

Church at Home

The Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity



Before the Service

A very warm welcome to Church at Home this seventeenth Sunday after Trinity.

Today, we mark a significant moment in the life of our Diocese, as the Bishop of Dorchester, the Rt Revd Colin Fletcher, retires this weekend. Bishop Colin has exercised episcopal oversight in the Dorchester Area covering much of Oxfordshire since 2000, and is the longest-serving Suffragan Bishop in the Church of England. He has also served with distinction as Acting Bishop of Oxford during two long vacancies. As Bishop Steven Croft has acknowledged: "Bishop Colin has helped to shape the Diocese of Oxford as much as anyone across the last 20 years."

We are honoured and delighted that our President today is Bishop Colin, with the address by the Ven. Judy French, Archdeacon of Dorchester.

The theme of our service is **the Lord's Vineyard** – a rich metaphor appearing numerous times in the scriptures, including in the book of the prophet Isaiah and the Gospels. Our readings today challenge us to consider our labour and our ways of living in the Lord's Vineyard, and to ask whether these produce good fruit – the fruits of God's Kingdom. On this, the last Sunday in Creationtide – the period in the annual church calendar dedicated to God as Creator and Sustainer of all life – we reflect further on our responsibility to tend and care for the Vineyard of all Creation that the Lord has gifted us.

As we prepare to gather – physically-distanced and yet drawn together around the Word and Table of the Lord – we continue to remember in prayer all those whose lives are currently being turned upside down by the disruption and threat of both the climate crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic – across the world, within our nation, in our local communities, and our churches. With the Psalmist who lamented the loss and brokenness seen in the Lord's Vineyard in their own time, we make the refrain of Psalm 80 our prayer:

Restore us, O God;
let your face shine, that we may be saved.

We are deeply grateful to all who made this service possible, including clergy and people from across the Dorchester Area of our Dioceses, and members of St Clement's, St Matthew's, and St Aldates churches in Oxford.

The Gathering

As we prepare for the service, we mark the retirement of the Rt Revd Colin Fletcher, Bishop of Dorchester.

The Greeting

President Welcome in the name of Christ.
God's grace, mercy and peace be with you
All **and also with you.**

Bishop Colin welcomes the congregation from around the Diocese, and introduces the service.

Opening Hymn – Praise to the Lord, the Almighty

*Led by singers from the Benefice of Steeple Aston,
North Aston and Tackley. The organist is Peter Read.*

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation;
O my soul praise him, for he is thy health and salvation:
all ye who hear,
now to his temple draw near,
joining in glad adoration.

Praise to the Lord who doth prosper thy work and defend thee;
surely his goodness and mercy shall daily attend thee:
ponder anew
what the Almighty can do,
if to the end he befriend thee.

Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in me adore him!
All that hath life and breath, come now with praises before him!
Let the Amen
sound from his people again:
gladly for aye we adore him!

Confession & Absolution

President We confess our sin, and the sins of our society,
in the misuse of God's creation.

President God our Father, we are sorry
for the times when we have used your gifts carelessly,
and acted ungratefully.

All Hear our prayer, and in your mercy:
forgive us and help us.

President We enjoy the fruits of the harvest,
but sometimes forget that you have given them to us.
Father, in your mercy:

All **forgive us and help us.**

President We belong to a people who are full and satisfied,
but ignore the cry of the hungry.
Father, in your mercy:

All **forgive us and help us.**

President We are thoughtless,
and do not care enough for the world you have made.
Father, in your mercy:

All **forgive us and help us.**

President We store up goods for ourselves alone,
as if there were no God and no heaven.
Father, in your mercy:

All **forgive us and help us.**

President The Lord enrich you with his grace,
and nourish you with his blessing;
the Lord defend you in trouble and keep you from all evil;
the Lord accept your prayers,
and absolve you from your offences,
for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Saviour.

All **Amen.**

The Collect

President Almighty God,
you have made us for yourself,
and our hearts are restless till they find their rest in you:
pour your love into our hearts and draw us to yourself,
and so bring us at last to your heavenly city
where we shall see you face to face;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

The Liturgy of the Word

Reading

Isaiah 5:1-7

Read by Deborah Ajulu from St Clement's Church, Oxford.

