

Trinity Church

Sunday 13th September 2020



Dear friends,

We are planning to open for Harvest worship on the 27th September. We are making every effort to

keep COVID secure – if guidelines and rules change between the time of writing and the services, so will the arrangements. But we are going to offer a service on 27th September at 10.30 am. We now have to restrict the number of people who can come to worship – so if there is a need a second Harvest service will be offered later the same day.

- **FROM THE 16th SEPTEMBER:** Carol will receive names of people wanting to attend the service – we have to keep a record for “track and trace”. We will need to know how many people you are booking in for and if there are any who require chairs with arms. Please ring the office on 01538 398483 or email on trinitychurchleek@uwclub.net.
- **FACE COVERINGS:** these are now mandatory in places of worship, and have to be worn at all times. If the standard style is a medical problem then visors are suggested – if there are any concerns about this please speak to one of the COVID group – John Fisher, Jean and Steve Thompson or Maureen Wiskin or speak to Carol.
- **DOORS OPEN:** we will not be able to open the doors until 10 minutes before the start of the service and social distancing will have to be maintained at all times.
- **SOCIAL INTERACTION:** we cannot socialize before or after the service – and to reduce the risk, people will be encouraged to stay in their seats until a steward asks them to leave the building.
- **SINGING:** we are not allowed to sing together at the present time, though we are planning to use music in the service.
- **45 Minutes:** we are told that people should not be in the building for more than 45 minutes, so the service will be around 30 minutes long.
- **FILMING:** we are currently looking at the possibility of filming the service to add to our on-line presence.

We will continue to send out reflections and will be putting things on line, and there will be ways we can share our thanks by offering to Christian Aid and ASHA. Despite the current restrictions and what has been happening globally, we have many reasons to give thanks.

Keep safe, *Richard*

***WORSHIP TOGETHER Sunday 13th September** - 10.30 am on Trinity Church Leek’s Facebook page or YouTube Channel; also there will be a Zoom service at 6 pm – please contact Richard for signing in details.

Lectionary Reading

Sunday 13th September 2020



Exodus 14: 19 – 31

Psalm 114

or

**Canticle: Exodus 15: 1b – 11,
20 – 21**

Romans 14: 1 – 12

Matthew 18: 21 – 35

A Reflection based on Matthew 18: 21 – 35

‘To err is human; to forgive, divine’.

Although it does represent some aspects of Biblical teaching, the actual quote comes from a poem written in 1711 by the English Poet Alexander Pope. In the poem Alexander Pope explains that while we all make mistakes, we should aspire to do as God does and show forgiveness to others.

Is it that simple, that straightforward?

Jenny Nicolson was a victim of the London bombings of 2005. Her mother’s experience of dealing with the aftermath of the bombings and the loss of her daughter is well documented, especially when nine months later the Rev Julie Nicholson resigned from her parish in Bristol. The headline at the time was that she was unable to offer forgiveness to the bomber. She has said herself, that it is more complex than that. Julie does not feel that it is her place to offer or withhold forgiveness – but it is her daughter’s, who is not here to make that decision.

When we talk of forgiveness and the issues are in reality little or trivial, the offer of forgiveness is a simple practice – I suspect there is not a parent who hasn’t made one child say sorry to another – whether they have meant it or not. It is a way of drawing a line under something and moving on. The problem is that human nature actually is much more akin to “an eye for an eye” – so if someone hurts me, the natural reaction is to hurt them back. The problem is that if the one who has been hurt or damaged is actually bigger, stronger, than the perpetrator, then it is often a greater retribution that comes back and the situation escalates. We see such pattern repeated throughout history, and not just about individuals but between nations.

Without forgiveness, bitterness and resentment can eat away not at the “guilty” party but the one who has been hurt; and such things can destroy people’s lives. So even when the issues are much bigger, forgiveness is still about being able to move on – maybe more about letting go rather than drawing a line. So forgiveness is much more

about the one who has been hurt than the perpetrator – forgiveness is therefore about being able to move forward.

