

Sunday 16th February 2025: 6th Sunday in Ordinary Time

For use by the Central Norfolk Circuit at 10.30 am or some other suitable time.

Theme for today is "Blessed are those who..."

Our call to worship Psalm 1

Hymn StF 81 H&P 566: Now thank we all our God

Prayer of Adoration and Confession:

Praise be to you, O God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whose love we are redeemed and forgiven.

Praise be to you, O God, the source of all holiness, by whose Spirit we are made whole and brought to perfection.

Praise be to you, O God, Source of all being, Eternal Word and Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and shall be forever. Amen.

Let us confess our sins.

Silence

Loving God,

We have sinned against you in what we have thought, said and done.

We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.

We are truly sorry and turn away from what is wrong.

Forgive us for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Silence

Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.

This is his gracious word: 'Your sins are forgiven.' **Amen. Thanks be to God.**

Hymn 544 StF As the deer pants for the water

Introduction:

Somebody once said on a mainstream television programme that God is a human construct for weak people who need a crutch to hold them up. I remember thinking how conceited the person was to assume that he was sufficiently self-important and self-assured that he had no need of God. Yet in our modern world there seems to be a greater desire than ever to want to BE God, rather than to recognise our continual need. Maybe that is sad.

Bible readings: Isaiah 6: 1-8 1 Corinthians 15: 1-11 Luke 5: 1-11

Reflection *brought to us by Aileen Fox one of our Local Preachers.*

In Luke's gospel Jesus has come down from the mountain where he has been praying overnight. There is a large crowd gathered, disciples, the 12 chosen disciples and people from Judah and Jerusalem and the coastal area of Tyre and Sidon, all eager to hear what he has to say but also many wanting to be healed. (It states in the previous verses (12-16) that Jesus had chosen 12 people to be his disciples/apostles) This event is often referred to as the Sermon on the Plain. Many in the crowd pushed to try and touch Jesus and when they did were healed.

Jesus spoke about blessings, 'Blessed are you who are poor for yours is the Kingdom of God' he goes on to say about the hungry being filled, those who weep will laugh. Then all the hard things, people hating us, excluding us, reviling and defaming us, because of Jesus. Jesus tells us to rejoice because of the heavenly reward. Sometimes this feels impossible, but we need to remember that God loves us and pray for strength to endure what is thrown at us. There is another aspect though to those hard-hitting words. Some Christians are poor or hungry because they have given selflessly, others have literally stood up for justice and paid the price. People who have gone through tragedy, wept many tears, have often found laughter again, perhaps doing something that is a memorial to the one they have lost.

At the moment many are struggling with the cost of living with food and fuel prices rising. There are cuts in education funding, growing waiting lists for the NHS. It can all seem rather bleak. God loves us all he sent Jesus who shared our human joys and sorrows. It wasn't always easy for Jesus. I believe we need to try and be positive, continue to serve God and stand up for justice however difficult it may be.

God offers us blessings often through the love and support of others, we often take them for granted but God loves us all and we do not walk alone.



Hymn: 455 StF 63 H&P All my hope on God is founded

Prayers of Intercession

God our Father, grant us the help of your Spirit in our prayers for the salvation of all people.

We pray for the Church throughout the world for this church and all its members for . . . that in faith and unity we may be constantly renewed by your Holy Spirit for mission and service.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the peoples of the world for the leaders of the nations for . . . that they may seek justice, freedom and peace for all.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for our country for those who have authority and influence for . . . that all may serve one another in wisdom, honesty and compassion.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for those among whom we live and work for all our neighbours for . . . that we may so use your gifts that together we may find joy in your creation.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for all in sorrow, need, anxiety or sickness for . . . that in their weakness they may know your strength, and in despair find hope.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

In you, Father, we are one family on earth and in heaven.

We remember in your presence those who have died . . . giving thanks especially for those who have revealed to us your grace in Christ. Help us to follow the example of your saints in light and bring us with them to the fullness of your eternal joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Offer to God your offertory for the week, and say the Lord's Prayer...

Hymn: 720 StF 412 H&P

We turn to you O God of every nation

Closing blessing –

The love of the Father enfold us, the wisdom of the Son enlighten us, the fire of the Spirit enflame us; and the blessing of God, the Three in One, be upon us and abide with us now and forever. Amen.