

Parish of St. Thomas, Apostle & Martyr, Ipswich

Sixth Sunday after Trinity - 19th July 2020

Collect:

Creator God, you made us all in your image: may we discern you in all that we see, and serve you in all that we do; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Psalm 139.1-12

1 O Lord, you have searched me and known me.
2 You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from far away.
3 You search out my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways.
4 Even before a word is on my tongue, O Lord, you know it completely.
5 You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me.
6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is so high that I cannot attain it.
7 Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence?



8 If I ascend to heaven, you are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.
9 If I take the wings of the morning and settle at the farthest limits of the sea,
10 even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me fast.
11 If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light around me become night,"
12 even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is as bright as the day, for darkness is as light to you.

A reading from the book of Genesis (28.10-19):

Jacob left Beer-sheba and went toward Haran. He came to a certain place and stayed there for the night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place. And he dreamed that there was a ladder set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. And the Lord stood beside him and said, "I am the Lord, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring; and your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and all the families of the earth shall be blessed in you and in your offspring. Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you." Then Jacob woke from his sleep and said, "Surely the Lord is in this place—and I did not know it!" And he was afraid, and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." So Jacob rose early in the morning, and he took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on the top of it. He called that place Bethel; but the name of the city was Luz at the first.

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew (13.24-30,36-43)

He put before them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field; but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, 'Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?' He answered, 'An

enemy has done this.’ The slaves said to him, ‘Then do you want us to go and gather them?’ But he replied, ‘No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.’”

Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.” He answered, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!

This is the gospel of the Lord. Praise to you, o Christ.

Reflection: Perhaps you’ve heard the phrase, ‘selective hearing’. It’s a strange affliction where children, when asked to do a chore or some homework, can suddenly seem to not hear what is being said to them. It can also affect adults, and maybe we even experience it ourselves on occasion! In fact, we probably practice selective hearing more often than we think. Our lives are full of noise that we learn to screen out. We learn to not pay attention, we train ourselves and each other to not listen. After all, if we really heard everything - all the advertisements, all the bad news, all the suffering, all the demands for our time, our money, our energy - it would be too much. So we develop the skill of not hearing.

So when Jesus says ‘let anyone with ears listen’, I wonder what he was getting at? Is it an instruction for everyone to pay attention? Is it an invitation to examine what we choose to give our focus and energy to? I think it is partly about choice. Jesus knows that we always have to make choices about what we really listen to. We decide what is really worthy of our time, worthy of responding to, and those things catch our ears. By asking anyone with ears to listen, Jesus is inviting us to choose to actively hear him. To actively listen is to engage, to respond, and to take action on what we hear. To really listen, means to let what we hear have an impact on us. To really listen means to open ourselves up to challenge and change. Because that is what Jesus’ ministry was all about. The purpose of all of Jesus’ teachings was to encourage change, to prompt his listeners to take action because of what they heard. “If you think what I’m saying is worth paying attention to, then act on it!”

This is always our challenge as Christians. Are we really listening? Are we allowing ourselves to hear in such a way that it makes us change and grow? Because the truth is, challenge and change can be painful, and it’s often easier to pretend we didn’t really hear, or that we’ve done all the listening already...

Active listening needs us to be open. Perhaps that’s something small and good to come out of the lockdown situation - some of us have found new perspectives. Maybe we’ve realised again that God isn’t just in church, but is at home with us too. For some of us, we might have become aware of our fears and fragility, of our precarious humanity. It could be that we’ve become more aware of kindness in our neighbourhoods, or how easy it is for us to care for each other. If we try to be open to honest seeing and listening, to discovering and acknowledging new things, it’s easier to face them, and to bring them into our ongoing journey with God.

In our reading from Genesis, Jacob is surprised to have an encounter with God. Jacob thinks he knows where God is, and where God isn’t. But while he’s travelling, Jacob has this dramatic dream of a ladder going into heaven, and when he wakes he exclaims, ‘Surely the Lord is in this place—and I did not know it!’. I wonder if this experience made Jacob realise that God was with him wherever he went. At this random spot on his journey, Jacob meets with the divine. And he declares that ‘this is none other than the house of God’. Perhaps you giggle at Jacob a little, because you already know that God isn’t tied to locations. But I wonder, are you as willing as Jacob was to see God in new surprising places? Are we willing to continually listen for God, to keep our hearts, minds, and ears open? Amongst all that goes on in life around us, all the choices we make of what to pay attention to - listen. carefully Listen, and you may hear the whisper of God.

- Rev Cat

*We are the body of Christ. In the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body.
Let us then pursue all that makes for peace and builds up our common life.
Alleluia! The peace of the Lord be always with you.*

**Here are the words of two
hymns you may like to sing or
pray this week:**

Brother, sister, let me serve you,
let me be as Christ to you;
pray that I may have the grace to
let you be my servant too.

