



The Benefice of
Harden, Wilsden, Cullingworth, Denholme
Sunday 8 August 2021



Tenth Sunday after Trinity

Alison leads us in our worship

Preparation

The Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns.

**Let us rejoice and shout for joy,
giving God the glory.**

Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
**as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

Loving God, we have come to worship you.

**Help us to pray to you in faith,
to sing your praise with gratitude,
and to listen to your word with eagerness;
through Christ our Lord.**

Amen.

The grace of God has dawned upon the world
with healing for all.

Let us come to him, in sorrow for our sins,
seeking healing and salvation.

**Almighty God,
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
maker of all things, judge of all people,
we acknowledge and confess
the grievous sins and wickedness
which we have so often committed
by thought, word and deed**

Call to Worship

Opening Prayer

Prayers of Penitence

against your divine majesty,
provoking most justly your anger
and indignation against us.
We earnestly repent,
and are deeply sorry for these our wrongdoings;
the memory of them weighs us down,
the burden of them is too great for us to bear.
Have mercy upon us,
have mercy upon us, most merciful Father,
for your Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake,
forgive us all that is past;
and grant that from this time onwards
we may always serve and please you
in newness of life,
to the honour and glory of your name,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Absolution

May the God of love
bring us back to himself,
forgive us our sins,
and assure us of his eternal love
in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Collect

Lord of heaven and earth,
as Jesus taught his disciples to be persistent in prayer,
give us patience and courage never to lose hope,
but always to bring our prayers before you;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

THE WORD OF GOD

First Reading: Ephesians 4:25–5:2

So then, putting away falsehood, let all of us speak the truth to our neighbours, for we are members of one another. Be angry but do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not make room for the devil. Thieves must give up stealing; rather let them labour and work honestly with their own hands, so as to have something to share with the needy. Let no evil talk come out of your

mouths, but only what is useful for building up, as there is need, so that your words may give grace to those who hear. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with which you were marked with a seal for the day of redemption. Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and slander, together with all malice, and be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you. Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Thanks be to God for the gift of his word.

Second Reading: John 6:35, 41–51

Then the Jews began to complain about him because he said, 'I am the bread that came down from heaven.' They were saying, 'Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, "I have come down from heaven"?' Jesus answered them, 'Do not complain among yourselves. No one can come to me unless drawn by the Father who sent me; and I will raise that person up on the last day. It is written in the prophets, "And they shall all be taught by God." Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me. Not that anyone has seen the Father except the one who is from God; he has seen the Father. Very truly, I tell you, whoever believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live for ever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.'

Thanks be to God for the gift of his Holy Word.

Reflection from Liz Moy

Many years ago, I attended one of the diocesan days which was a time for people from many of the parishes across the diocese to gather together for praise, worship and study time. One person who was mingling with the crowds wore a hoodie, with the hood covering his head. He certainly received some wary or puzzled looks. (People in hoodies had been receiving some pretty bad press at that time.) I wonder if people were expecting him to lash out at those near him – or to mug one of the other delegates. I expect there were quite a few surprised people when he was welcomed on to the stage as the guest

speaker, John Sentamu, the Archbishop of York! Maybe others were challenged as he did not fit into their preconceived idea of what an Archbishop would wear.

It's a sad fact that many people can make assumptions about different groups of people. At the risk of generalising, many people fall into the trap of making generalisations about others! So, we may have heard that Yorkshiremen wear flat caps and keep whippets. (Though living in Yorkshire, we probably realise that it is not the only form of headwear – and other breeds of dog are available.) And, it probably explains why, in the days when I was teaching French, a pupil brought a snail in for me one day! He thought I would like it for my tea – because we all know that the French eat snails! A kind thought, but I think I ate a more conventional dish of beans on toast instead!

Neither of those examples were very harmful (except to the snail, maybe, but I was assured that it was already dead when the child found it!) but sadly, history has shown us that many similar assumptions can develop into prejudices which can, in turn, develop into friction or even worse, against others.

It's only when we engage with people for ourselves, that we truly get to know them – their tastes, their preferences, their beliefs, their customs. And sometimes, when we do not take the time to know them as individuals, then we can really miss out because understanding of others and interaction with them can ease relationships and enrich the lives of all concerned.

