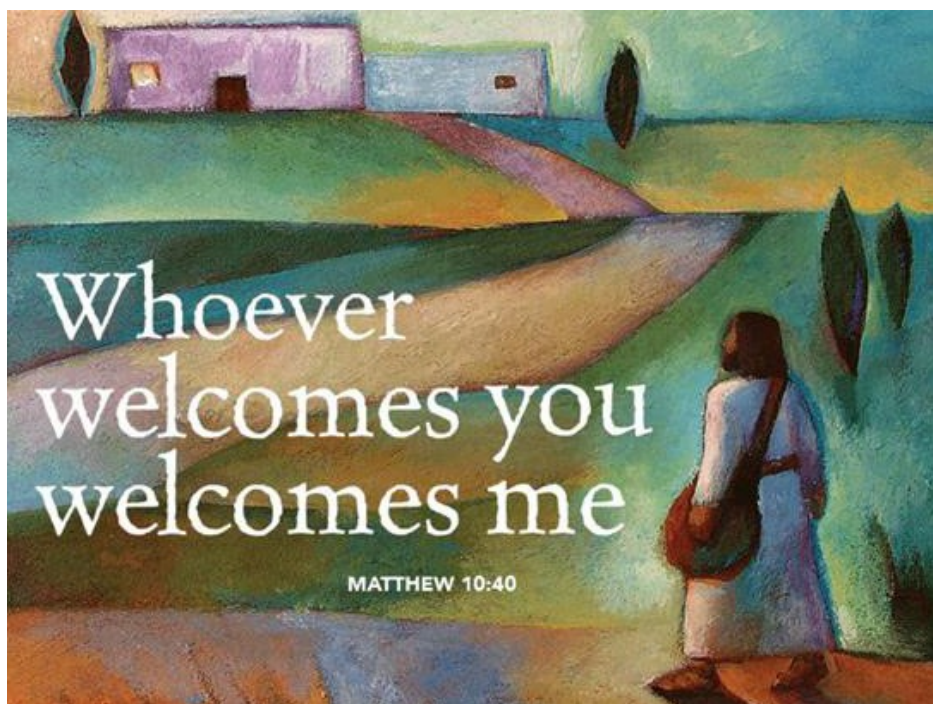


# **St Swithun's Church Family**

## **Trinity 3**

**Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> June 2020**

**Ordinary Time**



**Welcome**

*Please use this booklet to **worship with us** – ideally at 10am on Sunday so that we know we are joining our prayers together but any time is good. Use a candle and a cross if you can find them to give your worship a focus.*

*The children might like to use the Sunday school resources provided by Izzy.*

*This is a Service of The Word. It doesn't matter if you are one person or a family together – use the booklet and go through the words – stop and reflect as you need to. We are going to record this service again and add it to the website [www.saintswithuns.org.uk](http://www.saintswithuns.org.uk) There are various prayer resources and other things to look at on the website – if you have any feedback or anything to share please let me know.*

***Giving - if you usually give your collection on a Sunday morning in cash, and you are able to, please put this aside each week to bring to church when you are next able to. Even better would be to set up your giving online ('Saint Swithun's PCC' ; 60-05-11 ; 16126718 ; NatWest Bank) if you haven't already done this.***

*You might like to enhance your worship by singing or listening to a hymn or a song at various points – I have a few suggestions below – you tube is a great resource...*

**Gloria – clap clap  
Will you come and follow me  
How great thou art  
Deep peace (John Rutter)  
It is well with my soul  
All are welcome**

[https://youtu.be/ahrP4Xh\\_I0k](https://youtu.be/ahrP4Xh_I0k)  
<https://youtu.be/pnXOEUS7BBM>  
<https://youtu.be/dBLRsUMtuFQ>  
<https://youtu.be/Eve2y-P-Zjk>  
<https://youtu.be/zY5o9mP22V0>  
<https://youtu.be/js8RtT0mJpc>

## Introduction

Today is the third Sunday after Trinity.

Rev Frances is preaching for us in this worship service and she is reflecting on being welcoming – and considers who we are supposed to love and minister to.

What does it mean to follow Christ in our context?

