

HOLY TRINITY, HARTSHILL

March 22nd 2020-Mothering Sunday

A very warm welcome to all those joining us in our virtual worship today.

If possible use this service at 10am so we are worshipping together. Try saying the parts in bold aloud.

Opening Response

Let us start by reflecting on the week that has just passed.

Thank God for all the blessings you have received.

Consider the things which we have done, or not done, or even our thoughts which we now wish to say sorry to God for:

The gospel calls us to turn away from sin and be faithful to Christ. As we offer ourselves to him in penitence and faith, we renew our confidence and trust in his mercy. Father, Son and Spirit.

Father, we have sinned against heaven and against you. We are not worthy to be called your children. We turn to you again. Have mercy on us, bring us back to yourself as those who once were dead but now have life through Christ our Lord.

Absolution: 1 John 1:8-9

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Amen.

Collect for today

God of compassion, whose Son Jesus Christ, the child of Mary, shared the life of a home in Nazareth, and on the cross drew the whole human family to himself: strengthen us in our daily living that in joy and in sorrow we may know the power of your presence to bind together and to heal; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen

Reading for today Colossians Chapter 3 verses 12 to 17 (perhaps read it twice)

¹² Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. ¹³ Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴ And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. ¹⁵ Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. ¹⁷ And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Talk See talk below from Heather. Reflect on what this might mean for us in the coming weeks and how we might respond to God's word.

Mother's Day 22/3/20 – Sunday Talk/reflection

Dear friends and church family

This is a sermon I never wanted to write like this. I had a fun all age activity planned (which really can't easily be translated onto paper) but neither does it seem appropriate for what we are all facing at this moment. Our reading, however, has such an important message in the context of what is happening to us as a church, a neighbourhood, a nation and a global community. Never more so in this generation do we have to live out this teaching to "clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience". Our world needs to see and experience these virtues in order to keep going. Quite simply "over all these virtues put on love" because as we also know from God's word – love casts out fear. It is fear that is causing people to behave unkindly and inconsiderately. It is fear that is causing people to look inwardly rather than acknowledge the needs of others. However, it is love that is prompting random acts of kindness, for people to call their neighbours and offer practical support. It is love that is keeping the front line services going in serving us. And it is love that will keep us going because of God's love (through Jesus). And it is the cross, the definitive symbol of sacrificial love, that will ultimately save us.

We are also called to "Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts" which I acknowledge is so hard to do when the clamour and unpredictability of the world screams out anything but peace. God's peace, passing all understanding, is the only thing we can hold onto in an uncertain and unknown world. We CAN still pray and we NEED to keep worshipping – because God hasn't changed and is still worthy to be praised simply because of who He is and what He has already done for us. Our reading calls us to worship "through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts." The more we look up to God the less we look down at our circumstances. It's not a naïve or thoughtless instruction but a tough disciplined choice to keep focusing on God who is the author and perfecter of our faith – as what else is there to do as Simon Peter asked "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life" (John 6:68)

We are still the body of Christ and each member still has value and worth and purpose. Those roles will inevitably change or at least look very different in the days and weeks to come. I am immensely grateful to all those who have offered and given support already this past week and I truly and sincerely thank God for you.

I am also conscious of it being Mothering Sunday today. It's not always an easy day for many people for many different reasons – and so I know that the present circumstances will be making it even more difficult for many. It's poignant then that this is the first Sunday of our church buildings closing for public worship as one of the original traditions of mothering Sunday was of people returning to their 'mother church' to worship. It is so important to remember then that **we** are the church, the body of Christ, and although our building may be closed....our hearts are to remain open to what God is saying and calling us to 'be' and 'do' in our community and in and for God's Kingdom here on earth.

Sharon and I are praying for you (and if you join in with us – with you too – albeit remotely!) We will continue to do what we can, when we can and where we can – but please do be patient with us as we still have much to contend with as we process the daily updates we are receiving from both the Diocese and the National Church.

And so as I end this reflection let us look again at the last line of our reading "And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him." As I preached only 2 weeks ago ... we are blessed to be a blessing. We have the ultimate good news of the Gospel....let's keep it as our foundation and strength and share it wherever we can. You are loved by God...so....let's love one another and proclaim the GOOD news ... on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

Statement of Faith

Let us declare our faith in God

We believe in God the Father, from every family in heaven and on earth is named

We believe in God the Son who lives in our hearts through faith and fills us with his love

We believe in God the Holy Spirit, who strengthens us with power from on high.

We believe in one God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit

Amen

Prayers

Faithful Creator, whose mercy never fails: deepen our faithfulness to you and to your living Word, who is Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

**Keep us, good Lord, under the shadow of your mercy.
Sustain and support the anxious,
be with those who care for the sick,
and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may find comfort
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love
in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.**

Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your disciples, 'I am with you always'. Be with me today, as I offer myself to you. Hear my prayers for others and for myself, and keep me in your care. Amen.

