

18th Week after Trinity: 16th – 22nd October 2022

Greetings from Eileen

Dear Friends,

I had to draw on my own sermon preached last week on the Gospel verse Luke 17:17: “*Then Jesus asked, ‘Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they?’*” Jesus expressed disappointment when only one of the 10 lepers he healed returned to express gratitude, acknowledge God’s favour, and praise God. At St Mary’s, Gainford, we had to take the decision to cancel **Youth Got Talent** – a show that had previously drawn a huge audience and received rave reviews. Many had worked hard to plan, publicise, and prepare for the return of this event, only to find the response to be too poor for the show to be put on. But we are in a place of blessing, as even for Jesus, who did what was right, who had chosen to bless and favour all 10 lepers, disappointment happens.

As if reading the question in our minds, Buckingham Palace has announced **His Majesty The King Charles III will be crowned at Westminster Abbey on Saturday 6th May 2023**. For some, we still feel the passing of Her late Majesty The Queen; her death stirring in us our own grief of dearest ones departed. But in time, it would be a special privilege to consider how we wish to celebrate the forthcoming historical occasion of our new King’s Coronation as churches and parishes in the United Kingdom.

These are, however, challenging times not only in our country but in many places around the world. Many are faced with the real question of ‘**heating or eating**’ – the cost of energy and rising prices of basic foods and essentials are of real concern to many households. We give thanks that in Winston, a much-appreciated Lunch Club brings together many elderly and otherwise lonely members of our community to have a wonderful hot meal and social time together. In that warm and genial space of Winston Village Hall, there is relief and warmth of body and fellowship. We recognise that more of this is needed, and in Gainford, St Mary’s Church is partnering with St Osmunds and The Ordinariate, the Parish Council of Gainford and Langton, the Village Hall, the Scouts, and other community groups, to explore the setting up of a **Warm & Welcome Café** serving hot food and drinks with other social offerings once a week in Gainford’s Village Hall. Do you know anyone who would like to help especially on a regular basis and be part of our Warm Space Team? Would you like to help? **You’re welcome to our exploratory meeting on Thursday 20th October 7pm in St Mary’s, Gainford** or contact our Lay Pastoral Minister, Wendy Broderick c/o info@gainfordwinston.church to find out more or indicate your interest.



THIS SUNDAY IS MESSY CHURCH 3.30-5.30pm.

All families with children are assured of a great time learning about Jesus, discovering faith, through craft, music, stories, and food!

OTHER SERVICES THIS SUNDAY: Everyone welcome.

9.30am St Andrew’s, Winston – Holy Communion

10.45am St Mary’s, Gainford – Holy Communion with the Worship Band

God, the most holy and glorious Trinity is with us, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit!

Rev’d Canon Eileen Harrop

NOTICES:

Congratulations to Luke Turner and Sophie Millington married on Saturday 15th October 2022 at St Andrew's, Winston.



Thank you, Paula. **Discover our Creation Walk** between our two churches at St Andrews at Winston and St Marys at Gainford as part of our ethos to get people to enjoy God's creation while taking the time to look for surprises along the route. We have painted stones, painted wood, willow stars, toadstools and lots more.

Gainford CofE Primary School celebrates their Harvest in St Mary's, Gainford on Wednesday 19th October, 9.15am. Food and Produce will be delivered to the Foodbank and to Butterwick Hospice.

Collect for the 18th week after Trinity

God, our judge and saviour,
teach us to be open to your truth
and to trust in your love,
that we may live each day
with confidence in the salvation which is given
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Post Communion Prayer

We praise and thank you, O Christ, for this sacred feast:
for here we receive you,
here the memory of your passion is renewed,
here our minds are filled with grace,
and here a pledge of future glory is given,
when we shall feast at that table where you reign
with all your saints for ever. Amen

First Reading: 2 Timothy 3:14-4:5

¹⁴ But as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it, ¹⁵ and how from childhood you have known the sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.

4 In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I solemnly urge you: ² proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favourable or unfavourable; convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching. ³ For the time is coming when people will not put up with sound doctrine, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own desires, ⁴ and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander away to myths. ⁵ As for you, always be sober, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, carry out your ministry fully.

Gospel Reading: Luke 18:1-8

¹ Then Jesus told them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart. ² He said, 'In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor had respect for people. ³ In that city there was a widow who kept coming to him and saying, "Grant me justice against my opponent." ⁴ For a while he refused; but later he said to himself, "Though I have no fear of God and no respect for anyone, ⁵ yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that she may not wear me out by continually coming." ⁶ And the Lord said, 'Listen to what the unjust judge says. ⁷ And will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long in helping them? ⁸ I tell you, he will quickly grant justice to them. And yet, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?'

