

# ST NICHOLAS CHURCH SIGHTHILL

30 JULY 2023

## TWO TREES ONE GARDEN CONT'D

### Call to prayer

God is near to all who call on him. He listens when we pray. So let's bring our prayers to God with confidence, knowing that He will hear and answer

(Psalm 145: 14, 18)

**All: Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good,  
for His steadfast love endures forever.  
Give thanks to the God of gods,  
For His steadfast love endures forever.  
Give thanks to the Lord of Lords,  
For His steadfast love endures forever**

(Ps. 139:1-3)

### Hymn: "Great is Thy Faithfulness"

1. Great is Thy faithfulness O God my Father  
There is no shadow Of turning with Thee  
Thou changest not, Thy compassions they fail not  
As Thou hast been, Thou forever wilt be

#### Chorus

**Great is Thy faithfulness, great is Thy faithfulness  
Morning by morning, new mercies I see  
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided  
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord unto me**

2. Summer and winter and springtime and harvest  
Sun moon and stars in their courses above  
Join with all nature in manifold witness  
To Thy great faithfulness mercy and love

3. Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth  
Thy own dear presence to cheer and to guide  
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow  
Blessings all mine with ten thousand beside

### Opening Prayer

God, You are our highest good, the only One able to satisfy our deepest longings. You are the true font of joy and gladness. In You, we are always rich. In You, all gifts are ordered and find their rightful place. In You, we find the joy of giving. In You we find shalom: wholeness, healing.

But how quickly we are overawed when others grow rich. We are blinded by the splendour of their homes, the increase of their wealth as their profit margins increases. How quickly we turn to doubt and disbelief, suspicion and misgiving. "It's vanities of vanities," we say – "this war and unfair policies." Or we turn to greed and try to hoard. We build bigger barns, open another bank account, to hold what should be shared. Lord, we confess, we can easily become misguided. We can be swayed by greed and selfishness. We can store up reserves in churches when our neighbours can't afford their supper. We can covet more and more of that which is not really our own. But in the end, we acknowledge that it leaves us feeling empty. Lord, we ask for Your grace and forgiveness.

Fill us with the awareness that all things come from You, and that we will be forever restless unless all things find their right place and purpose in You. Fill us with gratitude for the things You've given us. Fill us with the riches of Your kingdom, so we can share with those who need it. And give us clean hearts, kind and open hearts to do it. And in so doing, we and our neighbours, both new and familiar, will find shalom: wholeness, healing. Thank You, Lord, for always hearing our prayers, extending grace with open arms and giving us that which we need to change and order our lives back to You, for Your glory and the benefit of others. In Jesus' name, Amen.

### The Lord's Prayer

Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.  
Matthew 6: 9-13 (NKJV)

## Bible Readings

### Matthew 7:15-20

Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.

### John 15:5

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

### Song: You are the vine

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=301PlhiRNx8&t=4s>

### Reflection:

**'Two trees in one garden cont'd – trees that bear fruit**

### We are an offering

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=esREllt0Bi0>

### Prayers for offerings

As we bring our offerings to you, we give back to you from the abundant blessings you have given us. May our gifts be acceptable in your sight, O Lord our God. Blessing and glory, wisdom and thanksgiving, honour, and power and strength, be unto you our God forever and ever. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, Amen.

### Prayers for others and ourselves

We pray for those parts of the world where there is war and unrest. For those in Ukraine, Afghanistan, Yemen, Palestine, and so many other places where there is no peace. Hear the cries of those who are frightened, strengthen and inspire those who work for peace. And help us to be people of peace ourselves.

**All: Loving Lord, help us to bring our needs to You.**

We pray for justice, that in our country and across the world leaders will be inspired by the Spirit to act

fairly and wisely for the common good, and that our institutions would be guided and renewed by those seeking to hear Your voice.

**All: Loving Lord, help us to bring our needs to You.**

We pray for families, in particular families struggling with rising living costs and the extra struggles that the school holidays bring. Help them to know Your peace and encouragement and help us to form communities which nurture and support families of all kinds.

**All: Loving Lord, help us to bring our needs to You.**

We pray for our Church, that at times of change and uncertainty we will be a place of refuge, silence and peace in our communities, that in a busy and troubled world we will have wisdom and compassion to support people in their pain; and guide them to find rest at Jesus' feet.

**All: Loving Lord, we bring our needs to You, in Jesus' name, Amen.**

### Hymn: Lord of all hopefulness (Slane – Be Thou my vision)

1. Lord of all hopefulness  
Lord of all joy  
Whose trust ever child-like  
No cares could destroy  
Be there at our waking  
And give us we pray  
Your bliss in our hearts Lord  
At the break of the day
2. Lord of all eagerness  
Lord of all faith  
Whose strong hands were skilled  
At the plane and the lathe  
Be there at our labours  
And give us we pray  
Your strength in our hearts Lord  
At the noon of the day
3. Lord of all kindliness  
Lord of all grace  
Your hands swift to welcome  
Your arms to embrace  
Be there at our homing  
And give us we pray  
Your love in our hearts Lord  
At the eve of the day
4. Lord of all gentleness  
Lord of all calm  
Whose voice is contentment

Whose presence is balm  
Be there at our sleeping  
And give us we pray  
Your peace in our hearts Lord  
At the end of the day

CCLI Song # 4778835

## **Final prayer and blessing**

Loving God, we have heard of Your power and might, and Your smallness and ordinariness, Your thirst for justice and Your desire for closeness in us.

As we leave this place, help us to take something of all these parts of You into the world with us, and to encounter You in our relationships and the events of our lives.

Amen

May God bless us this week, May the power of the Father, friendship of the Son, encouragement of the Holy Spirit, be with us now and always, Amen