



St. George's, Brockworth

Sunday 13th June 2021

Notices and updates

Worship

Please continue to contact the Church Office (by 11.30am on a Friday) to reserve your place for Sunday Services (you no longer need to reserve a place for the Wednesday Communion) and ensure you receive confirmation that a place has been reserved for you. Please note new email address.

Email: admin@stgeorgesbrockworth.org Tel: 01452 550554.

Please ensure you wear a face covering to any service.

What does worship at St George's Church look like in the future?

Following an incredibly challenging year, the Church of England recognises the need to explore new ways of worship and remain flexible and adaptable.

Bishop Rachel wrote recently: *"It is important to be clear that whatever our context for ministry we are not simply going back to where we were before the pandemic. This is a new morning. It will be really important that we take time to develop new and sustainable patterns of worship within our communities for the future. In many cases these will include a mix of in person and digital worship."*

Here at St George's we've been talking and praying about what that means for us.

While restrictions remain in place, and we establish ourselves in the new post-Covid environment, we are keen to build the strongest possible foundation for the future growth of the whole church family.

We currently have enough resources and capacity to build on the 9am worship service in the Church, and the 10.30am All-Age worship service in the Church Centre, and we're hoping to offer something in between the two services to gather the whole church family based around coffee and a catch-up – maybe even a bacon butty! We are excited to see how we can promote, and God may grow, these worship gatherings when we're free of restrictions.

Towards the end of the year we will look again to assess where and how we've grown. Please pray God would pour further blessing on St George's in this new season, and pray for us all - every member of our church family - as we tread the delicate path into the public worship settings of the future.

While Covid still affects our lives with uncertainty, we should remain certain about one thing: faith in God places our feet on sure and solid ground. Whatever the future looks like we will not only survive, but thrive, with our eyes fixed on Jesus.

*Hebrew 12:1-2 ... let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,
fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the
joy set before Him endured the cross*

Let us keep Jesus at the centre of all our conversations, and pray for the peace and courage of God as we pray, "...your Kingdom come, your will be done..." – Amen?

Keep connected with each other & with God.

End of Notices and updates

As we express our concerns & joys to God this week...

...let us be thankful and pray for those that care for our health and wellbeing; the Doctors' Surgery and all the healthcare professionals that serve our community.

...and let us pray for the retired priests that occasionally lead worship here.

Let us pray for the family and friends of Christopher Ford, Ken Evans and Wyn Sutch; pray they would know and experience the peace, presence and comfort of Jesus.

The Second Sunday After Trinity

We worship in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Sing: *(click on the song title, and it should open up and play in YouTube)*

Blest are the pure in heart

We meet to celebrate the coming of Christ into the world. The word was made flesh and dwelt among us ... and we beheld his glory.

**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 Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

Gathering our thoughts, we remember and confess:

**Our Lord Jesus Christ said;
The first commandment is this;
'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is the only Lord.
You shall love the Lord your God
With all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind
And with all your strength.'
The second is this, 'Love your neighbour as yourself.'
There is no other commandment greater than these.
On these two commandments
Hang all the law and the prophets.**

**Most merciful God,
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
we confess that we have sinned
in thought, word and deed.
We have not loved you with our whole heart.
We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.
In your mercy
forgive what we have been,
help us to amend what we are,
and direct what we shall be;
that we may do justly,
love mercy,
and walk humbly with you, our God. Amen.**

May almighty God have mercy on us and forgive us our sins and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

Take a few moments to sit and think about receiving that unconditional offering of forgiveness through grace.

Collect

Faithful Creator,
whose mercy never fails:
deepen our faithfulness to you
and to your living Word,
Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Reading: 1 Samuel 15:34-16:13 (ESV)***The Lord Rejects Saul***

Then Samuel went to Ramah, and Saul went up to his house in Gibeah of Saul. And Samuel did not see Saul again until the day of his death, but Samuel grieved over Saul. And the LORD regretted that he had made Saul king over Israel.

David Anointed King

The LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul, since I have rejected him from being king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil, and go. I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons." And Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears it, he will kill me." And the LORD said, "Take a heifer with you and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.' And invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do. And you shall anoint for me him whom I declare to you."

Samuel did what the LORD commanded and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling and said, "Do you come peaceably?" And he said, "Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD. Consecrate yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice." And he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely the LORD's anointed is before him." But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart."