O God, help me to trust you, help me to know that you are with me, help me to believe that nothing can separate me from your love revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Lord, in these days of mercy, make us quiet and prayerful;
in these days of challenge, make us stronger in you;
in these days of emptiness, take possession of us;
in these days of waiting, open our hearts to the mystery of your cross. Amen.**

Angela Ashwin

Prayers specifically for Mothering Sunday

God our mother, we pray for our mother church. We give thanks for our church community that nurtures us in the faith and provides for our spiritual needs. Challenge our churches to be a mother to our communities, help us to see where we can help practically to serve all your children in need. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Dear God, we pray for all those who will find Mothering Sunday difficult. We pray for those who have lost their mothers, those who have a difficult relationship with their own mother and those who long to be mothers. Help us find our rest and quietness in your loving arms. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Prayerful reflections:

*Spend some time thanking God for what you have and have received
Pray for those on the front line who are still serving so faithfully
Pray for those whose livelihoods have been impacted
Pray for those on your heart
Pray for yourself – be honest with God about your fears and feelings*

As our Saviour taught us so we pray

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen

Closing Prayers

Lord God, whose blessed Son our Saviour gave his back to the smiters and did not hide his face from shame: give us grace to endure the sufferings of this present time with sure confidence in the glory that shall be revealed; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. Amen

Blessing- A Lent seasonal blessing:

Christ give you grace to grow in holiness,
to deny yourselves, take up your cross, and follow him;
And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among us and remain with us always. **Amen**

Dismissal

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord in the coming week in any way that you can in these difficult and challenging times.

In the name of Christ. Amen

Notices for the week ahead

Message from Heather

We have sent out letters to as many church members as possible electronically & literally this week with a message about the C of E guidance and some prayer resources. We will (whilst we are able to) repeat this again at some point before Holy Week in order to resource you for Easter Worship. Please do let me know if you have an email address I may not be aware of – as emailing the resources out is more sustainable long term.

Coronavirus Guidance

Following Church of England advice there will be no services of public worship at Holy Trinity or St Peter's Church for the foreseeable future. Also the Lent Courses have been cancelled. This includes cancelling the Easter morning service on the Hayes – as despite being able to space people out it would constitute public worship which we have been asked to suspend at this time.

Isolated but not alone- Hartshill Community Helping each other

Help is needed for those self-isolating and volunteers are needed.

During this time many elderly or ill people are self-isolating due to the spread of Covid-19 (coronavirus).

If you can offer your time to help out people on your street by picking up groceries, prescriptions, emergency supplies or offering a friendly phone call to ease loneliness, then please register yourself with the Community Centre.

Please also remember your local shops are well stocked.

For any more details on how to help or if you need help finding your local volunteer then please call 02476397961.

Parish Giving Scheme

We have joined the Parish Giving Scheme which is a much more efficient method for all those giving by standing order, particularly to recover covenant income. If you have not already got a pack please contact Nick Miles on 024 76394339

Community Café

Following Government Advice this is currently closed.

Food Bank

We have received a letter of thanks for the 27.6 kgs of food that was delivered to the Food Bank over the last month. Well done to everyone for that. Obviously due the measures taken to deal with the coronavirus we are not able to continue with the bringing of items to Church. Yet this is at a time that the Food Bank is going to be under huge pressure especially with the news that schools are closing.

Can we urge everyone to consider if they can instead give a donation of money? Please visit their website- www.nuneaton.foodbank.org.uk and press on the Donate button at the top right of the page.

This is a really valuable way we can collectively as a Church show our love to the vulnerable people in our society. All items currently in church will be delivered next week

Coronavirus Prayer

Lord God, as you know the whole world is trying to deal with the impact of the coronavirus. We pray for all countries and communities as they consider what steps they can take to care and support each other. We pray in particular for the elderly, vulnerable and isolated as they face the fear and consequences of catching the virus. We pray also for all leaders who are having to make difficult decisions to deal with the crisis and all those working in the health sector which is under such pressure anyway.

Please pray for:

Heather and Sharon in their ministries in Hartshill and Galley Common; Nick and Sally our lay readers and churchwardens; Ruth & Rob Kinderman in their youth work; Michael Brandsma in his ministry in Atherstone; and Bill Walton in his curacy.

Pray too for our Archbishops, Bishop's and Bishop's Staff team as they lead the nation and diocese.

Pray for the government and local/national/international leaders as they make life changing and potentially life-saving decisions.

Those in need

Rachel McCormack and Family; Mark Johnson; Maureen; Raymond Ball; Dorothy; Olive; Julie; Jan & Tony; Mark Pettit; Rebecca; Jane.

Prayer List

Please notify Nick B-B of the names of anyone for whom you would like prayer and any thanks for prayers answered.

NB. Please ensure that you have the person's permission first.

If you want to be added to the email prayer chain/group or have any prayers you want to put on the prayer chain please email:- prayers.holytrinity@gmail.com

Family and Friends of the Deceased

For all those dealing with loss and bereavement caused by the Coronavirus nationally and internationally

Any items to be included on the weekly notice sheet please email Nick Blamire-Brown at njbb@hotmail.co.uk

Please use the notice sheet to give messages of help and support to others.