

Parish of St. Thomas, Apostle & Martyr, Ipswich

Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity - 6th Sept 2020

Collect:

Almighty God, you search us and know us: may we rely on you in strength and rest on you in weakness, now and in all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Psalm 121

- 1 I lift up my eyes to the hills - from where will my help come?
- 2 My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.
- 3 He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber.
- 4 He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.
- 5 The Lord is your keeper; the Lord is your shade at your right hand.

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah (43.1-7):

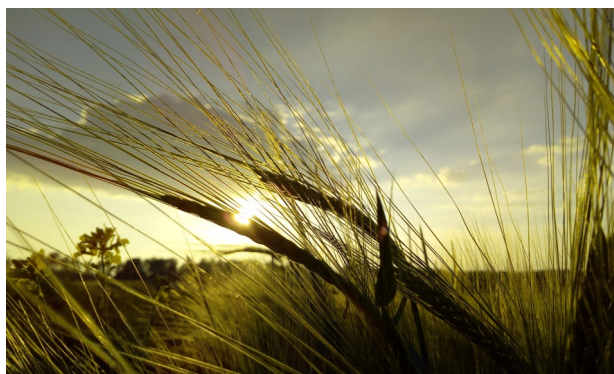
But now thus says the Lord,
he who created you, O Jacob,
he who formed you, O Israel:
Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by name, you are mine.
When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers,
they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you.
For I am the Lord your God,
the Holy One of Israel, your Saviour.
I give Egypt as your ransom,
Ethiopia and Seba in exchange for you.

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew (18.1-7)

At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" He called a child, whom he put among them, and said, "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.

"If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe to the world because of stumbling blocks! Occasions for stumbling are bound to come, but woe to the one by whom the stumbling block comes!

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



- 6 The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night.
- 7 The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life.
- 8 The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and forevermore.

Because you are precious in my sight,
and honoured, and I love you,
I give people in return for you,
nations in exchange for your life.
Do not fear, for I am with you;
I will bring your offspring from the east,
and from the west I will gather you;
I will say to the north, "Give them up,"
and to the south, "Do not withhold; bring
my sons from far away and my daughters from
the end of the earth—
everyone who is called by my name,
whom I created for my glory,
whom I formed and made."

This is the word of the Lord.

Reflection 'New Beginnings':

This first Sunday in September we usually think about 'New beginnings' as we come together after the summer holidays. And this year, even though we can't all gather to worship together we are very aware that the start of this new school year means a 'new beginning' for everyone, even if they are not starting in a new school or job. For, all of us are having to find new ways of living and being, of coping with not seeing family and friends who we would normally meet with regularly. Church is different from what we are used to, and many are unable to come to church at all. Jobs are uncertain, shopping and going out is strenuous and less enjoyable. We continue to live with heightened anxiety about this unseen enemy.

This week, we have been especially thinking about and praying for our schools, with children and young people, teachers and other school staff returning to school, praying that all the preparation for creating a safe environment for children and teachers will pay off, that all stay well and can have a rewarding and fruitful time in School again.

As people of faith, new beginnings, whether we have chosen them or they are imposed on us, always present an opportunity to hear afresh God's assuring and comforting words, that we are not alone; that we need not be afraid. New beginnings are an opportunity to develop new habits that involve walking more closely with God.

Our readings this morning remind us of God's invitation to allow God to be part of our lives and to rely more on God. In the gospel reading Jesus challenges the adults who have asked him 'who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven' by taking a child and saying to them 'whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven'. What is Jesus saying to us? What does it mean to 'be humble like a child?' Children know that they depend on others for their daily needs, for their development, their growth and flourishing. Children have to trust and they have an innate sense of the presence and awe of God if their environment encourages it. As we grow up and learn to take control of their lives, we often feel we have to do it all in our own strength, until we come up against our limitations, or life throws challenges into our path which overwhelm us. As Christians, we have the great gift of knowing God as 'our loving father in heaven' – and fact is, that God cares about each one of us as a 'loving father'. Do we believe and trust that? Do we live as if we have a loving Father who made us, knows us in the depth of our being and, most importantly, loves us – as we are -unconditionally. All God asks of us is to love God back.

