

St Werburgh's Sunday Newsletter No.26 Hello everyone, we hope you all enjoy this sunny weekend, make the most of the end of summer with a sit in the sun or a little walk outside!

Today's Bible reading

Matthew 18: 21 - 35 NRSV

Then Peter came and said to him, '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.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Father Julian's Reflection

How we want religion to be part of the ordered areas of our lives. Particularly in the current disorder of life. More often than not we think the disordered parts of our life need to be kept away from church.... Relationship issues, bereavements, shames, long felt

hurts. No, I come to church four Sundays in a row and kept the front up that I'm fine, so I've obviously got some grace points in for when the cracks do show.

I'm alright Jack so I turn the poverty of others into a blame game, but my Sunday prayer ensures me I'm OK with God, I couldn't care less about fair trade but my piety in church will make up for the child slavery my behaviour supports. I know the paper I read says obscene things about refugees, but nobody knows as I bow my head in devotion.

And if someone wrongs me in any way. Go ahead and apologise seven times, so I can forgive you seven times and check it off my list. Perfectly ordered completely fair.

Shall I stop there and cause no offence?

We all know it doesn't work like that.

Prepare all week for an interview, and the job goes to the internal candidate anyway. No matter how many hours we spend on our knees, a cure never happens. And the people we most want apologies from forget we even exist.

In today's scripture, Peter fresh from a conversation about who is a good and who is a naughty asks Jesus how many times to forgive. But Jesus refuses to play a numbers game.

Jesus tells a parable about a man whose debt is forgiven, then turns around and punishes his own debtor and is thrown in jail to be tortured... there you go... what goes around comes around... go ahead and feel all's well with the world... makes sense.

Until I learned how much a talent is worth and how much it denarii is worth.

According to Wikipedia the 10,000 talents owed the slave master is equivalent to 150,000 years worth of work. 100 denarii is about three months worth of work. You want a numbers game says Jesus to Peter... the forgiveness of God is infinite, unconditional. I don't know about you but I will confess here, aware of that unconditional forgiveness, like the slave, I fail to live from that love. I tally my time. I tally my prayers. I tally my forgiveness. I have in my soul a ledger which I hold up to Jesus who doesn't even look at it. "Julian," he says, "there is no accountant in heaven. It won't ever add up the way you want it to."

The Divine economy can never be counted, tallied, weighed. The only real currency we have is a bottomless vault of forgiveness uncounted. There is a billion talents worth of God's grace given to us today and it will be given again tomorrow, for everything that vexes us from the thoughtless friend to the uncooperative congregant that Peter is so angry about.

It is the grace that brings me here online and it is the grace that makes me open my bible even when that deserved miracle didn't happen.

It is grace that says I know you needed this job, let's have a cuppa, tell me what happened.

It is the grace that says, there is no shame in not being able to feed your kids I will go to the food bank with you.

It is the grace that says, you are a refugee and I will welcome you and your family as my neighbour.

It is the grace that says yes your spouse is dying, there is no cure. And no reason. And I will sit with you for as long as it takes.

It is the grace that says to me every day... I do not keep tally... Julian you are already forgiven.

SO what of the Jailors and the torture the parable promises? Did you think I'd quietly ignore that bit?

I torture myself in my own jail of small mindedness when all I owe is forgiveness. So infinitely bestowed on me. When I judge others on every little tally mark of my annoyance. When in my conceit I think my prayers validate my behaviour and when I nurse my resentments and my shames it is I who am tortured and in a prison of my own making.

All we have to do is forgive. Friends free yourselves from your torturous jail and bless the world with your own bottomless vault of forgiveness that is so freely given to each of us.

Update from the Church Wardens

Following recent announcements about social gatherings, new rules DO NOT CHANGE THE GUIDANCE TO CHURCHES - our services give people the strength to live and serve - they are not social gatherings. We have taken all necessary measures to ensure safety and our ticketed worship on Wednesdays at 10.30am and Thursdays at 7pm continues. We'd love to see you!

Jon & Kate - Church Wardens

N.B. Fr J is on holiday and then working away from the parish until Saturday 26th September. DO NOT CONTACT HIM. To book a ticket for Mass (or for any other query) please contact:

Warden Kate Leatherbarrow 01332 676106, or,
Curate Kate Smedley 07763473943

The church that isn't a 'Church', that IS a church!

Many of us have wondered what the Journey Community group is, since it's welcoming into our fellowship recently. Led by Rev Cath Holywell and Sharna Smith, Cath introduces the journey community and what it stands for...

"The Journey Community is a Church of England 'Fresh Expression of Church' based in Wilmorton and is a place to encounter and learn about our Living God through food, sacrament, stories and each other.

We welcome misfits, outcasts and tree-dwellers, those who have a faith or none, or are somewhere in between. We welcome people from different places who have been on this journey a while, who have only just begun or haven't even started. We welcome people who are willing to question, as well as those willing to listen to different points of view. We welcome all LGBTQ+ people. We welcome people of all ages and from all walks of life.