Then Jesse called Abinadab and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." And Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. And Samuel said to Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen these." Then Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all your sons here?" And he said, "There remains yet the youngest, but behold, he is keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and get him, for we will not sit down till he comes here."

And he sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy and had beautiful eyes and was handsome. And the LORD said, "Arise, anoint him, for this is he." Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers. And the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon David from that day forward. And Samuel rose up and went to Ramah.

Gospel Reading: Mark 4:26-34 (ESV)***The Parable of the Seed Growing***

And he said, "The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground. He sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed sprouts and grows; he knows not how. The earth produces by itself, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. But when the grain is ripe, at once he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come."

The Parable of the Mustard Seed

And he said, "With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable shall we use for it? It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when sown on the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth, yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes larger than all the garden plants and puts out large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade."

With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it. He did not speak to them without a parable, but privately to his own disciples he explained everything.

Gordon explores our bible readings and how we can apply this to our day to day lives.

GOSPEL MARK 4:26–34

May I be helped to speak in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

COMMUNICATION is everything. We all communicate every day, whether it is by speaking to another person face to face, using the internet, writing and posting a letter or using the telephone, and not many miles away of course we have the Government Communication Headquarters.

Jesus was a skilled communicator. When he was teaching and preaching he used language that could be easily be understood by the people to whom he was speaking. He referred to ordinary everyday things with which they were familiar in their lives. The people who came to listen to Jesus were country folk who had a keen eye for nature and were well acquainted with the rise and fall of the seasons. In today's Gospel reading from Mark, Jesus talks about the mysterious growth of seed in the ground with special reference to the tiny mustard seed that grows into the tallest of all shrubs, so that the birds of the air come and shelter in its branches.

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If, as a child, you have ever tried to grow mustard and cress on a piece of damp flannel or blotting paper, you'll know how small the mustard seed is. Unlike the mustard seed in this country, the same plant in the Holy Land grows into a shrub, up to twelve feet tall. Jesus was telling this as a parable in everyday words, not as a botanical textbook.

In a similar way to the small mustard seed, Christ's kingdom on earth began from very modest beginnings of a little cell of disciples. Yet, from it grew up a mighty tree, which is the present church – a tree under whose protection and shade in every age a multitude of sinners and troubled people have sought refuge and found a spiritual home.

It is interesting how trees and shrubs figure prominently in the story of salvation. Adam and Eve, our first parents, inhabited the tree filled Garden of Eden with specific instructions not to taste the tree of knowledge. When they disobeyed this command they were banished in fig leaf disgrace. Noah's Ark was built out of wood from a gopher tree and it was with an olive branch in its beak that the dove brought news of the subsidence of the waters of the flood. It was out of a burning bush that God called Moses to set his people free. The Psalmist declares that "The just will flourish like the palm tree and grow like the cedar of Lebanon". Lest we forget, it was on the tree of the cross that our salvation was won.

Growth is wonderful, strange and mysterious. We do not understand how it happens, yet it takes place before our eyes. There is nothing as awesome as the growing of a seedling. Planted in the earth by the sower it needs tendering and watering as well as protection from harsh and cold winds. Before taking root it lies dormant for a long time in the ground and then, following the laws of nature, of its own accord it sprouts and emerges out of the soil.

So how does the Kingdom of God on earth grow which Mark records in Jesus' parable. Not by force or conquest, but quietly, by its own fertile nature. For us, the Kingdom of God begins as a germ of an idea, dropped into the fertile soil of our minds. Perhaps a sentence which you may read in your bible or from a sermon preached in this church, finds a niche in your memory, and keeps coming back to nag at your consciousness. You mull over the idea, while obeying God as your King and it begins to sound more and more attractive. Gradually, more of your life becomes subject to God's direction. Probably, in this life, you will never become completely obedient to God. But from the little seed there's grown a mature personality, the admirable you, worthy to live with God in heaven.

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While most of the gospel stories teach us how to live as a follower of Jesus, this passage today teaches us how to view the church with its mission to proclaim and promote His kingdom. From a human point of view the church is a miracle of God's doing and not spectacular in the way we might expect. Most of us would have expected Jesus to base His kingdom on a more solid foundation than a group of fishermen and a tax collector. In the time of Jesus the Kingdom consisted of only a few hundred disciples. At the Last Supper there were only twelve, who deserted Him until only Jesus was left. On the day of Pentecost there were more than three thousand. Today, there are many millions of followers of Jesus all over the world.

