



AT HOME SERVICE

Sunday 5th July 2026

compiled by Vicki Penfound - Lay Assistant

Opening words:

Psalm 145 v 8 - 12

The Lord is gracious and compassionate,
slow to anger and rich in love.
The Lord is good to all;
he has compassion on all he has made.
All your works praise you, Lord;
your faithful people extol you.
They tell of the glory of your kingdom
and speak of your might,
so that all people may know of your mighty acts
and the glorious splendour of your kingdom.

Hymn 443 Singing the Faith

1] Come, let us sing of a wonderful love,
Tender and true,
Out of the heart of the Father above,
Streaming to me and to you:
Wonderful love,
Dwells in the heart of the Fa-ther ab-ove.

2] Jesus the Saviour this Gospel to tell
Joyfully came,
Came with the helpless and hopeless to dwell,
Sharing their sorrow and shame:
Seeking the lost,
Saving, redeeming at measureless cost.

3] Jesus is seeking the wanderers yet;
Why do they roam?
Love only waits to forgive and forget;
Home, weary wanderers, home!
Wonderful love,
Dwells in the heart of the Father above.

4] Come to my heart, O thou wonderful love!
Come and abide,
Lifting my life till it rises above
Envy and false-hood and pride:
Seeking to be,
Lowly and humble, a learner of thee.

Robert Walmsley (1831-1905)

Prayer:

Creator, Father,
We turn to you that we may experience your loving Presence
We come just as we are, aware of our sinful nature.
We fail all the time at reflecting your holiness in our lives,
But you beckon us close, as your dear children.
Thank you for your grace and mercy poured out to us in your unconditional love.
May we walk worthy of your calling, relying on the strength of your Holy Spirit.
May we live every day glorifying our Saviour Jesus Christ.
All praise be to you O God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Hymn 441 Singing the Faith

1] As water to the thirsty,
as beauty to the eyes,
as strength that follows weakness,
as truth instead of lies,
as song time and springtime
and summertime to be,
so is my Lord,
my living Lord,
so is my Lord to me.

2] Like calm in place of clamour,
like peace that follows pain,
like meeting after parting,
like sunshine after rain,
like moonlight and starlight
and sunlight on the sea,
so is my Lord,
my living Lord,
so is my Lord to me.

3] As sleep that follows fever,
as gold instead of grey,
as freedom after bondage,
as sunrise to the day,
as home to the traveller
and all we long to see,
so is my Lord,
my living Lord,
so is my Lord to me.

Timothy Dudley Smith (1926-2024)

Reading: Matthew 11 v 16-19, 25-30

'To what can I compare this generation? They are like children sitting in the market-places and calling out to others:

“We played the pipe for you,
and you did not dance;
we sang a dirge,
and you did not mourn.”

For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, “He has a demon.” The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, “Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.” But wisdom is proved right by her deed

At that time Jesus said, ‘I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this is what you were pleased to do.

‘All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

‘Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.’

Reflection:

Have you ever felt that “You can’t do right for doing wrong?” Whatever decisions you make will be criticised and it leads to stress, pressure and lack of confidence? People who are on the world stage, particularly in politics and sport, must have a calm head and steely determination to succeed. We all have opinions and in the world of social media, there is an avalanche of opinions for everything. Behind the anonymity of a keyboard or smartphone, people may express their opinions without any care of the effect they have.

Jesus faced the commentators of his day by comparing them to children who are amused by taunting people. His critique of the criticsers is firstly that they are immature. John the Baptist led a tough life, showing by example the attitude of humility and repentance. His calling and ministry was a particular one of preparing the way. Spiritually “cleaning house” in readiness for the arrival of the Messiah.

Jesus, in contrast, enjoyed a good party and socialised with people those who considered themselves righteous would not go near. The prevailing thought amongst the religious folk was that to please God, you had to avoid anything – and anyone – deemed to be unholy. We see that attitude still today held by those who describe their Christianity in terms of what they “don’t do”. By shunning the world, they withdraw into a sterile existence which gives the impression of holiness. Jesus turned this thinking on its head, preaching that what came out of a person was the problem. Greed, lust, selfishness etc. Jesus reveals the heart of God by caring for the poor and marginalised. He deliberately goes to the people who have been treated as outcasts, he validates them and gives them dignity. God is Love and Jesus is embodying that with action.

He references children again, this time saying that the things of God are revealed to little children over those who are seen as wise and learned. Pride and self-righteousness tend to lead to someone being unteachable. The mind of a child is by contrast, curious, questioning and eager to know more.

As Jesus invites the burdened and weary, he uses the analogy of a yoke. This was a carved wooden item which joined a pair of oxen so they could pull together. Thinking of Jesus as a carpenter, he may well have made some yokes in his time. The Greek word translated “Carpenter” in scripture is “Tekton”, which is better translated as “Artisan”, it could refer to a worker in stone as well as wood. However, a yoke was a bespoke piece, so that the animal was as comfortable as possible and the pulling as effective as it could be.

Jesus is inviting us to pull alongside him; the paradox is that we find rest when we take up his yoke. We are no longer struggling on our own, being yoked with Jesus means the burden is light. Alongside Our Lord is where we learn. Christianity is essentially being a Jesus follower, being a disciple, learning from him how to live life, how to receive from him and give to the world. There are a lot of over-burdened people who need to find soul rest. Let us show the way by our example and come to Jesus.

Let us pray:

Dear Lord,
For the poor, dispossessed, refugee, unseen and unnoticed,
Grant them the strength to hold their heads high,
Grant too, humility on the part of the powerful,
That they may see people as you do.
For those who struggle under the weight of ill-fitting yokes,
Tied to ways of living that are not your way,
May they hear your invitation to rest and trust in you.
For ourselves, we pray for a closer walk with you
That we may spread your love to all. Amen

Hymn 415 Singing the Faith

1] The church of Christ, in every age,
beset by change but Spirit led,
must claim and test its heritage
and keep on rising from the dead.

2] Across the world, across the street,
the victims of injustice cry
for shelter and for bread to eat,
and never live until they die.

3] Then let the servant church arise,
a caring church that longs to be
a partner in Christ's sacrifice,
and clothed in Christ's humanity

4] For he alone, whose blood was shed,
can cure the fever in our blood,
and teach us how to share our bread
and feed the starving multitude.

5] We have no mission but to serve
in full obedience to our Lord,
to care for all, without reserve,
and spread his liberating Word.

Fred Pratt Green (1903-2000)

Blessing:

God, who calls us to be your tender touch in the world,
Guide us and empower us to shine your light.
Your promise of presence with us always
As we travel with you. Amen