

SERVICE SHEET
6th September - Trinity 13

Canticle: The Song of Christ's Glory

**At the name of Jesus
every knee shall bow.**

**Christ Jesus
was in the form of God,
but he did not cling
to equality with God.**

**He emptied himself,
taking the form of a servant,
and was born in our human likeness.**

**Being found in human form
he humbled himself,
and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross.**

**Therefore God
has highly exalted him,
and bestowed on him the name above every name.**

**That at the name of Jesus,
every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth
and under the earth;**

**And every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.**

Philippians 2.5-11

**Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

Collect

Almighty God,
who called your Church to bear witness
that you were in Christ reconciling the world to yourself:
help us to proclaim the good news of your love,
that all who hear it may be drawn to you;
through him who was lifted up on the cross,
and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Amen

New Testament **Romans 13.8-end**

⁸ Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. ⁹ The commandments, 'You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet'; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' ¹⁰ Love does no wrong to a neighbour; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.

¹¹ Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; ¹² the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armour of light; ¹³ let us live honourably as in the day, not in revelling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarrelling and jealousy. ¹⁴ Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

Psalm 149

1 Praise the LORD!
Sing to the LORD a new song,
his praise in the assembly of the faithful.

**2 Let Israel be glad in its Maker;
let the children of Zion rejoice in their King.**

3 Let them praise his name with dancing,
making melody to him with tambourine and lyre.

**4 For the LORD takes pleasure in his people;
he adorns the humble with victory.**

5 Let the faithful exult in glory;
let them sing for joy on their couches.

**6 Let the high praises of God be in their throats
and two-edged swords in their hands,**

7 to execute vengeance on the nations
and punishment on the peoples,

**8 to bind their kings with fetters
and their nobles with chains of iron,**

9 to execute on them the judgement decreed.
This is glory for all his faithful ones.
Praise the LORD!

**Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

Gospel Reading **Matthew 18.15-20**

¹⁵ 'If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one. ¹⁶ But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. ¹⁷ If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax-collector. ¹⁸ Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. ¹⁹ Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. ²⁰ For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.'

Sermon

"An Englishman's home is his castle" -

Or is it?

It's a phrase or saying that perhaps sounds very positive – suggesting that home is somewhere safe, defended against an outer and possibly unfriendly world. Suggesting that home is somewhere we have autonomy, where we can be in control of our affairs in a wider world that sometimes feels chaotic and wild.

But what about the other side of the coin? What about the stories of people harmed, forced to move, even killed over disputes with neighbours about hedges/fences/shared driveways etc. It's not just neighbours falling out. Families can fall out too when offence is taken where perhaps there is none meant. People stop speaking, positions become entrenched, there is "no love lost" between the parties, be it father and son, brother and sister. Though actually a huge amount of love is lost!

Maybe some of us share some of these difficult experiences – sadly not all that uncommon. Recently, a more distant friend of mine died having been estranged from her son for some years, and reconciliation not having been achieved. An extreme example perhaps, and one with sad consequences. It's also sad to note that sometimes these kinds of "falling out" may even be part of our experience of church at some point, somewhere.

In our Gospel reading Matthew shows the way to resolve disputes in community, shows the way to reconciliation. It all seems very straightforward, very sensible, a staged process to bring about resolution of a problem or dispute:

Stage 1 – have a quiet word privately.

Stage 2 – if that doesn't work, try again, this time with other witnesses (or should it be mediators).

Stage 3 – still no resolution? Then involve the wider church! I wonder what this means – the Elders/PCC/Ministry Team? The whole congregation? The mind boggles how that might work out!

Stage 4 – still no solution to the dispute between church members? Then let the offender be as a Gentile or Tax Collector. Off with their head! Throw 'em out! They become an outsider. Straightforward and simple – they've had their chances and didn't take them – chuck 'em out.

Or is it?

Firstly, we all know that in disputes things are never simple. In this discourse we hear only one viewpoint, that of the person offended. It feels like there might be a bit of 'ganging up' on the offender. We know that in reality, it can take two to tango! It's complicated.

Secondly, as ever, it's not that straightforward because this is Jesus speaking, challenging the listeners, challenging us: "Let such a one be to you as a Gentile and Tax Collector". How did

Jesus respond to Gentiles and Tax Collectors? In Matthew's Gospel chapter 6, Jesus heals the Roman centurion's servant. In chapter 9 Jesus shares a meal with Tax Collectors and sinners, and then calls Matthew, the Tax Collector to be his disciple. Mmmm "throw 'em out"? Maybe not.

Jesus is challenging his listeners never to give up, to share the love and care he showed to Gentiles and Tax Collectors, to include them, to bring them into the fold. It's not time to feel smug about being in the right – there's work to do to create new relationship, to bring someone back into the community.