## The Gathering

### The Greeting

In the name of the Father,  
and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father  
and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

**And also with you**

### Opening Prayer

**We arise today  
through a mighty strength:  
God's power to guide us,  
God's might to uphold us,  
God's eyes to watch over us;  
God's ear to hear us,  
God's word to give us speech,  
God's hand to guard us,  
God's way to lie before us,  
God's shield to shelter us,  
God's welcome to secure us.**

*Adapted St. Bridget.*

## Saying sorry - prayers of penitence

*As we prepare to say sorry to God let us take a moment of quiet to recall our behaviour, our relationships, our attitude over the past few days – what do we need to repent of? What have we ignored or stayed silent on that we should say sorry for?*

Loving God, our maker and our redeemer,  
this is your world and we are your people:  
come among us and save us.

We have seen the ill-treatment of others  
and have not gone to their aid;  
Lord in your mercy  
**Lord in your mercy**

We have condoned evil and dishonesty  
and failed to strive for justice;  
Christ in your mercy  
**Christ in your mercy**

We have not loved you with all our heart,  
nor our neighbours as ourselves;  
Lord in your mercy  
**Lord in your mercy**

*We know that God forgives us when we say sorry*

## We are forgiven

May the God of love and power  
forgive us and free us  
from our sins,  
heal and strengthen us  
by the Spirit,  
and raise us to new life  
in the risen Christ.  
**Amen.**



# Glory to God

Glory to God in the highest,  
**and peace to all people on earth.**

*Find a way to rejoice knowing that God loves us and makes us whole. Maybe you could have a quick dance to your favourite tune, tell a funny joke, shut your eyes and feel God's loving embrace warming you, picture a place where you feel one with God.*



*Today we will sing a Gloria – the clapping version.  
We suggest making as merry a noise as you can  
Find something to shake / bang or just clap along...*

***Gloria (clap, clap), Gloria (clap, clap), in excelsis Deo X2***

**Lord God, heavenly King,  
peace you bring to us;  
we worship you we give you thanks,  
we sing our song of praise.**

***Gloria (clap, clap), Gloria (clap, clap), in excelsis Deo X2***

**Jesus, Saviour of all,  
Lord God, Lamb of God,  
you take away our sins, O Lord,  
have mercy on us all.**

***Gloria (clap, clap), Gloria (clap, clap), in excelsis Deo X2***

**At the Fathers right hand,  
Lord receive our Prayer,  
for you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord.**

***Gloria (clap, clap), Gloria (clap, clap), in excelsis Deo X2***

**Glory, Father and Son,  
Glory Holy Spirit,  
to you we raise our hands up high,  
we glorify your name.**

***Gloria (clap, clap), Gloria (clap, clap), in excelsis Deo X2***

## The Collect

God our saviour,  
look on this wounded world  
in pity and in power;  
hold us fast to your promises of peace  
won for us by your Son,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ.  
**Amen**

## The Liturgy of the Word

O Holy Spirit of God -  
come into our hearts and fill us:  
we open the windows of our souls to let you in.  
we surrender our whole lives to you.  
Come and possess us, fill us with light and truth.  
**Amen.**

*W.J. Carey (Adapted)*

## The Gospel Reading *Matthew 10: 40-end*

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew  
**Glory to you, O Lord.**

‘Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward; and whoever welcomes a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive the reward of the righteous; and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple—truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward.’

This is the Gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise to you, O Christ.**



## Sermon *Rev Frances*

May I speak in the name of the living God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen

'To receive you is to receive me, and to receive me is to receive the one who sent me... I tell you, anyone who gives a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is a disciple of mine will certainly not go unrewarded.' On first reading, this short passage, though it speaks of showing hospitality and care for others, appears to be about the behaviour of Christians to one another. Some theological traditions and some churches have made and do make this emphasis - that the command to 'love one another' and minister to one another refers particularly to our 'brothers and sisters in Christ'. Yet who might be 'these little ones' to which our passage refers? And what are the marks by which we can recognise a disciple of Christ? - not surely just their proclamation of 'truths' What is this 'good news' that imprints itself into the hearts of these who encountered and encounter Christ - and so have been forever changed?

'Everything you did for my brothers, however insignificant, you did for me', Jesus, here the 'King' in Matthew's account of the last judgment, commends the 'sheep'. But they are perplexed as Jesus describes the pattern of their ministry in serving him: looking after him when he was sick, taking him into their home when a stranger, clothing him, feeding him when hungry, visiting him in prison: 'When did we do these things for you?' 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.', Jesus replies - and those who did not do these things did not minister to Christ. The parable of the two sons (also in Matthew) comes to mind: a father asks his sons to work in the vineyard - the first agrees to do so and does nothing; the second refuses, but turns up anyway.





