**Sunday 21st June**

**2nd Sunday after Trinity**

**Notices**:

[**ISingPop**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M9jBUW8OnGU&feature=youtu.be) - **Excellent Resource for Family**: Their latest content looks at the really important topic of “[Equality](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LmckFkLpuQQ)”.

**Foodbank**: please use the supermarket collection points while the church office is closed, and our movement is limited. Also, donations can be made direct to [Gloucester Foodbank](https://gloucester.foodbank.org.uk/), through their [Giving Page](https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/donation-web/charity?charityId=1016815&utm_source=extbtn&utm_campaign=donatebtn).

**Church Will Be Open** for ‘Supervised Private Prayer’ every Wednesday and Sunday 3pm-4pm, starting this Sunday 21st June.

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 us all – wherever we are.

**Sing**: (*click on the song title and it should open up and play in youtube)*

 [Great is thy Faithfulness](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dTKIqmdfHSk&list=RD7Y5N6oxIKH0&index=9)

Gathering our thoughts, we remember and confess:

Almighty God,

To whom all hearts are open,

All desires known,

And from whom no secrets are hidden:

Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts

By the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,

That we may perfectly love you,

And worthily magnify your holy name;

Through Christ our Lord.

Amen

Our Lord Jesus Christ said;

The first commandment is this;

‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is the only

Lord. You shall love the Lord your God

With all your heart, with all your soul, with all your

Mind, and with all your strength.’

The second is this, ‘Love your neighbour

as yourself.’ There is no other commandment

greater than these. On these two commandments

hang all the law and the prophets.

**Most merciful God,**

**Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,**

**we confess that we have sinned**

**in thought, word and deed.**

**We have not loved you with our whole heart.**

**We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.**

**In your mercy**

**forgive what we have been,**

**help us to amend what we are,**

**and direct what we shall be;**

**that we may do justly,**

**love mercy,**

**and walk humbly with you, our God.**

**Amen.**

Almighty God,

Who in Jesus Christ has given us

A kingdom that cannot be destroyed,

Forgive us our sins,

Open our eyes to God’s truth,

Strengthen us to do God’s will

And give us the joy of his kingdom,

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

*Take a few moments to sit and think about receiving that unconditional offering of forgiveness through grace.*

Faithful creator,

Whose mercy never fails:

Deepen our faithfulness to you

And to your living Word,

Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Reading:** Matthew 10:24-39

“The student is not above the teacher, nor a servant above his master. **25**It is enough for students to be like their teachers, and servants like their masters. If the head of the house has been called Beelzebul, how much more the members of his household! “So do not be afraid of them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed or hidden that will not be made known. What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs. Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. **29**Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father’s care. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So don’t be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows. “Whoever acknowledges me before others, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven. But whoever disowns me before others, I will disown before my Father in heaven. “Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to turn

“‘a man against his father,
    a daughter against her mother,
a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law—
**36**    a man’s enemies will be the members of his own household.’[[c](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+10&version=NIV#fen-NIV-23454c)]

**37**“Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.**38**Whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me.**39**Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it.

The disciples knew about fear. Jesus had warmed them enough: v16 Jesus explains to them that persecution will come, persecution from the governors, Romans and from their own culture. He continues in our verses today to warn them what to fear and what not to fear: v26 ‘have no fear’, v28 ‘ do not fear’, but in the same verse they are told to ‘fear him’. Skipping onto v31, ‘fear not’, then finally in v34 Jesus declares ‘I have not come to bring peace but a sword’ – some might be fearful of that prospect.

