

Berrow with Pendock, Eldersfield, Birtsmorton and Hollybush



A Service for the 5th. Sunday after Trinity

Welcome-do have a candle, glass of juice/wine and cracker/piece of bread ready

The Lord be with you
and also with you

OPENING PRAYER

**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 Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF PENITENCE AND ABSOLUTION

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, in penitence and faith,
firmly resolved to keep God's commandments
and to live in love and peace with all.

**Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
 we have sinned against you and against our neighbour,
 in thought and word and deed,
 through negligence, through weakness,
 through our own deliberate fault.
 We are truly sorry, and repent of all our sins.
 For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, who died for us,
 Forgive us all that is past;
 and grant that we may serve you in newness of life
 to the glory of your name.
 Amen.**

Almighty God,
 who in Jesus Christ has given us
 a kingdom that cannot be destroyed,
 forgive you your sins,
 open your eyes to God's truth,
 strengthen you to do God's will
 and give you the joy of his kingdom,
 through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

THE COLLECT

Almighty and everlasting God,
 by whose Spirit the whole body of the Church
 is governed and sanctified: hear our prayer which
 we offer for all your faithful people, that in their vocation and ministry
 they may serve you in
 holiness and truth to the glory of your name;
 through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,
 who is alive and reigns with you,
 in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
 one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

READING : Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

(At home, please read Romans 8:1-11)

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REFLECTION

Jesus often talked to people in different locations. Here he walks by the lake.

So what kind of soil are you?

We know the right answer. Can you claim you're good soil -- producing 30, 60, 100 times what was planted?

Are we the path? Rocky soil? Thorny soil? Or good soil?

Have you ever had to prepare a garden? You know that you have to get our hands in the soil, dig in the dirt, pull up those rocks and root out those thorns. Its hard work but in the fullness of time, we can turn bad soil into good. People have to labour, prepare the soil, root out the bad thorns or rocks to prepare for Jesus to come into our lives fully. What obstacles are in the way?

We have to dig in deep, getting our hands dirty, cut, nicked, pulling up roots and rocks and thorns, so that Jesus' seed can take root and a harvest can follow.

Are we able to cope with being a healthy and sustainable church in this climate of change, streamlining and offering ministry in different and alternative ways?

When seeds fall on the path, they cannot grow for lack of moisture, and the birds come and eat the seed. That's when we fail to understand the word and the implications of being a Kingdom person. As a member of the body of Christ, what ways have we used to open God's word to others?

What about the rocky soil? Jesus says that's a person who receives the word of the kingdom with joy but endures only for a little while and then falls away with any trouble or persecution on account of the word. Do we know people like that?

Discipleship can be hard work. God expects us to bear fruit. And he expects us to bear fruit surrounded by rocks. The more we dig in the soil, the more bruised our hands will be.

The church and within our church community is the place where we bear fruit surrounded by rocks -- our sisters and brothers in Christ -- and where we're rocks to other people. And we hope that God not only uses us to make Christians out of others but uses others to make Christians out of us -- people who forgive as Jesus commands.

Thorny soil -- Jesus says the thorns in the soil are "the cares of the world and the lure of wealth." They choke the word, so it yields nothing. But have you ever noticed these worries can take over your thinking, your living? Many thorns are wrapped around us, choking us off from being fruitful.

But good fruitful soil can yield an abundance -- 30, 60, 100 times what was sown. I wonder what ministries can achieve those sorts of results? God may throw seeds everywhere. Some of it took root in you and me, or we wouldn't be here. So where can we throw the seed now? Many of our most cherished traditions in history have not helped spread the Gospel.

What wild, unexpected seeds might you be holding in your hands ?

Jesus is our role model, if our minds are open to the different possibilities, can we start to attend to the many scattered seeds in alternative ways? Jesus met people in different places and in different contexts where they were. We come across all kinds of people who have critical moments in life when something enormously tragic happens to them and they never get over it. To their dying day, they blame God for the tragedy which happened in their life. They also blame God for all the other tragedies that happen in the whole wide world.

There are fair weather Christians who believe in God and are committed to God as long as things are going well. But when things get nasty, they start giving up their faith in God.

The purpose of the Christian faith is not to insulate us from tragedy but to make us strong in the midst of the tragedies of life. The legitimate cares of our lives interfere with the growth of this plant, with the growth of our relationship to Christ. The plant is alive there in that soil but it just doesn't produce any fruit.

And I sense that it is a constant battle in your lives as well.

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But then we get to the good soil. It produces a lot.
 Why? Why is it that some lives are so productive of fruit? Good soil is a miracle where you work hard at the soil. Where you pull out the rocks. This soil once was filled with rocks and somebody had to dig them out. When you pull out the rocks and when you pull out the weeds. It takes time to age good soil. It takes time of prayer and patience and goodness.