And so, as we move into this autumn, with it's challenges and uncertainty; as we care for our children and young people; our vulnerable, shielding family and friends; as we care for ourselves wanting to flourish and stay well, let's draw on the wisdom of our faith and develop or strengthen habits that allow God to be part of our lives, our worries, our struggles, our joys and sorrows. Start and end your day with prayer, saying the Lord's prayer or another prayer that works for you. Pray with your children at bed-time, looking back over the day: what sadnesses do we place into God's hands for the night; what do we say thank you for; who are the people we pray for? If your day is super full, notice where the spaces are when you are on your own: walking the dog; doing the washing up: talk to God as if you were talking to a friend. Many people find listening to worship songs/ hymns uplifting and strengthening. And remember, you are part of a faith family – make space to be with others who are on the journey with God. You are not alone. Hear God's words, spoken through the prophet Isaiah 'Do not be afraid, ... I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you.'

Amen.

- Rev Jutta

***God is love. Those who live in love live in God, and God lives in them.
The peace of the Lord be always with you.***

For this week, the first Sunday of the new school year, here are the words of a hymn to sing or pray, and a prayer for New Beginnings:

Let all the world
in every corner sing,
my God and King!
The heav'ns are not too high,
His praise may thither fly;
the earth is not too low,
His praises there may grow.

Let all the world
in every corner sing,
my God and King!

Let all the world
in every corner sing,
my God and King!
The Church with psalms must shout,
no door can keep them out;
but, above all, the heart
must bear the longest part.

Let all the world
in every corner sing,
my God and King!

Prayer for New Beginnings

God of our lives,
You are always calling us
To follow you into the future,
Inviting us to new ventures, new
challenges, new ways to care,
New ways to touch the hearts of all.

When we are fearful of the unknown, give us courage. When we worry that we are not up to the task, remind us that you would not call us if you did not believe in us.

When we get tired, or feel disappointed with the way things are going, Remind us that you can bring change and hope out of the most difficult situations.
Amen.

(from *The Pattern of our Days*, K. Galloway)

Call this number ↓ **for free**, to 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 at 10am are working well. **In order to attend church on Sundays, you need to book in, ideally with the electronic booking form, or by phoning 01473 742973** (the Church answer phone) by Saturday 9 am.

To attend the Wednesday 10am communions, 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.

Notices:

Our **prayer lists** are going to be refreshed. Unless you ask in the next two weeks for a person to remain on the prayer list, all names will be removed. Let Rev Cat or Rev Jutta know if you would like a name to remain listed below.

Youth Group is starting again, online, on the 13th September! For school year 7+, we meet from 6pm-7.30pm, every other week until the 6th December. We will be joined by Andy Jefferson (Inspiring Ipswich Pioneer) who is going to support leading the group. We look forward to seeing our young people online!

We pray for all being ordained Deacon and Priest at the cathedral in Bury St Edmunds this weekend. We also pray for Malcolm, who will be licenced as an Evangelist on the 27th.

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, Vincent Lightbody, Colin Wells

All who are affected by the Coronavirus in the UK and around the world: *For all who have lost their jobs due to Covid19; all who are despairing. For all who have lost their lives & livelihoods, the injured, the bereaved. For sufficient assistance and recovery.* **For our government & MP', and local councillors: for honesty in politics, for wisdom and justice for all.**

Those who have recently died, and their families mourning their loss: Gwen Strike (Phyllis' sister), Carl Leonard R.I.P

Sunday Worship Video & other Worship resources on the Church Facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/sthomasipswich/>

Sunday 6th September Trinity 12 - 10 am:
Eucharist & ZOOM Worship, followed by 11am ZOOM coffee

Wednesday, 9th September, 10am
Eucharist in Church with livestream on Facebook/StThomasIpswich

Church website:
<http://sthomasipswich.org.uk/>

Please note: Our website is down due to problems with the server. Please go to facebook/stthomasipswich for any updates

Contacts:

Priest in charge: Revd Jutta Brueck
m: 07958 360564

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

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

Edith Abbott, Eric Baker, June Baker & family, Jenny & Andrew Barfield, Alan Banks, Michelle & Stephen Bennett, Pearl Bird, Margaret & Les Bloomfield



Birthdays this week:

Mary Bullass (7th), Margaret Christian (8th), Roger Elmer (10th)

**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.

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

← Revd Jutta or Rev Cat
Roger Elmer 07810 274586
Gloria Elmer 745590

Sylvia Dickerson 07903 739487
Malcolm Gibbs 07906 663530
Mary Bullass 625135
Rev Jackie 07962 172639
Revd Pat 464748