**So how do you stop being afraid?** With the world in such an unstable situation between lockdown and unlocking, this in-between state can be a place of fear. Waiting with someone to hear the results of a medical test can be a place of fear. The future with its financial, economic and social changes can also put us in a place of fear

There are people and groups that Jesus tells the disciples to be fearful of, a few verses earlier in v16 Jesus warns the disciples about persecution from governors, kings and men, ‘for they will deliver you over to courts and flog you in their synagogues’. The one person the disciples are told to fear is, “him who can destroy both soul and body in hell”, God, the Father of all creation. As Jesus tells his disciples about what to fear and what not to fear, Jesus talks about **sparrows**. He is trying to emphasize the importance and the intimacy he has with one of the smallest parts of his creation. How much more then, will he have for those who have chosen to be counted as followers of Jesus, under the rule and reign of the Kingdom of God. The numerous sparrows are so abundant because they are cared for by God: take courage that God knows and cares about your life, even as you face the fears that manifest themselves in your life. We are precious and unique creations worthy of our Creators affection and protection.

However, we have a bigger role in this relationship than just not being fearful, we are to be faithful. Verses 26 and 27 talk about things starting off in the dark and them being brought into the open or light.

When life gets tough and we **feel overwhelmed**, we are to remember our faith in a God, in our saviour Jesus, and trust in the abundant provision of our God who is intimately involved in our lives: **stand firm in our faith**. Stand firm when everything around you looks bleak and hopeless, stand firm when the worry or anxiety rises inside you, stand firm when it feels helpless. One day revelation and understanding will be brought into the light but until that time: lean into the promises of our creator and saviour:

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,
    behold, O Lord, you know it altogether.
**5**You hem me in, behind and before,
    and lay your hand upon me.
**6**Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;
    it is high; I cannot attain it. (Ps139)

Nicky Gumbel, senior church leader and pioneer of the Alpha course at Holy Trinity Brompton London, encourages us to choose faith not fear and fix our eyes on Jesus. Love is the antidote to fear.

As we go about our week and those times of fear, stress and uncertainty come across our minds, remember we are surrounded by God who is, ‘hemming you in, behind and before’ and his hand is upon you.

**Sing**: (*click on the song title and it should open up and play in youtube*)

 [Lord of the Years](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MkTrFQLy6js)

Let us declare our faith with confidence:

**Holy, holy, holy**

**is the Lord God almighty,**

**who was, and is, and is to come.**

We believe in God the Father,

who created all things:

**for by his will they were created**

**and have their being.**

We believe in God the Son,

who was slain:

**for with his blood,**

**he purchased us for God,**

**from every tribe and language,**

**from every people and nation.**

We believe in God the Holy Spirit:

**the Spirit and the Bride say, ‘Come!’**

**Even so come, Lord Jesus!**

**Amen.**

**We pray for the world, the church, and for our family, friends & our neighbour’s:**

We pray against the discrimination of people because of the colour of their skin. We pray for peace with justice in the communities around the world, and we pray for transparency and accountability in all organisations to bring an end to abuse and discrimination.

*For the isolated and housebound: we pray that we may be alert to their needs, and care for them with our words and prayers and actions*

*in their vulnerability.*

*We pray for all those who are putting themselves at an increased risk to care for others: for the carers at Millbrook Lodge, Brockworth House, Doctors surgeries and pharmacies.*

*We also pray for those in our local schools: Brockworth Primary Academy, Castle Hill Primary School, Coopers Edge School and Henley Bank High School. Heavenly Father would you increase your spirit in these places that all that go through these places would both know and experience your peace and hope, keep all those who work there protected.*

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

We pray with confidence as our saviour has taught us:

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 forever. Amen.

**Sing**: (*click on the song title and it should open up and play in youtube*)

 [Praise my Soul the King of Heaven](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rCRCZMmnwZQ)

**Numbers 6:24-26** *The Lord bless you and keep you;* *the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.*

**Until we can come together in worship & witness be strong in the Lord & in his mighty power**. (Eph6:10)

 – **AMEN?**

***I would love to hear from you about what is inspiring you in your faith at the moment: have you seen, heard or watch something which completely captivated you and made you wonder at the height, depth, and breadth of our Father and his Kingdom slowly being unveiled around us.***