

We are the church.

Sunday 5th July
Trinity 4

Notices:

ISingPop - Excellent Resource for Family: Their latest content looks at the really important topic of “.....”.

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, through their Giving Page.

‘Supervised Private Prayer’ every Wednesday and Sunday 3pm-4pm, starting this Sunday 21st June.

Mid-Week Gathering: a group of us have starting meeting online through Zoom on Wednesday mornings at 930am. It is very informal, and we would love you to join us. The Zoom details are:

For sound and engaging biblical teaching check out [bibleproject.com](https://www.bibleproject.com)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/96766775950?pwd=ZEZjVnk4MG0rMmorOTVhN3VEZ3Zadz09>

Meeting ID: 967 6677 5950

Password: 080328

Black Lives Matter part 2 – racism or discrimination of any kind has no place in our communities and in our society. We can stand together in unity to end the injustice of racism. It is not simply enough to say nothing, we as a community declare that we love God, and love our neighbour, whatever their skin colour, as ourselves. Acting out of love and fighting injustice is what was modeled and taught to us by Jesus. To help us **be more proactive** in our empathy, understanding, and compassion of racism, systemic racism, social injustice and the hurt black people are feeling today, please can I encourage you to watch this video:

Uncomfortable Conversations with a Black Man **PART 2**

We are the church.

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*)

God Forgave my Sin in Jesus' Name

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

We are the church.

Gathering our thoughts, we remember and confess:

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.

Gracious Father,
by the obedience of Jesus
you brought salvation to our wayward
world: draw us into harmony with your
will, that we may find all things
restored in him,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.

We are the church.

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.

Gospel: Matthew 11:16-19; 25

"But to what shall I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to their playmates,

"We played the flute for you, and you did not dance;
we sang a dirge, and you did not mourn.'

For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon.'
The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' Yet wisdom is justified by her deeds.

At that time Jesus declared, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Tom Wright, NT & Pauline theologian, Bishop of Durham 2003-2010 and professor at St. Mary's College in the University of St. Andrews, has translated a copy of the NT, his interpretation of our reading the morning is really helpful:

Are you having a real struggle? Come to me! Are you carrying a big load on your back? Come to me – I will give you a rest! Pick up my yoke and put it on; take lessons from me, I'll be gentle with you! The last thing in my heart is to give you a hard time. You'll see – rest you need, and rest you shall have.
"My yoke is easy to wear; my load is easy to bear."

We are the church.

Such a real and relevant question: Are you struggling at the moment? Are you struggling not seeing your family and friends? Are you struggling with your health, or someone in your family? Are you struggling with money? Are you struggling seeing and hearing the devastating reports of the horrific human suffering in India, Burma, and Yemen – sadly to name only a few.

Jesus acknowledges the burden of the pain and worry we carry for these things in our lives, and in the lives of those we care about. However, we are not without help, the rest and help we need is in the presence of Jesus, “rest you need, and rest you shall have”. We experience the maximum amount of rest when we keep our journey of faith within the arms of Jesus, to fully experience his peace, grace, and patience. This means daily (or even hourly!), reminding, reconnecting, and recognizing the presence of Christ Jesus with us. This might be reading the bible, or quietly sat at home or in the office or on the way to work and inviting God into your thoughts or worries. Just as the Spirit hovered over the chaos in Genesis, inviting the Holy Spirit into the sometimes-chaotic world of our thoughts and emotions is giving God permission to bring order, and structure ... and even beauty into the situations. Talking with God in prayer, is also another a good way to ease the burden, Smith Wigglesworth said, “I don’t often spend more than half an hour in prayer at one time, but I never go more than half an hour without praying”.

Finally, from our passage we see that our burden isn’t taken from us. However much we want to be burden free, we are not designed that way. A healthy burdened draws us into a deeper relationship with our Father. Through prayer, reading the bible and quiet times with God, our burdens teach us to care, pray and encourage ourselves and each other. In that place of going to Jesus we get rest, relief from the physical exhaustion of worry, and responsibility of our concerns.

The yoke of Jesus is the mantle we carry to remind ourselves that these are not our burdens, they are burdens that have been placed on our hearts to keep us relying, and going to Jesus for his support, and comfort. So as you go about your week remember you are within the arms of Jesus to receive his help and comfort with whatever is burdening you.

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,

We are the church.

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.

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

Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise

Rona Clifford leads us as we pray for the world, the church, and for our family, friend's & our neighbour's:

Let us pray to our loving God, who is attentive to us all, his children, let us pray to him now.

Father, we pray that your church, in whatever guise it takes at the moment in these strange times, may we always be open to receive your love, keep your church strong in the law of Christ, resisting the temptation to accept false values, let us come humbly and simply into your presence and wait on you, knowing our dependence on you and rejoicing in it.

As you have called us:
Lord, we come to you.

Father, we pray for all world leaders and their governments;
for the strength of authority comes not through force and domination but through co-operation and mutual respect;
We pray for a greater consideration of the needs of one another and our planet,
have pity on a world of discontent, restless and finding no lasting satisfaction, guide into the right way all who desire the good but give way to evil, give us a desire to right past wrongs and injustices and to help all those who are persecuted.

As you have called us:
Lord, we come to you.

We are the church.

Father, thank you that we live in hope and THAT WE ARE BOUND TOGETHER THROUGH YOUR LOVE. This hope is a strong and trustworthy anchor for our souls. Help us work together to make the world a better place where your love is shown through loving, respectful relationships one with another.

As you have called us:
Lord, we come to you.

Father, we pray for children everywhere in these uncertain times, we thank you for the exuberance of young people. Help us to guide and encourage them, allowing them the freedom to explore while providing care to keep them safe. We pray for them and we feel for them as they try to make the most of their education in these trying times of coronavirus and for their parents who are schooling them at home. We pray for our schools, for teachers and staff who work in them doing their best to help the pupils whether in school or at home, may they all receive the help they need to cope with their circumstances so that they still experience the good quality of life that they deserve. We pray for all the children who are not so lucky, who are in refugee camps and do not know what is happening to their world that they may be helped to enjoy a better life.

As you have called us:
Lord, we come to you.

Father, we pray for all who are sick among them, we pray in a moment of silence those of our family or friends who are in need at this time.....for those in hospital and especially Erica as she prepares for her operation this week. We pray for all those whose poverty denies them the chance of healing! And we pray for all those who give a helping hand, who care for the sick or needy, for carers, social workers, doctors and nurses. We pray for all who cry out for rest and relief, for all who are down, the fearful, the weary, the despairing and all who are unable to help themselves.

When trouble overwhelms us, let us hear you say 'take heart, it is I, do not be afraid'

As you have called us:
Lord, we come to you.

Father, we pray for those who have died recently..... both those well-known to us and those dying unknown and unnoticed all over the world and those who have died unprepared to meet you! We thank you for them and their gifts to the world. We place them all into your loving keeping.

As you have called us:

We are the church.

Lord, we come to you.

Father, in these times of CHANGE:

Comfort us, Lord, when we feel overwhelmed and insecure
Help us through the challenges we face
Although we feel safe with familiar ways
Never let us become resistant to new ways
Give us grace to be open and receptive
Entrusting us to work to your praise and Glory.

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)*

[Guide Me, O Thou Great Redeemer](#)

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Please have a listen to this beautiful song which has been inspiring and encouraging me at the moment. The lyrics are beautiful and helpful, from one verse:

Your grace abounds in deepest waters
Your sovereign hand
Will be my guide
Where feet may fail and fear surrounds me
You've never failed and You won't start now

Hillsong UNITED – Oceans (Where Feet May Fail)

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?**