

Parish of St. Thomas, Apostle & Martyr, Ipswich

Eighth Sunday after Trinity - 2nd August 2020

Collect:

Lord God, your Son left the riches of heaven and became poor for our sake: when we prosper save us from pride, when we are needy save us from despair, that we may trust in you alone; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Psalm 17.1-7,15

1 Hear a just cause, O Lord; attend to my cry;
give ear to my prayer from lips free of deceit.
2 From you let my vindication come; let your
eyes see the right.
3 If you try my heart, if you visit me by night,
if you test me, you will find no wickedness in
me; my mouth does not transgress.
4 As for what others do, by the word of your
lips I have avoided the ways of the violent.
5 My steps have held fast to your paths; my
feet have not slipped.



6 I call upon you, for you will answer me, O
God; incline your ear to me, hear my words.
7 Wondrously show your steadfast love, O
saviour of those who seek refuge from their
adversaries at your right hand.
15 As for me, I shall behold your face in right-
eousness; when I awake I shall be satisfied,
beholding your likeness.

A reading from the book of Genesis (32.22-31):

The same night he got up and took his two wives, his two maids, and his eleven children, and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. He took them and sent them across the stream, and likewise everything that he had. Jacob was left alone; and a man wrestled with him until daybreak. When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he struck him on the hip socket; and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. Then he said, "Let me go, for the day is breaking." But Jacob said, "I will not let you go, unless you bless me." So he said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." Then the man said, "You shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with humans, and have prevailed." Then Jacob asked him, "Please tell me your name." But he said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" And there he blessed him. So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, "For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life is preserved." The sun rose upon him as he passed Peniel, limping because of his hip.

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew (14.13-21)

Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a deserted place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them and cured their sick. When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a deserted place, and the hour is now late; send the crowds away so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves." Jesus said to them, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." They replied, "We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish." And he said, "Bring them here to me." Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And all ate and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full. And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

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

Reflection:

Trust in God with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding'. Proverbs 3:5

In our scriptures today, we have two amazing stories - where people who know about God begin to realise the depth of his love for his people and how he provides for them throughout the history of salvation. We meet Jacob who stole his brother's birthright - and was ready for a war - and the disciples who were learning what it means to trust God through Jesus in all his power and glory.

How does it feel to be overwhelmed by the power of God? To see or experience God at work either personally or among his people?

Encounters with God can be very subtle or very dramatic. Earlier in Genesis 22 Jacob had seen a dream of angels climbing up and down a ladder to heaven. Now in one the most mysterious, baffling and awe-inspiring passages of the entire book of Genesis as Jacob prepares for war - a 'man appears who wrestled with him till daybreak' (verse 24).

What do we know about Jacob? It seems that he has been wrestling all his life with his brother Esau, with Laban, Rachels father with his own Father, with himself, but most of all underlying all the others - with God. And the night that we read about is the climax of his spiritual pilgrimage. At the deepest roots of his being, from the time of his birth and reflected in his name - Jason was the grasper - one who holds tight. We read of Jacob, who grasps hold of God and will not let him go until he is blessed. (Verse 26). Quite something to demand!

God knew Jacob deeply and it was time for him to lay hold of God and to grasp what only God could give him. Jacob now knows this and will not let go. Whether he lives or dies the only thing of importance is to embrace and to be blessed by God.

In the scripture about feeding 5000 in the gospel from Matthew we read that Jesus has been working all day. Miracles are happening all the time when Jesus is present... and as he ministers to the sick, teaching and blessing them. Wherever he went the crowd followed and he had pity on them. This is a holy moment of compassion and love as Jesus made time to meet their needs rather than insist on his own. The disciples were lost and didn't know what to do. Their faith was low - and so Jesus used this situation to teach them their responsibilities.