We are pilgrims on a journey,
and companions on the road;
we are here to help each other
walk the mile and bear the load.

I will hold the Christ-light for you
in the night-time of your fear;
I will hold my hand out to you,
speak the peace you long to hear.

I will weep when you are weeping;
when you laugh I'll laugh with
you;

I will share your joy and sorrow
till we've seen this journey
through.

When we sing to God in heaven
we shall find such harmony,
born of all we've known together
of Christ's love and agony.

Brother, sister, let me serve you,
let me be as Christ to you;
pray that I may have the grace to
let you be my servant too.

Will your anchor hold in the storms of life,
when the clouds unfold their wings of strife?
When the strong tides lift, and the cables strain,
will your anchor drift, or firm remain?

*We have an anchor that keeps the soul
steadfast and sure while the billows roll;
fastened to the Rock which cannot move,
grounded firm and deep in the Saviour's love!*

Will your anchor hold in the straits of fear,
when the breakers roar and the reef is near?
While the surges rage, and the wild winds blow,
shall the angry waves then your bark o'erflow?

Will your anchor hold in the floods of death,
when the waters cold chill your latest breath?
On the rising tide you can never fail,
while your anchor holds within the veil.

Will your eyes behold through the morning light
the city of gold and the harbour bright?
Will you anchor safe by the heavenly shore,
when life's storms are past for evermore?

*Call this number ↓ for free, for a greeting
from Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury!*

*Then listen to hymns being sung, prayers, or
reflections. Give it a go, it's a lovely way to worship
from home!*



A free phone line of hymns,
reflections and prayers



St Thomas Church is open for Private Prayer, on Mondays and Thursdays, between 11 am and 2 pm.

The Peace Garden is Open for use every weekday.

We are planning to hold our first service back in Church on Sunday 26th July—more information in the newsletter. We hope to continue with ZOOM Church & ZOOM Coffee as well as making videos to reach as many people as possible with the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Please pray for:

Those with chronic or long-term illness: Eric Dickerson, Rosemary, Sophie, Adam, Jenny, Andrew Barfield, Kathy Steele, Frank D., Andrew Derrett, Peggy, Pat, Natacha, Christine, Stephen, Julie, Samantha, Jill, Rex, Molly Johansen, Margaret Christian, Marion (Val's sister-in-law)

Those undergoing treatment or currently ill: Emily & family, Juliet Adams, Gloria Elmer, Helen Harlow, Jean Dominy, Leslie Bloomfield, Pete Tancred, Katie (cancer), Peter, Jim, Richard (June's nephew), Sylvia Eley, Dougie, Robert, Andy (Lyanne's neighbour), Alice (Joan's grandson's wife), Beryl Field (Jim & Daphne's friend)

All who are affected by the Coronavirus in the UK and around the world: For **New Dawn, India** supporting communities affected by Covid 19 **for all health care staff, for teachers and for businesses opening again. For all who have lost their jobs due to Covid19; all who are despairing.**

For our government & its advisors: for guidance and wisdom.

Those who have recently died, and their families mourning their loss.

Sunday Worship Video & other Worship resources on the Church Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/sthomasipswich/>

Sunday 19 July Trinity 6 - 10am

ZOOM Worship (Let us know if you want to join by phone)

Tuesday 21 July LiveStream Meditation (time to be confirmed) **on facebook/ StThomasPilgrimCommunity**

Thursday 23 July 4pm –Bible from Scratch on ZOOM Contact Cat to join.

Pray for members of the St Thomas Congregation (each week we will include a dozen names)

Naomi Bloomfield with Dan, Amelia, Lily-Rose, Archie & Dylan, Peggy Blyth, Carol Brown, Lyanne & Aaron, Keith & family, June Browes, Mary Bullass, Canon Chris



Birthdays this week:

Kurt Lowe (23rd July)

YOUR SUPPORT NEEDED FOR NWIPSWICH FOODBANK organised by the Big Local Trust:

Please drop non-perishable food at Castlehill Community Centre, Highfield Road on **MONDAYS** between 9.30 and 11.00am.

Church website:

<http://sthomasipswich.org.uk>

Contacts:

Priest in charge: Revd Jutta Brueck
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Email: jutta.brueck@cofesuffolk.org

Jutta's days off are: Fridays & Saturdays

Assistant Curate: Revd Cat Connolly
m: 07530 412988

Email: revcatconnolly@gmail.com

Cat's day off: Mondays

If you would like to chat, please do give us a ring:

Revd Jutta: 07958 360 564 Rev Cat 07530 412988

Roger Elmer 07810 274586 Sylvia Dickerson 07903 739487

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