We all may get discouraged that the church does not produce instant results but requires time to develop. Just as the harvest will not be rushed neither will the Kingdom of God be advanced by those eager for instant results.

At baptism, the seed of God's Kingdom was planted within our very being to grow into a marvellous and mysterious manner so as to produce the fruits of a lifetime. Without our knowing how, God's spirit grows gently but surely within our hearts. What we need most of all is trust and patience, because growing in Jesus Christ is a very slow business and requires time to develop. We have to avoid becoming discouraged by our failures, and disheartened by our shortcomings. And these have been very prevalent during the last fifteen months of the Covid pandemic and lockdowns for many of us. Our confidence in God's love sometimes wears thin when we dwell on our sinfulness and wonder whether the seed of the kingdom did ever take root. In moments of despair we may even wonder if our misdeeds are something that put us beyond the realms of forgiveness. We need to remember that real growth comes from God and although His plan may not be spectacular, it will triumph in spite of human weakness. His work unfolds, not only among His followers, but also in people and places unknown and unrecognised by us.

There is good seed in every human heart and given time and patience, the spirit of the living God will fall afresh and will put down deep roots in our lives, which will produce a bumper harvest, assuring our salvation.

In today's reading, Jesus compared the kingdom of God to a plant. A plant is either growing, or it is dead. Is obedience to God growing in your heart? Are you bubbling with excitement about what it is to have God as your King and Jesus as your friend? Can other people see this, shining from your face and in your life? Then, without any effort on your part, the seed of the kingdom which took root in your heart is spreading and communicating to others, until all the nations can come and rest in its shade.

Allow me please to finish in prayer:

Let us offer this prayer to God the Father who has sown the seed of His word in our hearts, which night and day flourishes and brings freshness into our lives.

Heavenly Father, you have implanted the word of the gospel in our hearts. Strengthen the faith within us. By the power of your grace may these words today bear fruit in a genuine Christian life.

COMMUNICATE AND STAY CONNECTED WITH EACH OTHER AND WITH GOD.

Amen.

Sing: *(click on the song title, and it should open up and play in YouTube)*

[God is working his purpose out](#)

Let us declare our faith with confidence:

**We believe in God the Father,
who created all things:
for by his will they were created
and have their being.**

**We believe in God the Son,
who was slain:
for with his blood,
he purchased us for God,
from every tribe and language,
from every people and nation.
We believe in God the Holy Spirit:
the Spirit and the Bride say, 'Come!'
Even so come, Lord Jesus!
Amen.**

Rona leads us as we pray for the needs of the world, the church, and for our family, friends & neighbours. Use these prayers to help inspire and encourage your own prayers this week.

Let us pray to the God of heaven and earth
that like the mustard seed his kingdom will grow.

May your kingdom grow in clusters of Christians all over the world;
may it grow as hearts are warmed by encounter with the living God;
nourished by word and sacrament, private prayer and public worship,
may those who bear responsibility in the Church of Christ be supported and
encouraged in their work of sowing the seeds of God's kingdom.

Lord of heaven: **let your kingdom grow!**

May your kingdom grow in states, empires and monarchies,
in the crowded streets of cities and in the scattered rural communities;
in all decision-making and all spending.

Lord of heaven: **let your kingdom grow!**

May your kingdom grow in every shelter and home,
every place of work and education,
in each conversation and in our mutual care of one another.

Lord of heaven: **let your kingdom grow!**

May your kingdom grow to bring peace and healing
wherever there is pain or sadness;
we pray for those we know in a moment of quiet
help to bring your loving reassurance, comfort, courage
and hope to all who need it.

Lord of heaven: **let your kingdom grow!**

In the knowledge that we must all face dying,
we pray for those who have died
we thank you for the blessings that they brought into our lives,
entrusting our loved ones to God's safe keeping.
May they now enjoy the peace of your kingdom.

Lord of heaven: **let your kingdom grow!**

As we thank God for all his blessings to us
and like the mustard seeds grow, may we grow in faith
as we offer him the rest of our lives.

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

We pray with confidence as our saviour has taught us:

**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 forever. Amen.**

Sing: *(click on the song title, and it should open up and play in YouTube)*

[My God I love thee](#)

Numbers 6:24-26

May the LORD bless you and protect you.

May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you.

May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.

Our worship has ended, but our service now begins. Let us go in peace to love and
serve the risen Lord. **Thanks be to God. Amen.**