We also want to understand and practice what it means to be Peacemakers and Reconcilers and yes, we know it'll take a lifetime - but we are up for The Journey. Radical Hospitality, Peacemaking and Reconciliation are at the heart of The Journey Community. It's who we are and what we try to do. In many ways we are only simply following how Jesus first created community and how and why Christians and seekers first met in the early Church. After all if we're not about real hospitality, peacemaking and reconciliation then what are we doing?

The Journey Community was born amongst and is especially for people for

whom 'Religion' and 'The Church' has at best been irrelevant and at worst been painful and damaging. But we also welcome people of many different backgrounds and experiences which is a real gift. For example, Rev Eleanor and Joan regularly take part in Morning and Evening Prayer alongside people with very little religious experience who consistently blow them away with their honesty and wisdom."

The Ohana Prayer is now part of the rhythm of prayer in our fellowship. Ohana means family, family with or without blood ties, a diverse collection of like-minded people. Family means no one gets left behind or forgotten – as the final lines of the prayer tell us.

Our choralist Tim Scott is part of the Journey Community and offers his unique perspective on the group...

"When I realised I wasn't going to be confirmed at St Werburgh's, to be honest, I was bitterly disappointed. However, confirmation was important to me so, as planned, I started classes. One of those classes took us to St Osmond's church hall, the very place we were to be confirmed, and to the Journey Community.

The first time I went into St Werburgh's I felt like I had always been a part of it. And here, quite soon afterwards, was the second place I'd ever been where I felt exactly the same, part of it, instantly.

Here, it doesn't matter where you have come from in life, it's about your own journey and the journey together. A place where differences are obvious, but disagreements are left outside. A welcoming place for friend and stranger, from all different backgrounds, young and old, traditional church goes and not. An eclectic walk of life.



And so, confirmation came, and a few friends from church came to support. I had no problem about where my confirmation took place. This night was one of the most spiritually emotional moments of my life. Not only for my own confirmation, but also witnessing the baptism and confirmations of others, not just from St Werburgh's but also the Journey Community.

That couldn't be it? The end? I had to learn more, grow more. So, I continued going to the gatherings, and became a firm member of the Journey Community. That was BC, before COVID. Lockdown arrived. And quite quickly, living alone, my mental health suffered. Badly. I found help via my GP and medication. But I was really struggling.

During Holy Week, an email arrived inviting me to Morning Prayer via Zoom

from Reverend Cath, and I joined. I was at my worst with snot and tears, but I went to Morning Prayer daily, and soon, felt a little better. Of course, we couldn't gather physically, but Wednesday evenings on Zoom was the time when we could gather together virtually and share the Holy Meal. Morning Prayer taught me to have confidence to pray out loud, in front of others! The fellowship, friendship and company, saved me when I was at my lowest. And my Journey, grows and grows.

I am grateful that my confirmation took place where it did. I found somewhere else to investigate and explore my own walk with God, and witness some truly inspiring moments in others.

The group has about 20 of us, and we currently meet online via Zoom on Wednesday evenings. Before COVID, in not so good weather days we gathered at St Osmond's church hall. I look forward to the COVID free, good weather days, to joining everyone at the allotments in Wilmorton.





I have a social bubble with my friend Kat from the group, and at the beginning of June, we started studying the Bible together. We have found new ways of looking at, and hearing scripture. And on the sunny summer days, took the Bible study on tour all over Derbyshire.

By Sonya Dobson



Quiz time

As the children have got stuck back into learning, how about some school-based quiz fun... Can you work out these school related anagrams!

ICLPNE SCAE

LURRE

OCYRASN

KOBOS

TLCMEUNIH

GOCOLSBHA

PAPLE

TAEWR LTBT OE



Photo time!

The children are still getting back to school.



Edward has gone back with a big thumbs up.

Henry started preschool and had a great time (his mum Charlotte says you can tell it was a good day by the state of his jumper!)



Alexis has been enjoying some quieter playgrounds.

Whereas the Marshall's house is very noisy with the arrival of 2 kittens – Hamilton and Jefferson! (Have you seen the musical “Hamilton” yet?!)



Gaby has turned 3 this week! Happy birthday Gaby. She celebrated with her cousins, a caterpillar cake and a tea party at home.



Next week's newsletter please send us any photos or messages to include in the newsletter on stwhelps@gmail.com or post to our [Facebook community](#). It really is a great way to keep connected with each other and to share our news!

Coffee - Do not forget to join coffee and chat on Zoom after Parish Mass (leave a short time in order to make a coffee and then join in!).



<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81291297056?pwd=VUpMb0g5dTZSOEVDNVM3OTNZTWFCUT09>

Meeting ID: 812 9129 7056

Passcode: 144845

Being careful, caring for all @ St Werburgh's

Quiz answers:

Pencil case

Ruler

Crayons

Books

Lunchtime

Schoolbag

Apple

Water bottle