

Berrow with Pendock, Eldersfield, Birtsmorton and Hollybush



15th. 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,**

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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

God, who in generous mercy sent the Holy Spirit upon your Church
in the burning fire of your love:

grant that your people may be fervent in the fellowship of the gospel
that, always abiding in you, they may be found steadfast in faith and
active in service;

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 : Matthew 20:1-16

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

(At home, please read Philippians 1.21 to end)

REFLECTION

Do you think some salaries reflect the importance of what people do in
their working life? The NHS folk are looking for a pay rise after the heart-
warming accolades during the Covid 19 crisis. BBC salaries?

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Footballers? CEOs, bankers, a care worker in a nursing home or in the community?

What if you are made redundant? Furloughed? Your own business in Lock Down? Minimum wages? People can get very heated just thinking about the pros/cons/difficulties of their own, neighbour or loved one.

Originally, the origins of the women's movement was initiated by unequal salaries for equal work. Women simply wanted equal pay for equal work.

Then there is those who feel discriminated against as minority groups e.g. the disabled; governments have brought in more laws to try and balance any injustice.

Money, salaries, equal pay for equal work, action, justice: these words cause all kinds of tensions within us. It is with this tense and conflictive mood that we approach the parable for Jesus for today.

Jesus' parables are never about church. Jesus' parables are from everyday life. They are from the marketplace, the farm, the family. Today's parable is about salaries, wages, and a fair day's pay for a fair day's work. People always get tense, anxious and nervous when you talk about money, salaries, and income.

Jesus was and is a master storyteller. When you examine the parables of Jesus, they are enormously creative. The parables of the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son are two of the memorable short stories.

In the story for today, once again Jesus uses every day, common life experiences. What was the dominant farm crop in Israel at this time? Grapes. And so, Jesus would tell a story about harvesting grapes. Those early birds and industrious people, who had worked all day, from six o'clock in the morning, for the full twelve hours under the heat of the sun, those workers were mad that the latecomers received the same wage.

When you are putting in the time, doing all the work, and someone else near you is sloughing off, and they get the same salary. Doesn't that make you mad?

The workers in the vineyards didn't stop to figure out the meaning of the parable because they were so upset about the story itself.

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What is the purpose of this story of Jesus? The parables of Jesus are always earthly stories with heavenly meanings. So, what is the heavenly meaning of this earthly story for today?

The key to the story is the contrast between those who came at the last hour and those who came at the first hour. Those who came at the last hour were given a full day's wage

Those who were given a full day's wage at the last hour felt that their wage was undeserved, unearned and a wonderful gift from the owner. The wage was a gift, a surprise, a wonderful delight.

And there are Christians who feel that God's generosity to them is unearned, undeserved, and they are surprised at the generosity of God. Such Christians have this attitude that life has been a wonderful gift from God such as these workers who came to work for only one hour and had received a full blessing from God.

Meanwhile, there are other religious people who were there at six o'clock in the morning and they worked all day long. They were born into the Christian faith; they were baptized into the Christian faith; they went to Sunday School; they went to Youth Group; they did confirmation; they sang in the church choir; they served on the church council; they came to church every Sunday. They had the inner attitude: if anyone deserved to be blessed by God, they did for they had been faithful to God and his church all their lives.

So, this parable is one of the many contrast parables and teachings of Jesus.

Jesus said those who are last with an attitude of thanksgiving shall be first, and those who think they are first shall be last.

The abundant life, and eternal life are free gifts of God to us, and we do nothing to deserve or earn them.

Jesus tells many stories that contrast. For example, the prostitutes and the Pharisees. These women were surprised that Jesus had such affection and love for them, they knew they did not deserve it. The Pharisees, on the other hand, knew that they deserved God's blessings and love. They knew their Old Testament; they tithed, observed all the

special worship services. They deserved the blessings and honour from God.

Another contrast. In the parable of younger brother and older brother. The younger son who had run away to the far country. "O Father, I sinned greatly, ran away, consumed your inheritance, and now am coming home. I deserve nothing. ... What? You are killing the fatted calf for me? Celebrating that I have come back to you?" The older brother thought and felt: "Father, I have stayed home with you my whole life. I am a loyal son who has done what you wanted me to do. I expect your blessing."

In many of Jesus' stories there is this contrast between *these people* and *those people*. *These people* who understand that all of life and forgiveness, the abundant life and the eternal life, that all of this is a gift from God, undeserved, unearned and a surprise. And *those people* have the attitude that I expected it, that I deserved it, that I earned it. Pay me my full day's wage.

Jesus told this great story about this wine grower who had to get some workers. He got the first set of workers at six o'clock in the morning and they worked all day in his vineyards. There were others who came at five o'clock in the afternoon. Those who received the money were surprise, amazed and pleased with the gift to them. Those who worked all day grumbled at the owner's generosity.

Do you understand this riddle of the kingdom of God?

The years have gone by, and I know this for sure: that everything in my life is a gift from God. My husband, my family, my job, you. Life, the abundant life, eternal life. Of this I am sure: that everything is a gift. What a surprise. So many surprises that life has given.

Amen

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Please ask for any additional prayers

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

Amen

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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;**

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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.

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

**Keep, O Lord, your Church, with your perpetual mercy;
and, because without you our human frailty cannot but fall,
keep us ever by your help from all things hurtful,
and lead us to all things profitable to our salvation;
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