

Church at Home

The Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity



Before the Service

A very warm welcome to all who are joining us from around the Oxford Diocese for today's service of Church at Home on this 14th Sunday after Trinity.

We are delighted that The Revd Canon Dr Peter Groves (Vicar of St Mary Magdalene and Assistant Archdeacon of Oxford) is presiding for us today, and that the reflection will be given by The Revd Canon Richard Peers (Sub Dean of Christ Church Cathedral). A huge thank you also to all the contributors who have offered their music, voices, prayers and myriad other gifts to help lead us in worship this morning.

This Sunday we explore together the theme of 'forgiveness'; celebrating the boundless mercy and grace of God, who calls us into right-relationship with him, with others, with the world and within ourselves.

Forgiveness is perhaps one of the most counter-cultural and revolutionary of all Kingdom values. It cannot be commanded *of* us by others, nor can it be demanded *by* us, of them. It can only ever be a gift; freely offered out of love. And it is from the Source of Love itself, that forgiveness is offered to us.

Forgiveness is often not a single act, but a process, by which we allow the abundance of God's love to flow through our brokenness, and the devastating pain which we can cause to each other, in order that that pain might be healed and transformed. Sin ruptures our relationship with God and each other; the grace of forgiveness heals and restores these relationships. Forgiveness is not an easy process. It can feel costly to us because it requires absolute honesty about the human condition, and it also invites those who have been hurt by the sin of others to choose to open themselves to the fullness of the work of healing (a task especially difficult when we have been hurt by a fellow Christian). However, as Jesus reminds Peter in our Gospel reading, forgiveness is not limited, but *limitless*, because it comes, not from ourselves, but from the limitless love of God. Love which once and for all stretched out its arms on the Cross and prayed 'Father forgive'.

As we celebrate in this Sacrament together this morning, we do so as a people who are already 'forgiven, loved and free'. Our challenge as the Church is to live in the light of the forgiveness which we have received; to allow our lives to be transformed by it, and to open our hearts to show Christ's forgiving love to others. As we prepare for worship, you may wish to pray the Coventry 'Litany of Reconciliation'.

Coventry Litany of Reconciliation

coventrycathedral.org.uk/wpsite/litany-of-reconciliation

All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

The hatred which divides nation from nation, race from race, class from class,

Father, forgive.

The covetous desires of people and nations to possess what is not their own,

Father, forgive.

The greed which exploits the work of human hands and lays waste the earth,

Father, forgive.

Our envy of the welfare and happiness of others,

Father, forgive.

Our indifference to the plight of the imprisoned, the homeless, the refugee,

Father, forgive.

The lust which dishonours the bodies of men, women and children,

Father, forgive.

The pride which leads us to trust in ourselves and not in God,

Father, forgive.

Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

Hymns & Mass Setting from Clerks of the Christ Church Cathedral Choir

Hymns Crown him and Now thank we - recorded by the Choir of Christ Church Cathedral in 2004, directed by Stephen Darlington, on the CD 'Favourite Hymns from Oxford' (Nexus)

Hymn There's a wideness - recorded by the Cathedral Singers of Christ Church in 2013, under the direction of John Padley, on the CD How shall I sing that majesty (Convivium))

Front Cover: 'Heaven and Earth Embrace' - Resurrection scene in the East window of St Mary & St Nicholas Church, Littlemore, by Louis Davis. Photo by The Revd Margreet Armitstead (Littlemore)

Video stills: Yvonne Bell (christian-art.vpweb.co.uk/icon-vestments-and-paintings) and Meg Wroe (megwroe.com). All other stills courtesy of Shutterstock and the Diocese of Oxford.

Music before the service

recorded by The Revd Marcus Green
(Steeple Aston with North Aston & Tackley)

President In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

All **Amen.**

President The Lord be with you

All **and also with you.**

The President welcomes the congregation.

Hymn

Crown him with many crowns,
the Lamb upon his throne;
hark, how the heavenly anthem drowns
all music but its own!
Awake, my soul, and sing
of him who died for thee,
and hail him as thy matchless King
through all eternity.

Crown him the Virgin's Son,
the God incarnate born,
whose arm those crimson trophies won
which now his brow adorn:
Fruit of the mystic Rose,
as of that Rose the Stem;
the Root whence mercy ever flows,
the Babe of Bethlehem.

Crown him the Lord of love;
behold his hands and side,
those wounds yet visible above
in beauty glorified:
no angel in the sky
can fully bear that sight,
but downward bends his burning eye
at mysteries so bright.

