



Worship for Sunday 12th July 2020 **Emerging!**



This week there seems to be a sense of emerging – the lockdown has eased for many businesses and there are planned dates for further ‘unlocking’ in the coming weeks. However, this can’t happen without preparation. No doubt you will have seen how the different places have had to prepare to open – that’s no different for us at church. I’ve met with both the Churchwardens and the PCC in this past week and we have made a plan for the safe re-opening for Sunday worship. Of course this worship will look somewhat different for us for the first few weeks!

We have settled on 16th August to be the first Sunday gathering and we are in the process now of preparing the building for that. I will send out detailed instructions of how that will work for us next week – but, in the mean time please do get in touch if you haven’t already done so, to let me know if you would like to return in August. This is important as we will need to operate a booking system, just as our Cathedral in Rochester is, as numbers will be limited to enable us to stick to the Government and Church of England guidelines. Depending on the numbers who want to gather we may need to offer alternate weeks initially.

Light a candle or simply have a quiet moment to prepare....

Greeting

The confidence in our Lord Jesus Christ be within us.
And, also within all who search for courage.
Amen.

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.

Confession

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
So that we might emerge from the weight of them,
firmly resolved to keep in step with the Spirit of God,
and to live in love and peace with all.

Most merciful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
we confess that we have sinned in thought, word and deed.



We have not loved you with our whole heart.
We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.
In your mercy forgive what we have been,
help us to amend what we are, and direct what we shall be;
that we may do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with you, our God.
Amen.

Absolution

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

Hymn

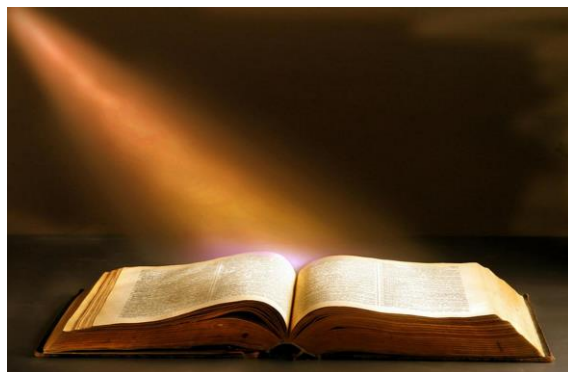
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9f2FXxDVO6w>

The Collect

Bible Readings

For Collect and Readings please see separate sheets

Reflection



This week you might like to spend extra time with the three readings, there is a lot of content and its good to see what God is saying to us personally through either one or all of them.

As we begin to emerge into a new, different ‘normal’ – if we can even call it that, these readings remind us of just what we have in Christ – we are children of the living God, made holy by God’s holiness; we are heirs, with Christ and eternity is our birth-right. Be encouraged, be comforted, be confident in your place in the Kingdom of God!

With Esau and Jacob we see family dynamics, competing and personal agendas - ultimately Esau showed contempt for his birth-right and gave it up to satisfy his stomach. What might we be hungry for. Sometimes we don’t realise what that we have the Holy Spirit of Jesus as our birth-right as the people of God. Do we realise and fully appreciate what we have? Sometimes the challenges we face in life causes us, unwittingly, to forget the enormity of what we have.

The Spirit or power that raised Christ from the dead lives in us!

The words of Jesus are there to show us how to live – the parables, as well as offering us accepted meanings, can speak into our own personal circumstances. There are some things we have heard before about the seeds and the ground or soil. Seeds need to be deeply rooted, fed, have the right nutrients; fall on the right ground. However, we still sometimes see a great tree growing out of a crack in a rock, or a flower blooming from a few stones – those who have ears can hear what the words of the Lord say to *them!*

As we emerge form the past few months – and continue to be a bit uncertain of what the next few will bring, we need to prepare our hearts for the healing God has for us. However safe, comfortable or looked after we have been, there is still a healing work – we have had a shock and we are emerging into a different place.