Let me sing for my beloved
my love-song concerning his vineyard:
My beloved had a vineyard
on a very fertile hill.
He dug it and cleared it of stones,
and planted it with choice vines;
he built a watch-tower in the midst of it,
and hewed out a wine vat in it;
he expected it to yield grapes,
but it yielded wild grapes.
And now, inhabitants of Jerusalem
and people of Judah,
judge between me
and my vineyard.
What more was there to do for my vineyard
that I have not done in it?
When I expected it to yield grapes,
why did it yield wild grapes?
And now I will tell you
what I will do to my vineyard.
I will remove its hedge,
and it shall be devoured;
I will break down its wall,
and it shall be trampled down.
I will make it a waste;
it shall not be pruned or hoed,
and it shall be overgrown with briars and thorns;
I will also command the clouds
that they rain no rain upon it.
For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts
is the house of Israel,
and the people of Judah
are his pleasant planting;
he expected justice,
but saw bloodshed;
righteousness,
but heard a cry!

Reader This is the word of the Lord

All **Thanks be to God.**

Gradual Hymn – God be in my head

Sung by the Choir of Keble College, Oxford.

God be in my head and in my understanding.
God be in mine eyes, and in my looking.
God be in my mouth, and in my speaking.
God be in my heart, and in my thinking.
God be at mine end, and at my departing.

The Gospel Reading

Matthew 21: 33-end

Read by James Elward from Witney Benefice.

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

‘Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watch-tower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country.

When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way. Finally he sent his son to them, saying, “They will respect my son.” But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, “This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.” So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him.

Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?’ They said to him, ‘He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time.’

Jesus said to them, ‘Have you never read in the scriptures:
“The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone;
this was the Lord’s doing,
and it is amazing in our eyes”?’

Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom. The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls.’

When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.

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

The Address

The Ven. Judy French, Archdeacon of Dorchester

Affirmation of Faith

President We say together in faith
All **Holy, holy, holy
is the Lord God almighty,
who was, and is, and is to come.**

President We believe in God the Father,
who created all things:
All **for by his will they were created
and have their being.**

President We believe in God the Son,
who was slain:
All **for with his blood,
he purchased us for God,
from every tribe and language,
from every people and nation.**

President We believe in God the Holy Spirit:
All **the Spirit and the Bride say, 'Come!'
Even so come, Lord Jesus!
Amen.**

President Let us pray for the Church and for the world and let us thank God for his goodness.

Prayers of Intercession

*Led by the Revd Dr Jacky Barr, Rector to the United Parish of Chinnor,
Sydenham, Aston Rowant and Crowell.*

This response is used after each petition:

All Lord, in your mercy.
 Hear our prayer.

After the final petition, the intercessions conclude:

All Merciful Father,
 accept these prayers
 for the sake of your Son,
 our Saviour Jesus Christ.
 Amen.

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

The Peace

President The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace.
 If we live in the Spirit, let us walk in the Spirit.
 The peace of the Lord be always with you.
All **and also with you.**

President Let us offer one another a sign of peace

Preparation of the table

The president prepares the altar-table as we listen to Maurice Duruflé's setting of 'Ubi Caritas', sung by the Choir of the University Church of St Mary the Virgin, Oxford.

*Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est.
Congregavit nos in unum Christi amor.
Exultemus, et in ipso jucundemur.
Timeamus et amemus Deum vivum,
et ex corde diligamus nos sincero.
Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est.
Amen*

Where charity and love are, God is there.
The love of Christ has united us.
Let us rejoice and be glad in him.

Let us fear and love the living God
and adore him from a sincere heart.

Where charity and love are, God is there.

Amen

Taking of the Bread and Wine

President Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation:
through your goodness we have this bread to set before you,
which earth has given and human hands have made.
It will become for us the bread of life.

All **Blessed be God for ever.**

President Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation:
through your goodness we have this wine to set before you,
fruit of the vine and work of human hands.
It will become for us the cup of salvation.

All **Blessed be God for ever.**

The Eucharistic Prayer

President The Lord be with you
All **and also with you.**

President Lift up your hearts.
All **We lift them to the Lord.**

President Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
All **It is right to give thanks and praise.**

President You are worthy of our thanks and praise,
Lord God of truth,
for by the breath of your mouth
you have spoken your word,
and all things have come into being.

You fashioned us in your image
and placed us in the garden of your delight.
Though we chose the path of rebellion
you would not abandon your own.

Again and again you drew us into your covenant of grace.
You gave your people the law and taught us by your prophets
to look for your reign of justice, mercy and peace.

As we watch for the signs of your kingdom on earth,
we echo the song of the angels in heaven,
evermore praising you and saying:

All **Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

President Lord God, you are the most holy one,
enthroned in splendour and light,
yet in the coming of your Son Jesus Christ
you reveal the power of your love
made perfect in our human weakness.