Crown him the Lord of years,
the Potentate of time,
creator of the rolling spheres,
ineffably sublime:
Glassed in a sea of light,
Where everlasting waves
Reflect his throne--the Infinite!
Who lives--and loves--and saves.

Words: Matthew Bridges (1800–94)
Music: Diademata, G J Elvey (1816–93)

Confession

President Jesus says: forgive your brother and sister from your heart.

Coming into God's presence as God's family,
we know ourselves chosen, called and deeply loved.
Yet we know too our faults and our failings,
and as we bring them to our loving Lord
we long for God's promised forgiveness.

All **Almighty God, our heavenly Father,**
we have sinned against you
and against our neighbour
in thought and word and deed,
through negligence, through weakness,
through our own deliberate fault.
We are truly sorry and repent of all our sins.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
who died for us,
forgive us all that is past
and grant that we may serve you in newness of life
to the glory of your name.
Amen.

Absolution

President Almighty God,
who forgives all who truly repent,
have mercy upon you,
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,
and keep you in life eternal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

Gloria in Excelsis

Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Et in terra pax
hominibus bonæ voluntatis.

Laudamus te, benedicimus te,
adoramus te, glorificamus te.
Gratias agimus tibi
propter magnam gloriam tuam,
Domine Deus, Rex cœlestis,
Deus Pater omnipotens.

Domine Fili unigenite, Jesu Christe,
Domine Deus, Agnus Dei,
Filius Patris,
qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.
Qui tollis peccata mundi,
suscipe deprecationem nostram.
Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris,
miserere nobis.
Quoniam tu solus Sanctus;
tu solus Dominus;
tu solus Altissimus, Jesu Christe,
cum Sancto Spiritu
in gloria Dei Patris.
Amen.

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

*Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.*

*Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated
at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.*

*For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.*

The Collect

President Let us pray.

Silence is kept.

President Almighty God,
whose only Son has opened for us
a new and living way into your presence:
give us pure hearts and steadfast wills
to worship you in spirit and in truth;
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.**

Sit comfortably to listen to God speaking through the Scriptures.

First Reading

Romans 14:1–12 (NRSV)

read by Benjamin Johnson III (Littlemore)

A reading from the Letter of St Paul to the Romans.

Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarrelling over opinions. Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgement on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. Who are you to pass judgement on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. Those who observe the day, observe it in honour of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honour of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honour of the Lord and give thanks to God.

We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

Why do you pass judgement on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgement seat of God. For it is written,

‘As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,
and every tongue shall give praise to God.’

So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

Reader This is the word of the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God.**

*Bless the Lord O my soul, O my soul
Worship His Holy name
Sing like never before, O my soul
I'll worship Your Holy name*

The sun comes up, it's a new day dawning
It's time to sing Your song again
Whatever may pass and whatever lies before me
Let me be singing when the evening comes:

You're rich in love and You're slow to anger
Your name is great and Your heart is kind.
For all Your goodness I will keep on singing
Ten thousand reasons for my heart to find.

And on that day when my strength is failing
The end draws near and my time has come
Still my soul will sing Your praise unending
Ten thousand years and then forevermore:

*Words and Music: Matt Redman (b. 1974) and Jonas Myrin (b. 1984)
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Recorded by All Saints' Singers (High Wycombe)*

Gospel Reading

Matthew 18:21–35 (NRSV)

read by Revd Serena Tajima (Banbury)

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

Then Peter came and said to Jesus, ‘Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?’ Jesus said to him, ‘Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

‘For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, “Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.” And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow-slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, “Pay what you owe.” Then his fellow-slave fell down and pleaded with him, “Have patience with me, and I will pay you.” But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he should pay the debt. When his fellow-slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, “You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow-slave, as I had mercy on you?” And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he should pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.’

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

Reflection

The Revd Canon Richard Peers
Sub Dean, Christ Church Cathedral

*With thanks to Yvonne Bell and Meg Wroe
for the images used in the reflection.*

The Creed

Let us affirm our faith in Jesus Christ the Son of God.

All **Though he was divine,
he did not cling to equality with God,
but made himself nothing.
Taking the form of a slave,
he was born in human likeness.
He humbled himself
and was obedient to death,
even the death of the cross.
Therefore God has raised him on high,
and given him the name above every name:
that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bow,
and every voice proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.
Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession

*led by Revd Hannah Cartwright with
Star and Cherry Bevington (Littlemore)*

The Peace

President Jesus says: 'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.
Do not let your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.'
The peace of the Lord be always with you.