When we were growing up one of the weekend treats was to watch “Dallas” – the US soap opera about the Ewing clan. One storyline I remember was the protagonist JR digging up some dirt on a local politician; JR discovered that in this closet, as a teenager himself, the politician had sexually assaulted a girl. Although JR’s motives were not pure, he met with the woman who had been the “victim” – with help she had been able to let go and move on; the woman’s mother, on the other hand, broke down in tears at the mere mention of the politician’s name. It reminds us that sometimes a much wider circle of people are affected by something, but also forgiveness is possible, even in the most dire of circumstances.

Within the church we are much more aware of the issues around safeguarding, and specific safety measure have to be in place when someone convicted of abuse comes into the life of the church – forgiveness is not about pretending things have never happened; if anything, forgiveness enables someone to face up to what has happened, and the experience can make the one stronger. We should also remember that nowhere in the Bible does it say that followers of Jesus should allow someone else to walk all over them.

Forgiveness is not dependent on remorse; it may seem to be easier to forgive if someone is genuinely sorry – but forgiveness is not about the person who is the perpetrator, but the victim, the one who is hurt. So when the conversation suggests that forgiveness should be offered “70 times 7” it is not a specific number, but an infinite number of times that forgiveness should be offered – not because we should love our neighbour but because we should love ourselves.

And when we cannot forgive, when we have been so hurt or damaged by someone else, when we come face to face with God – is the God we see reflected in the life of Jesus more likely to heap coals upon our pain, or hold us and weep with us?

Loving God,
help us let go of the things and the people that hurt us;
teach us to be gentle with ourselves,
and to travel forward, deeper into your love.
Amen

PRAYER AND REFLECTION

Trinity Church will continue to be open for individual private prayer and reflection on



Wednesday mornings from 10am to 12 noon. Numbers in the building will be monitored and kept within current social distancing requirements and time restrictions may be included if busy.



Prayer List for Sunday 13th September 2020



Those who need prayer for sickness or other reasons

Angela Bates, Sarah Best, Eric Birch, Jill Ellis, Grace Hambleton, Frances Earl, Dennis Bates, Josh, Ivan, Lyn Kirkham & family, The Rev Julie Hassall, Jane Fulbrook, Audrey Pointon, Christine Redfearn, Alison Roberts, Michelle Coates (Liz Lowe's daughter), and Millie and family.

We also pray for all those who care for the above.

We remember Debbie Beville's family and friends, particularly for the funeral on the 14th September

We also remember Grace Hambleton and her family after the death of her granddaughter in the US to Covid 19.

On 11 September – we remember with thanks Joan Woodcock, praying for those who love and miss her, especially Teresa and Andrew

On 16 September – we remember with thanks Patricia Bloor, praying for those who love and miss her, especially Gwen



We will be collecting goods for ASHA at Harvest. These can be dropped off at Trinity between 10am and 12 noon on Wednesday 23rd and 30th

September or brought to the service on the 27th. The items that are needed are: Long life full milk, Basmati Rice, Pasta, Sunflower oil, tinned tomatoes, tomato paste or passata, Tinned sardines in sunflower oil, Tinned tuna in sunflower oil, Tinned fruit, Tinned rice, tinned sweetcorn, chickpeas, lentils, beans (**not** red kidney beans or baked beans or other veg), Tinned coconut milk, Dried chickpeas, lentils, pulses, Cereals -porridge, Weetabix, muesli, Tea, Jam, Biscuits, Toiletries - toothpaste, toothbrushes, shower gel, bars of soap, deodorant, Sanitary towels, Disposable nappies - sizes 3, 4 and 5



We will also be collecting for Christian Aid. The Harvest Mailing will be included next week.

TRINITY CONTACTS:

Tel: 015383 398483 (church office)

Office opening hours: Wednesday to Friday 8.30 am to 12.30 pm

Email: trinitychurchleek@uwclub.net

Website: <http://trinitychurchleekurc.org.uk/>

FACEBOOK: [facebook.com/URCMethodist](https://www.facebook.com/URCMethodist)

YouTube: Trinity Church Leek