There is a resonance here with the 'little ones' in our Gospel reading: caring for the weakest and least important in our midst seems to have a particular emphasis in God's Kingdom. How we behave to others: whether we show love and compassion, particularly to those who rank 'last' and least, seems to be the ultimate litmus test of what it means to follow Christ.

'Presentism' - outward conformity without inner transformation - does not seem to be what matters: but rather the orientation of our inner selves: 'For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also', we are told earlier in Matthew.

Like our gospel, some church traditions would see Matthew twenty five's call to serve God through caring for others as primarily intended for fellow Christians - our brothers and sisters in Christ; the faithful whom Jesus commands to love one another as a sign that they are his followers. Yet the parable of the Good Samaritan is a response to the question a lawyer poses to Jesus: if the greatest commandments are to love God and neighbour, who then, is my neighbour? Jesus' reply, in the form of probably his most famous parable, reveals that the status of particular groups, traditions or religions have no special claim here.

When Jesus concludes by asking who was neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of robbers, the lawyer replies: 'The one who showed him kindness'. 'Go and do as he did', Jesus tells him.



We follow Christ in loving and supporting our fellow Christians; and in seeking, however inadequately, to show God's love to all those we encounter, whether we find this easy or difficult. The horizon is not limited, but limitless; and the more we gaze upon it, the greater our capacity to widen and deepen the pattern of our discipleship.

There is, it seems to me, a parallel between the first understanding of our gospel, as referring to about Christians and



the second wider emphasis of everyone being our brothers and sisters are in Christ: between this and traditional and more radical understandings of what it means to be a Christian. Going to church, being confirmed, taking communion; being physically together in worship: these tend to be the external criteria that define a Christian. The lockdown has made these practices impossible: yet having these things denied cannot take away our Christian identity. The closing of churches is something we have never experienced.

The loss of our familiar religious landscape, though, however difficult we may (or may not) find it, means we must seek and forge other ways of living out and nurturing our faith.

**This church building is closed to everyone  
Even those with keys**



**Join our church online [www.saintswithuns.org.uk](http://www.saintswithuns.org.uk)**

And all this is against the backdrop of an involuntary isolation which forces us to face up to ourselves: to ask who we really are, what we believe about the world, God and other people. In recent months, we have been confronted with our mortality; with how little control we truly have over our lives; how much we need one another - and also that it turns out that we can live without some of the things we thought were important.

This time of great trial also has the potential to be a great gift; to re-make church in a new way; to enlarge and enrich our understanding of what it means to 'be church'. Although many have felt and feel a sense of spiritual emptiness, there are others here at St Swithun's and elsewhere who seem to be experiencing a deeper sense of God's presence; families who are learning to pray together; individuals who have discovered silent prayer, or who are finding that reading scripture has a special resonance at the moment. And people have said that when out walking, they appreciate the beauty of God's creation more than ever.

One Roman Catholic preacher has described members of his congregation feeling closer than ever to God, despite not having had communion for three months.

Without being able to be physically in church, we may paradoxically find ourselves more engaged with our faith life. Until now, the key understanding of being a Christian was simply going to church and taking communion, whether spiritually enriching or not; whether we wanted to be there, or were told to be, or felt we 'should' be. That many people are now experiencing God in new ways offers great hope and has the potential to bear much fruit. The boundaries between the institution of church and the world have been blurred. In circumstances none would have wished for, many individuals have, without being in a building or receiving sacraments, glimpsed the rumour of God. That collective experience offers the hope of a spiritual renewal - one the Church as we have understood it desperately needs.

In this time of particular vulnerability and helplessness, no longer are we powerful; instead we have become the sick, the poor, the prisoner - Christ being ministered to by the God who 'so loved the world' that he became fully us: the God of all love who came 'not to be served, but to serve.' Stripped now of so much of our external persona, can we experience more deeply our true identity in Christ, and as children of God, trust that Christ is with us in consolation and desolation: that He is present inside our church building and at the Eucharist - and also throughout the length and breadth of this Earth? The God whose horizon of love is infinite is here with us in our vulnerability: may we be bold and courageous in embracing the challenges and opportunities of this time, knowing that in God's Kingdom love and justice are inseparable.