President The peace of the Lord be always with you
All **and also with you.**

We know that Christians have shared a sign of peace since the very earliest days of the Church. In these times, it may seem strange to 'share the Peace.' But peace is from the heart and from God. God's peace in the Spirit moves among us and unites us, physically distanced yet one in the Body of Christ.

Hymn

There's a wideness in God's mercy,
like the wideness of the sea;
there's a kindness in his justice
which is more than liberty.
There is no place where earth's sorrows
are more felt than up in heaven;
there is no place where earth's failings
have such kindly judgment given.

For the love of God is broader
than the measures of man's mind;
and the heart of the Eternal
is most wonderfully kind.
But we make his love too narrow
by false limits of our own;
and we magnify his strictness
with a zeal he will not own.

There is plentiful redemption
in the blood that has been shed;
there is joy for all the members
in the sorrows of the Head.
There is grace enough for thousands
of new worlds as great as this;
there is room for fresh creations
in that upper home of bliss.

If our love were but more simple,
we should take him at his word;
and our lives would be all gladness
in the joy of Christ our Lord.

Words: FW Faber (1814–63)

Music: Corvedale, Maurice Bevan (1921–2006)

Preparation of the Table

President Yours, Lord, is the greatness, the power,
the glory, the splendour, and the majesty;
for everything in heaven and on earth is yours.
All things come from you,
and of your own do we give you.

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 It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,
always and everywhere to give you thanks,
holy Father, almighty and eternal God.
From sunrise to sunset this day is holy,
for Christ has risen from the tomb
and scattered the darkness of death
with light that will not fade.
This day the risen Lord walks with your gathered people,
unfolds for us your word,
and makes himself known in the breaking of the bread.
And though the night will overtake this day
you summon us to live in endless light,
the never-ceasing sabbath of the Lord.
And so, with choirs of angels
and with all the heavenly host,
we proclaim your glory
and join their unending song of praise:

Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus
Dominus Deus Sabaoth:
pleni sunt cœli et terra gloria tua.
Hosanna in excelsis.

*Holy, holy, holy
Lord God of hosts:
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.*

Benedictus qui venit
in nomine Domini.
Hosanna in excelsis.

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

President We praise and bless you, loving Father,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord;
and as we obey his command,
send your Holy Spirit,
that broken bread and wine outpoured
may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his friends
and, taking bread, he praised you.

He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

When supper was ended he took the cup of wine.
Again he praised you, gave it to them and said:
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.
So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did,
in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice
made once for all upon the cross.
Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation,
we proclaim his death and resurrection
until he comes in glory.

Deacon Great is the mystery of faith.
All **Christ has died.**
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

President Lord of all life,
help us to work together for that day
when your kingdom comes
and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.

Look with favour on your people,
gather us in your loving arms
and bring us with all the saints
to feast at your table in heaven.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father,
for ever and ever.

All **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

President In times of hope, in times of trouble,
in times of sorrow, in times of praise,
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 the Bread

The President breaks the consecrated bread.

President We break the bread of life
life and forgiveness, salvation and joy.

Agnus Dei

Agnus Dei,
qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.

Agnus Dei,
qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.

Agnus Dei,
qui tollis peccata mundi,
dona nobis pacem.

*Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.*

*Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.*

*Lamb of God,
you take away the sin 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,
in the glory of God the Father.**

The Priest receives the Bread & Wine on behalf of the community as we make our 'spiritual communion'; taking time to notice God's presence with us and trust that, as we also desire communion with God, God will meet us in our hearts by faith. There are no special words or actions required for this; only true desire, lively faith and genuine love. If you find it helpful you may wish to use one of the following prayers, or simply listen to the music and meditate upon God's love for you.

In union, O Lord with the faithful at every altar of thy Church, where the Holy Eucharist is now being celebrated, I desire to offer thee praise and thanksgiving. I present to thee my soul and body with the earnest wish that they may always be united to thee. And since I cannot now receive thee sacramentally, I beseech thee to come spiritually into my heart. I unite myself to thee, and embrace thee with all the affections of my soul. Let nothing ever separate thee from me. May I live and die in thy love. Amen.

Lord, you stand at the door of my heart and knock. You wait for me and only I can let you in. I believe and trust in you and ask you now to fill me with your presence. Feed me with your body and unite me in your blood, that I may be your blessing to a world in need. Amen.

Song

I will kneel in the dust
At the foot of the cross,
Where mercy paid for me.
Where the wrath I deserve,
It is gone, it has passed.
Your blood has hidden me.