Embracing our humanity,
Jesus showed us the way of salvation;
loving us to the end,
he gave himself to death for us;
dying for his own,
he set us free from the bonds of sin,
that we might rise and reign with him in glory.

On the night he gave up himself for us all
he took bread and gave you thanks;
he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way, after supper
he took the cup and gave you thanks;
he gave it to them, saying:
Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

Therefore we proclaim the death that he suffered on the cross,
we celebrate his resurrection, his bursting from the tomb,
we rejoice that he reigns at your right hand on high
and we long for his coming in glory.

As we recall the one, perfect sacrifice of our redemption,
Father, by your Holy Spirit let these gifts of your creation
be to us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ;

form us into the likeness of Christ
and make us a perfect offering in your sight.

Look with favour on your people
and in your mercy hear the cry of our hearts.
Bless the earth,
heal the sick,
let the oppressed go free
and fill your Church with power from on high.

Gather your people from the ends of the earth
to feast with all your saints
at the table in your kingdom,
where the new creation is brought to perfection
in Jesus Christ our Lord;
by whom, and with whom, and in whom,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory be yours, almighty Father,
for ever and ever.

All **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

President As our Saviour taught us, so we pray:
All **Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.**

Breaking of Bread

President Every time we eat this bread
and drink this cup,
All **we proclaim the Lord's death
until he comes.**

Agnus Dei

All **Jesus, Lamb of God,
have mercy on us.**

**Jesus, bearer of our sins,
have mercy on us.**

**Jesus, redeemer of the world,
grant us peace.**

Invitation to Communion

President God's holy gifts
 for God's holy people.

All **Jesus Christ is holy,
Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.**

We are invited to make a spiritual communion with God, who comes to meet us wherever we are. There are no special words or actions required for this; only true desire, lively faith, and genuine love.

As we make our spiritual communion, take time to notice God's presence with us and trust that, as we desire communion with God, God will meet us in our hearts by faith. If you find it helpful please join in this song celebrating God's love for each one of us.

Music during Communion – Speak to this heart

Performed by Philip King and Margaret Parkin of St Matthew's Church, Oxford.

Speak to this heart
of the Love that is my treasure.
Love so unbounded,
so faithful and so true.
Strength in my weakness;
my comfort and my shelter,
that stills my hunger
and sets my soul at rest.

Speak to this heart
of the cross that shows your mercy.
Steadfast in purpose,
the Christ was crucified.
Humbled and wounded;

all majesty surrendered:
the Father's favour
revealed in suffering.

Speak to this heart
of the truth that is your gospel.
Death is defeated
and sinners reconciled.
My sure foundation,
the rock of my salvation:
Jesus the Saviour
has set this captive free.

Speak to this heart
of the hope that is made certain.
Love's crowning glory,
the Lamb upon the throne.
Risen, exalted;
in this my heart rejoices:
I live in Him
and forever He shall reign.

Prayer after Communion

President Lord, we pray that your grace
 may always precede and follow us,
 and make us continually to be given to all good works;
 through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

Final song – Cornerstone

Led by Jamie Thomson and members of the worship band from St Aldates Oxford

My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness
I dare not trust the sweetest frame
But wholly trust in Jesus' name

*Christ alone, Cornerstone
Weak made strong in the Saviour's love
Through the storm
He is Lord
Lord of all*

When darkness seems to hide His face
I rest on His unchanging grace
In every high and stormy gale
My anchor holds within the veil
My anchor holds within the veil

When He shall come with trumpet sound
Oh may I then in Him be found
Dressed in His righteousness alone
Faultless, stand before the throne.

The Dismissal

President Eternal God,
 our beginning and our end,
 accompany us in this day's journey.
 Dawn on our darkness,
 open our eyes to praise you for your creation
 and to see the work you set before us today.
 Take us and use us
 to bring to others the new life you give
 in Jesus Christ our Lord.

 And the blessing of God almighty
 the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
 be among you and remain with you always.

All **Amen**

President Go in the peace of Christ.

All **Thanks be to God.**

Our special thanks go to all those who contributed to this service:

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Farewell service for The Rt Revd Colin Fletcher OBE Bishop of Dorchester

Sunday 4 October 2020, 3pm
Dorchester Abbey



Please join us at 3pm for our farewell service for Bishop Colin, live-streamed online from Dorchester Abbey.

oxford.anglican.org/livestream