Amen



# Profession of Faith

*We remember that we are joined together as a family despite not being able to meet in person at the moment – our faith holds us all – whoever we are, however we come to God:*

**We believe in God the Father,  
from whom every family  
in heaven and on earth is named.  
We believe in God the Son,  
who lives in our hearts through faith,  
and fills us with his love.  
We believe in God the Holy Spirit,  
who strengthens us  
with power from on high.  
We believe in one God;  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.  
Amen.**



# Prayers

Let us pray for all people, everywhere, both close to us and far away.

Welcoming God we pray for all people –We pray especially for our global neighbours most affected by climate change, the many in our world who are refugees, those who are hungry, those who are desperate for clean water, those without adequate healthcare, especially those places still struggling with the effects of covid.

Help us to open our eyes and make your ways known on earth.

God hear us

**God graciously hear us**

Welcoming God, as an inclusive church may we welcome all people radically - regardless of disability, economic power, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, learning disability, mental health, neurodiversity, or sexuality.

Help us to see that we are all made in your image.

May our church love others as you love us.

God hear us

**God graciously hear us**

Welcoming God, we pray for our neighbours, our community, all those we serve. We pray for those in our parish who are feeling anxious about the traffic calming measures, those who are continuing to shield and feel isolated and worried, those who are financially affected by the virus.

Help us to serve our parish with love.

God hear us

**God graciously hear us**

Welcoming God, we pray today for all who suffer in mind, body, or spirit, and for those who care for them. We pray for the sick; for those who mourn; for those without faith, hope or love.

We especially remember today Rossy and family, Taneisha, Talabi, Kevin, Elisabeth and family, Ivy, John, Lena, Shonette, Susan, Margaret, Sydney, Edith, Vanda, Lorna, Ena and Stephen and any known personally to us. We remember them now in a moment of silence .... bring them healing and wholeness. Help us to care for others.

God hear us

**God graciously hear us**

Welcoming God, you call us to live with you in eternity. We remember before God those who have died. We remember Oscar Kissi-Debrah, George, John and Roy and all who we have loved and who are now no longer on earth...

Rest eternal grant unto them O Lord

**And let light perpetual shine upon them**

Merciful Father

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

## **The Prayer Jesus taught us**

Rejoicing in God's new creation, we pray as Jesus taught us:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;  
thy kingdom come;  
thy will be done;  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
the power and the glory,  
for ever and ever.  
Amen.**

# The Peace

God is love and those who live in love live in God  
and God lives in them.

The Peace of the Lord be always with you.

**And also with you.**

*Who could you share God's peace with?*

*Spend some time planning a deliberate act of peace.*

DEEP PEACE *of* THE RUNNING *wave* TO YOU.

DEEP PEACE *of* THE FLOWING *air* TO YOU.

DEEP PEACE *of* THE QUIET *earth* TO YOU.

DEEP PEACE *of* THE SHINING *stars* TO YOU.

DEEP PEACE *of* THE INFINITE *peace* TO YOU.

*Celtic Blessing*

[essenceofwild.co.uk](http://essenceofwild.co.uk)

# Dismissal and Blessing

## The Blessing

May the blessing of God go before you  
may God's grace and peace abound.  
may God's spirit live within you.  
may God's love wrap you round.  
may God's blessing remain with you always  
may you walk on holy ground  
and the blessing of God, Creator, Friend and Spirit  
Be among us and remain with us always.  
**Amen.**

## The Dismissal

We go from here blessed for the journey that lies before us,  
and strengthened for the challenges we may yet face.

Let us go in peace  
to love and serve the Lord.

**In the name of Christ**

**Amen**





## Notices:

- The Church will be open for private prayers from July 1st according to government and church guidelines – it will be 10-11am on Wednesdays and Saturdays initially – thank you to those who have offered to help with this.
- In the absence of foodbank collections Olivia invites us to donate online <https://www.trusselltrust.org/get-involved/ways-to-give/make-a-one-off-donation/>
- If you know of anyone in any need – please let Mother Juliet know as we are working with others who can help.

## Birthdays / celebrations:

Happy Birthday to everyone who has had a birthday recently...



## Contacts:

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**Faith, hope and love  
in Hither Green**

[www.saintswithuns.org.uk](http://www.saintswithuns.org.uk)

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