*Mercy, mercy,
As endless as the sea.
I'll sing Your hallelujah
For all eternity.*

We will lift up the cup
And the bread we will break,
Remembering Your love.
We were fallen from grace,
But You took on our shame
And nailed it to a cross.

May I never lose the wonder,
Oh, the wonder of Your mercy.
May I sing Your hallelujah.
Hallelujah, Amen.

*Words and Music: Matt Redman (b. 1974)
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Recorded by Hannah and Liam Cartwright*

Prayer after Communion

President Let us pray.

Lord God, the source of truth and love,
keep us faithful to the apostles' teaching and fellowship,
united in prayer and the breaking of bread,
and one in joy and simplicity of heart,
in Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Hymn

Now thank we all our God
with heart and hands and voices,
who wondrous things hath done,
in whom his world rejoices;
who from our mother's arms
hath blessed us on our way
with countless gifts of love,
and still is ours to-day.

O may this bounteous God
through all our life be near us,
with ever joyful hearts
and blessed peace to cheer us;
and keep us in his grace,
and guide us when perplexed,
and free us from all ills
in this world and the next.

All praise and thanks to God
the Father now be given,
the Son, and him who reigns
with them in highest heaven,
the one eternal God,
whom earth and heaven adore;
for thus it was, is now,
and shall be evermore.

*Words: Martin Rinkhart (1586–1649)
trans. Catherine Winkworth (1827–78)
Music: Nun Danket, Johann Cruger c. 1647*

Blessing

President The blessing of God be upon you:
the peace of the One who made you,
the love of the One who redeems you,
the comfort of the One who sustains you;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

All **Amen.**

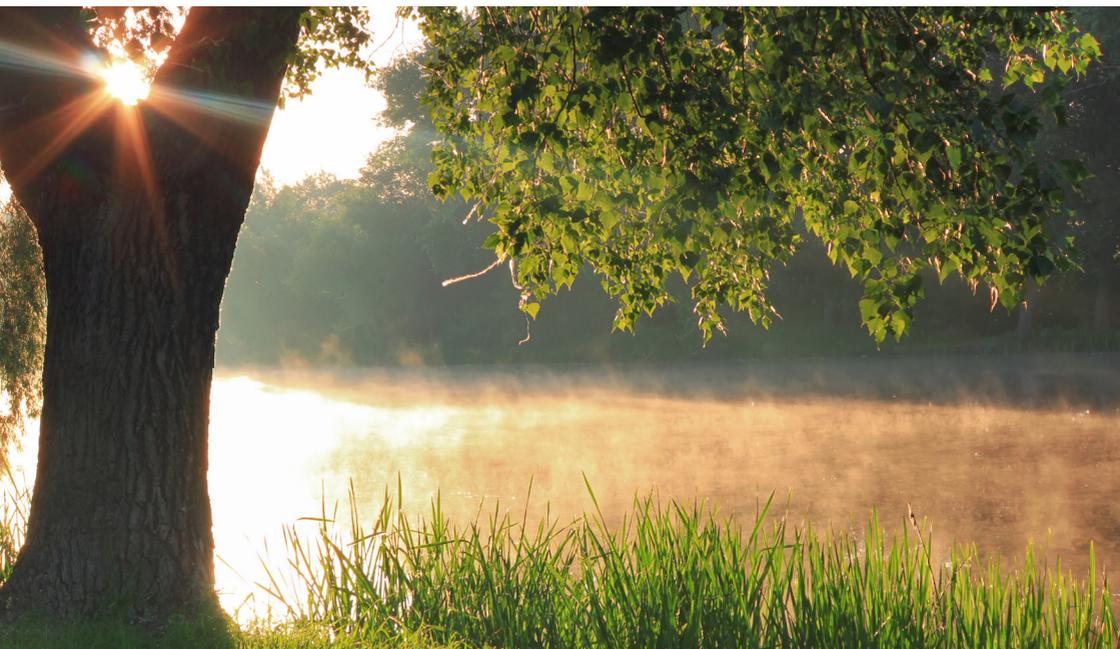
Go in the peace of Christ.

All **Thanks be to God.**

Music after the service

*recorded by The Revd Marcus Green
(Steeple Aston with North Aston & Tackley)*

Reflections for a church in lockdown



Reflections for a church in lockdown is a series of reflective podcasts by the Bishop of Oxford, the Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft, which aims to resource the Church during the pandemic. Listen online, on Spotify, iTunes and Google Play.

blogs.oxford.anglican.org

Responding to the current emergency is the responsibility of every family, every workplace, every village, town and city, every company, and every public institution. Find out more at oxford.anglican.org/environment