Sermon, 17th Sunday after TRINITY: Rev'd Canon Eileen Harrop, 25th September 2022 (2 Timothy 2.8-15; Luke 17.11-19)

"Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, a descendant of David—that is my gospel..." This is what Paul, the missionary apostle wrote to Timothy, a young ministry leader. Paul's ministry can be considered effective, because a couple of thousand years later, we can say that this also is our gospel. Jesus Christ is our 'way'; his resurrection is 'the truth'; and his living example is 'the life' we follow. Yet how we live out this gospel is distinct for you and me, as it was distinct for Timothy.

Paul wrote of suffering hardship, of being chained in prison as if he was a criminal. In many parts of the world today there are Christians whose lives mirror Paul's. But the power of Paul's life and of those who are called to live out the gospel by confronting sin and injustice, is not in their suffering or perseverance. The power is in the impact and outcomes of their faith that affirm and strengthen the faithful, which exceed geographies and generations.

Whatever Paul and others endured, they were blessed by God's rewarding revelations, and they blessed countless others as they stood firm in their faith.

Our lives as Christians, as believers and followers of Jesus, are mostly quite different from these persecuted Christians. We may relate more to named Biblical characters who live out the gospel in normal life and behind the scenes. Lois and Eunice, Timothy's grandmother and mother, are commended by Paul for introducing Timothy to faith in Jesus. I see some present who are parents and grandparents, and I myself am a beneficiary of my grandparents, parents, aunts and uncles in this way. Chloe, was an early church leader, who sought Paul's guidance to resolve disagreements amongst their church family. We may know of members of our churches, who are faithful in ministry, and who seek the way of reconciliation and grace. Pheobe was an early Deacon, ordained and anointed in the same way as the first Deacon and martyr Stephen; and Dorcas (who also went by the name Tabitha) was known for her pastoral work with the poor and the widowed.

Members of our church family live out the gospel by showing practical care to our neighbours; to the sick, the poor, and the hungry. In both our churches, many lead or help with social activities, both regular and occasional, that help the lonely, the bereaved and widowed, the infirm, the elderly, and the poor in spirit. Of course, we know that charity and good works are not confined to those who follow Jesus. Afterall we are all made in God's image, and as God is love it should not surprise anyone when good works characterise the best in humanity.

And as your priest and minister, I am not comparing you with anyone. I am blessed by your faith, big or small. I commend you for what you do in practical ways that proclaim the gospel of our Lord in thought and word and deed. By what you do, you are bringing the love and light of Christ into the world.

I like what Paul says: “*avoid wrangling over words, which does no good but only ruins those who are listening. Do your best...*” If you believe in Jesus, and live your Christian life doing your best following Jesus, do not be ashamed to say you are. Jesus told Peter, the disciple whom he appointed to build the church: ‘*Heal the sick, give to the poor, help the widowed and the needy. Feed my lambs.*’

Now I want to say a few words in connection with our Gospel passage. (*My imagination did run away a little because it seemed like a covid-19 scene when the 10 infected men approaching Jesus had to keep their distance.*) This scene involving Jesus and the 10 lepers is very familiar to me. In the past, I had only been disheartened because of the 9 lepers who had seemingly forgotten the One who healed them. But this time, I was heartened. I was heartened not by the one grateful leper, who recognised the wonder of being favoured by God to be healed. How amazing to be healed by the Son of God himself. But no, it was not that. I found myself as if in Jesus’ person. There he was, God incarnate, exercising his earthly ministry. 10 lepers had chosen to approach Jesus for healing, and Jesus heals them. But when only one healed leper returns to acknowledge God, “*Jesus asks,*

‘Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they? Was none of them found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?’”

In our ministry today, we discern God’s purposes then do our best to follow Jesus. When you lead or serve in a coffee morning, in Tea and Chat, at Lunch Club, at Messy Church, or Youth Saints, in the Music Group or play the organ; lead a pilgrimage, prayer meeting, Bible study; and when I preside at a service: a strong response like a full church, many come, the donations are generous, and the place is abuzz, we feel rewarded.

But what if the returns are disappointing? What if the response is discouraging?

So, I was and am heartened that we stand with Jesus and Jesus stands with us. Is one out of 10 a disappointing return? Should Jesus have deduced from this that he should stop healing lepers? No, Jesus knew that it was God’s will that he should heal the sick and so on, whatever the variable response.

In the same way, we do our best to live out the gospel, to do as Jesus did. This is our life of faith and this is our sacrifice of thanks and praise. Thanks be to God.

Amen