As we begin to emerge from the lockdown or from what has happened in the last few months we might realise that we need to receive something from God, we need to recover, we need healing. The story of the soil and the seeds can apply directly to our recovery from the past months. The varied responses to the seed of the gospel are like the many responses of us receiving healing, recovery and restoration from God. Some acknowledge the need of and embrace recovery and healing wholeheartedly, some only half-heartedly or temporarily, and some pass up the opportunity denying that they need it.

Living in God's word helps us to accept God's healing mercy and open ourselves up to experiencing new and full life with God – these words from Charles Haddon Spurgeon say it another way, from a sermon preached at the Tabernacle in London:

"I was sitting, one day, in the New Forest, under a beech tree. I like to look at the beech and study it, as I do many other trees, for every one has its own peculiarities and habits, its special ways of twisting its boughs, and growing its bark, and opening its leaves, and so forth. As I looked up at that beech, and admired the wisdom of God in making it, I saw a squirrel running round and round the trunk, and up the branches, and I thought to myself, 'Ah! This beech tree is a great deal more to you than it is to me, for it is your home, your living, your all.'

Its big branches were the main streets of his city, and its little boughs were the lanes; somewhere in that tree he had his house, and the beech-mast was his daily food, he lived on it. Well now, the way to deal with God's word is not merely to contemplate it, or to study it, as a student does; but to live on it, as that squirrel lives on his beech tree. Let it be to you, spiritually, your house, your home, your food, your medicine, your clothing, the one essential element of your soul's life and growth."

The Creed

We believe in God the Father,
maker of heaven and earth
to whom all creatures owe their lives.

We believe in God the Son,
who breathes the life of the Spirit into us,
and gives us gifts and wisdom.

We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who inspires us with confidence and hope.

We believe in one all powerful God;
Father, Son and Spirit.
Amen.



The Peace

As we wait patiently for you, O God,
and emerge from darkness into your glorious light;
fill us with songs of gladness and bring us peace.
The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with us all.

Offer the gift of peace to friends, family, community and world...

Prayers of Intercession:

Offer the prayers of your heart to God who hears us.....

For safety as we emerge from lockdown to find a new 'normality.'
For wisdom as we emerge into areas we haven't been for months.

O God our safety and our rock,
In you we take refuge,
Save us and protect us.
Let us find shelter in you,
Let us find comfort in you,
For we remember you
in our time of need.

The Lord's Prayer

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.

Blessing

The blessing of the Sacred Breath,
blessings of air, wind and breeze;
blessings of clear mind and clear insight;
The blessings of the interconnectedness of all that lives:
And the blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit
be with us and those we love now and always.
Amen.

Dismissal

We go into the world to walk in God's light,
to rejoice in God's love and to reflect God's glory.
In the name of Christ Jesus our Saviour.
Amen.





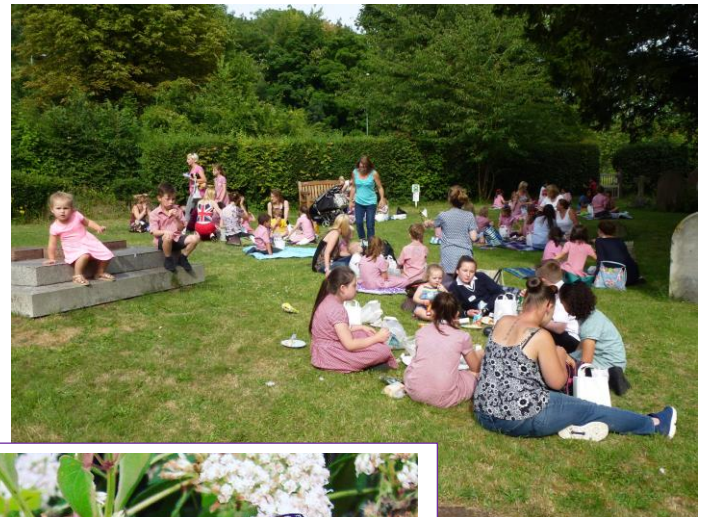
A free phone line of hymns,
reflections and prayers

Quotes for Life

'The best time for new beginnings is now!'

'Silence is full of answers.'

'If nothing ever changed, there'd be no butterflies.'



This is how we will be welcomed back to church!

