Charles Kingsley published his book 'The Waterbabies' – a critique of child labour. Yes! This country still sent small children up chimneys to clean them and it didn't end there. In 2015 the UK found it necessary to pass the Modern Slavery Act. There is slavery around us here today. Just as it is remarkable that Paul addressed children it is also noteworthy that he addressed slaves. Commonly regarded as chattels, without rights they represented a capital investment for their owners who cared for them in the same way as for their livestock or furniture. Paul however addressed slaves as respected members of the Christian community and regarded them as responsible people. Just as parents represent God to children, so do masters to slaves. Paul reminds us "he who is both their Master and yours". The primary responsibility for both is to serve Christ. Why? "because you know that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does". The one true God is a God of justice and judgment. There is no fooling him.

Paul supports the solidity of family life and the extended household. Our culture often sees families, like marriage, as oppressive and enslaving. Yes, that does happen, but it is equally possible to get it right. The reason the family can become a place of fear and bondage is because it is designed

as the place of love, security, and affirmation. Corruption of that design wreaks havoc with relationships, respect, and responsibility.

The Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation he came down from
heaven,
was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again in accordance with the
Scriptures; he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the
dead, and his kingdom will have no end.
We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and
glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of
sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come.
Amen**

Prayers of Intercession - Led by Richard Gowland

Heavenly Father, we are here to worship you. May we continue to show full reverence for your presence in church or home. Jesus's mission is to save us. May we be ready for his calling.

Lord in Your mercy.... Hear our prayer.

We pray for the Church and for the world in the name of Jesus Christ. Renew the life and faith of the Church at this time. We are encouraged by fellowship with fellow Christians and we thank you that we are able to meet and worship together again. We thank you for the friends who have put so much effort into organising and taking part in the on- line services. We are one in Christ.

We pray for our leaders, Archbishops Justin and John and Bishops Graham and Jane. May they continue to guide us in ways of truth and faith. We pray for our own Veronica, and the group of readers at St Mary's. May we faithfully follow their leadership and teaching. We thank you that we are a growing faith community.

Lord in Your mercy.... Hear our prayer.

We pray for good government. We ask for patience among us as the pandemic continues. Despite the many voices complaining at delay in relaxing regulation to allow a return to normal, we need to proceed with caution. Help all of us over the next few months. We need to turn to you and to embrace Jesus' message to love one another and work for the common good. This church family is a loving one and gives us all such valuable support. When we return to normal our society will need to examine its priorities and become less selfish. Guide us as we re-build a more just vision. There are signs of good within our people. May this be continued and not fade away.

The voices and actions of climate conscious people are with us. May their actions be moderate and have the effect on the nation which will result in progress towards reducing the hazards. We all need to contribute. Government cannot be successful without our active support.

Lord in Your mercy.... Hear our prayer.

Continue to guide this church family at Heacham. Help us to decide our personal priorities and where the well-being of this community and the church should be.

May we show compassion towards those in need, wherever they come from. We continue to see desperate people who are exploited by gangs crossing the channel in dangerous circumstances. We cannot accommodate all-comers. Those who land and enter our community, are in many cases falling into 'modern slavery' at the hands of the same criminals.

Lord in Your mercy.... Hear our prayer.

We thank you for the service of our queen and her family. May they continue to serve the nation and you faithfully. Our queen is rightly admired for her wisdom and her sense of duty. Thank you for guiding her in all she does and is.

Lord in your Mercy: Hear our Prayer

We raise before you now in a few moments of silence those known to us who specially need prayer. In illness, bereavement, worry, people who are hurting. Our prayer chain is an active example and duty for us to observe. May this be used more. May we learn to pray more and to talk to you through this prayer.

(Short Silence)

Lord in your Mercy: Hear our Prayer

Remember, the souls of your servants no longer here on earth with us and for those who are saddened by their passing. Be with the bereaved in their loneliness and give them the faith to look beyond their present troubles to your Son Jesus Christ who died and rose again and who lives for evermore. We shall all be reunited in heaven.

(Short Silence)

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

Amen

We pray together the Lord's Prayer.....

Blessing

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep our 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 us and remain with us and those we love now and always.

Amen.

Hymn: In an age of twisted values

In an age of twisted values
we have lost the truth we need;
in sophisticated language
we have justified our greed;
by our struggle for possessions
we have robbed the poor and weak –
hear our cry and heal our nation:
your forgiveness, Lord, we seek.

We have built discrimination
on our prejudice and fear;
hatred swiftly turns to cruelty
if we hold resentments dear.
For communities divided
By the walls of class and race
Hear our cry and heal our nation:
Show us, Lord, your love and grace.

When our families are broken;
when our homes are full of strife;
when our children are bewildered,
when they lose their way in life;
when we fail to give the aged
all the care we know we should –
hear our cry and heal our nation
with your tender fatherhood.

We who hear your word so often
choose so rarely to obey;
turn us from our wilful blindness,
give us truth to light our way.
In the power of your Spirit
come to cleanse us, make us new:
hear our cry and heal our nation
till our nation honours you.

Dismissal:

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ. Amen.

Closing music – Alison plays 'Magnificat', Op.41 No.2 by Felix
Guilmant (1837-92)

Church Contact:

Rev. Dan Tansey tel. 01553 390615/07928825060

Or email: dan@churchinthewoottons.net

Church Office tel. 01485 572539 (answerphone)

Or email: heacham.church@gmail.com