Perhaps we'd all better think about that. I wonder what that means for my life and yours?

Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Let us pray to our loving God.

Heavenly Father, may your words of truth take root in our hearts and grow to rich maturity. May we hear your will for us and act upon it; may we take seriously our responsibility to encourage and nurture one another in faith at every age and stage.

(pause)

Lord in your mercy,

Hear our prayer

Heavenly Father, may every act of selfless giving and every search for truth be richly rewarded;

Disturb assumptions and lead many to ponder more deeply the spiritual dimensions of their lives.

May the word of God reach all who are ready to receive it, and let us set no boundaries here as to who they might be.

(pause)

Lord in your mercy,

Hear our prayer

Heavenly Father, make our homes places of love and growth, welcoming to all who visit them, and accepting and forgiving to all who are nurtured there. Help us through quarrels and heartaches and remind us to honour one another as your cherished ones.

(pause)

Lord in your mercy.

Hear our prayer

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Heavenly Father, may all who are distressed in mind, body or soul, come to know your comforting and strengthening power of your companionship, and the healing work of your love. May we be more ready to support and befriend one another through the difficult times, and find new ways to reach out in the name and love of God.

(pause)

Lord in your mercy

Hear our prayer

Heavenly Father, we pray for all who are making the final journey in this mortal life. Surround all those who mourn with the comfort and solace of friends and family. May we cherish each day on this beautiful planet, through the rain or sunshine, let us be thankful for all the simple and ordinary gifts we take for granted each day.

(pause)

Lord in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Please ask for any additional prayers

Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Gathering our prayers and praises into one,
let us pray with confidence as our Saviour taught us.

Our Father,

which art in heaven,

hallowed be thy name;

thy kingdom come;

thy will be done ;

in earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation;

but deliver us from evil;

for thine is the kingdom,

the power and the glory,

for ever and ever. Amen.

THE PEACE

We are all one in Christ Jesus.
We belong to him through faith,
heirs of the promise of the Spirit of peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.
and also with you.

THE APOSTLES' CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.
Amen.**

THE THANKSGIVING PRAYER

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Lift up your hearts
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give him thanks and praise.

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Father, you made the world and love your creation.
 You gave your Son Jesus Christ to be our Saviour.
 His dying and rising have set us free from sin and death.
 And so we gladly thank you,
 With saints and angels praising you, and saying:

**Holy, holy, holy, Lord,
 God of power and might,
 heaven and earth are full of your glory.
 Hosanna, in the highest.
 Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
 Hosanna, in the highest.**

We praise and bless you, loving Father,
 Through Jesus Christ, our Lord;
 And as we obey his command, send your Holy Spirit
 That broken bread and wine outpoured
 May be to us the body and blood of your dear Son.

Here is the table set for a special meal.

On the night before he died he had supper with his friends
 And taking bread, he praised you.
 He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:
 Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
 Do this in remembrance of me.
 When supper was ended he took a cup of wine.
 Again he praised you, gave it to them and said:
 Drink this all of you;
 This is my blood of the new covenant,
 Which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
 Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did, in him we plead with
 confidence his sacrifice
 Made once upon the cross.
 Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation,
 We proclaim his death and resurrection
 Until he comes in glory.

Great is the mystery of faith

**Christ has died:
Christ is risen:
Christ will come again.**

Lord of all life,
Help us work together for that day
When your kingdom comes
And justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.
Look with favour on your people,
Gather into your loving arms with St Faith, St John the Baptist, St
Thomas of Canterbury with St Peter and St Paul and all the Saints to
feast at your table in heaven.
Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ,
In the unity of the Holy Spirit,
All honour and glory are yours, O loving Father,
For ever and ever.
Amen.

**Jesus, Lamb of God
have mercy on us.
Jesus, bearer of our sins,
have mercy on us.
Jesus, redeemer of the world,
grant us peace.**

Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.
Therefore let us keep the feast

(consume)

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Grant, O Lord, we beseech you, that the course of this world may be
so peaceably ordered
by your governance, that your Church may joyfully serve you in all
godly quietness; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

**We thank you, Lord, that you have fed us in this physical and spiritual sacrament, united us with Christ, and given us a foretaste of the heavenly banquet prepared for all peoples.
Amen.**

THE GLORIA IN EXCELSIS

**Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.
For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.**

THE BLESSING

**May the father from whom every family
in earth and heaven receives its name
strengthen you with his Spirit
so that Christ may dwell in your hearts;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you, and remain with you always.
Amen.**

**Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ. Amen**