Our reading from John's gospel today shows a group of people who missed out in this way. Jesus had recently fed the 5000 and the reading is about the reaction of some of the people to those events and Jesus' subsequent revelation that he is the bread of life. After such amazing events, which had been welcomed by so many, this particular group had a different reaction. They began to complain! They were focused so closely on Jesus' earthly family and assuming that, as Joseph was a carpenter, they knew all that there was to know about Jesus. They had closed their minds to the possibilities that this local person may also be the bearer of wonderful news. So, they missed out on understanding the gospel message which Jesus brought. They missed out on the news that by following him, they could find the spiritual nourishment we all need to live life in all of its fullness. They missed out on that opportunity to form a deeper relationship with their loving God through his Son, Jesus. So sad – just because they were blinded by their assumptions.

Jesus wanted to share the message of God's love with all people, but that does require that we are open to receiving that message, that we have not put up any barriers in our minds, based on assumptions that we make. Probably it is easier to keep that openness if we follow another part of Jesus' teaching. We are reminded in John's gospel that he tells his followers to, "love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another." Certainly, when Jesus interacted with other people, he did not hold any assumptions about them. He saw them as individuals with their own joys and sorrows, their own needs and gifts. His love was generous and self-sacrificing, even to the point of giving up his life for the sake of others. And he calls us to love others with the same generosity of spirit. When we love others, the barriers which may have been erected are set aside. They are totally irrelevant because we no longer see the generalised picture, but we see the other as an individual. And as Paul reminds us in the letter to the Galatians "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. " – just a reminder that there are no barriers between those who are united in Christ, whatever differences there may be.

So, let's be open to receiving God's generous love and growing a deeper relationship with him, through his Son Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit. May that love open our hearts and minds so that we can truly follow Jesus' commandment to love one another – and as we do so, may we all be open to the blessings and gifts which we can share with one another.

Affirmation of Faith

**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.**

Prayers of Intercession led by Jasmin Smith

Blessed are you, Lord our God, you provided for your children.

In the wilderness of this world, you give us the bread of life.

Lord, grant, as we journey towards the Promised Land,
that we may put our hope and our trust in you.

Father, we give you thanks that you have called us to know you and to love you.
You have drawn us to you with bands of love. Help us to listen and to obey your
word.

We pray for all ministers of the word and of the sacraments.

We remember before you all who do not know or love you and we ask your
blessing upon all who reach out in mission and love to them.

We pray for any who have lost faith in themselves or in you.

Silence is kept

Lord our God,
our hope is in you.

Lord God, creator of heaven and earth, we pray for the nations of the world.
May they find a unity and a peace in you.

We ask your blessing upon the work of the United Nations and
upon all peacekeeping forces.

We pray for areas of the world where there is strife and division, where people
are unable to trust each other, where people do not listen to each other.

We remember displaced peoples and refugees.

Silence is kept

Lord our God,
our hope is in you.

We thank you for the love and protection of our homes.

We ask your blessing upon our families and friends.

We remember before you homes where there is division or distrust,
where families are divided.

We pray for all who have been betrayed or deserted.

We give thanks for those who mediate and provide protection for those who have been abused.

Silence is kept

Lord our God,
our hope is in you.

We give you thanks for our own well-being
and for all that feeds our bodies, minds, and spirits.

We remember all who are struggling with doubt, depression, and despair,
all who are having difficulty in their daily lives.

We pray for all who are ill at home or in hospital,
especially those who have no one to care for them or visit them.

We pray for all who serve in a caring role, in hospitals or in the community; for
their heartfelt desire to provide for the ill, the lonely and those who fear for the
future.

Silence is kept

Lord our God,
our hope is in you.

We rejoice that you sustain us with the Bread of Life.

Through our union with Jesus, you offer us life eternal.

As we celebrate our communion with the saints,
we remember our friends and loved ones departed
and ask that they may rejoice in the fullness of eternal life

Silence is kept

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

The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**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 for ever. Amen**

Closing Prayers

Creator God,
you give seed for us to sow,
and bread for us to eat;
make us thankful for what we have received
and generous in supplying the needs of others
so all the world may give you thanks and glory,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Go forth into the world in peace;
be of good courage;
hold fast that which is good;
render to no one evil for evil;
strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak;
help the afflicted; honour everyone;
love and serve the Lord,
rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit; **Amen**

Blessing

**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with us all evermore. Amen.**

Sending Out

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord
In the Name of Christ! Amen!

We go into the world
To walk in God's light,
To rejoice in God's love
And reflect God's glory. **Amen.**