Jesus however drew attention in the miracle to himself as their resource. The small donation of bread and fish were taken to him and the disciples were then able to meet the needs of the people. Jesus prayed the Jewish prayer of blessing over the food as the bread and fish were held up to God - then taken, blessed and broken by Jesus; the food multiplied in the hands of the disciples - and once again the Messiah himself provided a banquet for his followers. Here in a totally unexpected place and way Jesus did just that.

So we see God at work among his people. With Jacob we see him crying out for blessing and with Jesus as he fed, provided and healed the crowds - they were all profoundly blessed full to overflowing. Working in our own strength is not what God expects. He wants us to trust him and have faith in him. True faith sees every circumstance of life as a ground for spiritual growth for the glory of God.

In these miracle stories - Jacob met with God and the disciples recognised clearly for the first time that Jesus truly was God. They worshipped him as they would only worship God. Sometimes we are deeply tested but when we turn to God and place our hands in his we are often surprised how he meets us and is always one step ahead. When we have reached the end of our strength - but still have more to do - we have only ONE to turn to - God himself. His full giving comes to us when we need it.

His love has no limits, His grace has no measure, His power has no boundaries known to man. He gives, and gives and gives again. How deeply we are blessed by Him.

- *Rev Jackie*

Questions for Reflection: 1. In what areas of your life might you be wrestling with God.

2. Have you had an experience of God's blessing?

*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:**

1 **All my hope on God is founded;**
he doth still my trust renew.
Me through change and chance he
guideth,
only good and only true.
God unknown, he alone
calls my heart to be his own.

2 Human pride and earthly glory,
sword and crown betray his trust;
what with care and toil he
buildeth,
tower and temple, fall to dust.
But God's power, hour by hour,
is my temple and my tower.

3 God's great goodness aye en-
dureth,
deep his wisdom, passing
thought:
splendour, light, and life attend
him,
beauty springeth out of naught.
Evermore from his store
new-born worlds rise and adore.

4 Still from earth to God eternal
sacrifice of praise be done,
high above all praises praising
for the gift of Christ his Son.
Christ doth call
one and all:
ye who follow shall not fall.

Robert Bridges (1844-1930)

1 **Lead us, heavenly Father,** lead us
o'er the world's tempestuous sea;
guard us, guide us, keep us, feed us,
for we have no help but thee;
yet possessing every blessing,
if our God our Father be.

2 Saviour, breathe forgiveness o'er us:
all our weakness thou dost know;
thou didst tread this earth before us,
thou didst feel its keenest woe;
lone and dreary, faint and weary,
through the desert thou didst go.

3 Spirit of our God, descending,
fill our hearts with heavenly joy,
love with every passion blending,
pleasure that can never cloy:
thus provided, pardoned, guided,
nothing can our peace destroy.

(James Edmeston (1791 -1867))

*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



Our services back in Church, combined with ZOOM church at 10am, followed by ZOOM coffee at 11, worked well. **In order to attend church on Sundays, you need to book in, ideally with the electronic booking form or by phoning 01473 742973** (Church answer phone) by Saturday 9 am. **To attend the Wednesday 10am communions, book in by phone, but you can just come along.** We look forward to seeing you soon.

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.

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, Alice (Joan's grandson's wife), Beryl Field, Baby Freya & mum

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: Susan Rutter, Sethe Dube R.I.P

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

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

Sunday 2 August Trinity 8 - 10 am: Eucharist & ZOOM Worship, followed by 11am ZOOM coffee

Tuesday 4 August LiveStream Meditation 7.30 pm on facebook/ StThomasPilgrimCommunity

Wednesday, 5 August, 10am Eucharist in Church with livestream on Facebook/ StThomasIpSwich

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

Amanda DiBenga with Luke, Lucy Drake, Caren Elwis with Emma, William & Daniel, Roger & Gloria, Pam Everett, Chris Fisher, Caroline Fisk & family, Jo Goddard & Patrick, Alison & Malcolm, Rose Godfrey,



Birthdays this week:

No birthdays this week

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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Jutta's days off are: Fridays & Saturdays

Assistant Curate: Revd Cat Connolly

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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

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