It may be significant that this passage follows on immediately from the story of the Lost Sheep – the shepherd leaving the flock of ninety-nine to find the one who has wandered off, and rejoicing when he succeeds.

Jesus is giving his listeners, and therefore us, real food for thought on how to bring about reconciliation and resolution in dispute, and this is summed up perfectly in the reading from the letter to the Romans:

verse 8: "owe no one anything except to love one another, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law"

verse 9: " all the commandments are summed up 'love your neighbour as yourself'".

However strongly I am convinced that 'I am in the right', the call of Jesus, the call of the Gospel is to act or respond with love and care; not a hard-hearted rigidity, not with a desire for revenge, but with a real desire to see relationship restored. It might mean backing down, and in doing so building something new. Not easy. How would it be if individuals, communities, even nations followed Jesus' instruction to regard everyone with the same perseverance of determined love and care that he did?

And there is a warning, don't hang about, do it now:

verse 11: "you know what time it is".

Yes – written with the expectation that Jesus would soon return, nevertheless good advice when working for reconciliation and rebuilding relationship. Ongoing tension, bitterness, anger, disagreement or estrangement are good for no one. Yet still there may be no response to our best efforts, perhaps over a long time. We have done our best, we have kept on keeping on, leaving the door open for something new to happen, for the extended hand of friendship to be grasped. What now? The Gospel reading ends with Jesus telling his listeners to leave things in prayer in God's hands. Hopefully our efforts have been rooted in prayer. Now we trust the thing to God's hands, and God's time, and keep on keeping on in love and prayer. Amen.

Intercessions

Lord, take us by the hand:
And lead us.

ST JOHN

Those who are ill and their carers:

Pat Crowe, Jo Hearn, Ann Kinson, Allan Law

FOR YOUR PRAYERS

ST MICHAEL

Those newly in need of prayer

Chris Dickerson, Elizabeth Chapman, Claire Kendrick, Nick Rutter, John and Sonia Doidge

Those in continuing special need of prayer:

Anthony Staples aged 6, Audrey Egleston, Colin Eastwood, Yvonne Harper, Ian and Judith Watson, Alison Cox-Toplis, Julian & Wendy, Jamie, Gary and Denise, Sam Bassett, Mark Berry, Dorothy Clayton, Jo Cobb, Dottie Collins, Robert Harris, Bill Hill, James Knight, Marielouise Oliver, Arthur Palin, John Tipper, Sheila Vaughan, Renee Wellings, Felicity Woodfield

Those who have died

Richard Keay, Debra Neal (interment of ashes)

Post Communion Prayer

God our creator,
you feed your children with the true manna,
the living bread from heaven:
let this holy food sustain us through our earthly pilgrimage
until we come to that place
where hunger and thirst are no more;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

CHURCH NOTICES

ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH ROOF APPEAL.

We urgently need money to repair the roof on the southside of the church. If you can donate please use the blue envelopes, fill in the front if you can gift aid and make all cheques payable to the 'PCC of St Michael and St Mary, Lichfield'. Please mark the envelope 'Church Roof'. This will really help the count team

Many thanks

Brenda Liptrot

WARNING

If you receive an email from: **Revd Preb Simon Baker** and the email address is:
churchvicar8@gmail.com

Please do not reply or open any attachments.

I never use that title in any emails I send and this is not my email address. Please block the email address and everything sent from it to you should go into spam.

If you receive any email that asks you to spend any personal money on my behalf please delete it at once.

Simon

WORSHIP NEWS

PLEASE REMEMBER TO...

- *Wear a mask over your nose and mouth before you enter church*
- Sanitise your hands on the way in – sanitisers are available
- Keep a proper distance at all times
- Sit only in seats as indicated
- Leave the church as instructed by the clergy and do not stay in church for conversation
- Conversation may continue in the open space of the churchyard
- Take with you the Sunday service sheet when you go
- Be aware of others at all times
- Children are welcome but there will be no toys or activities provided

FLOWERS AT ST MICHAEL'S Now that we're back in church, if you would like to do the flowers, please sign the rota at the back of church. Flowers will be provided. *Diana*

WORSHIP BY ZOOM will be on the first and third Sundays of each month. The next services are on.

Sunday 6th September 6.00pm

Sunday 20th September 6.00pm

You can join the service from 5.45pm. The service will last about 40mins.

If you have not had a link by Friday at 11am please contact the office
office@stmichaelmaryjohn.org.uk

OTHER NOTICES

OFFICE Angie is on annual leave from 7th September until 20th September. The office will be staffed.

CAKE SALE in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support: Sunday 27th September at 11am outside St Michael's Church. In place of our usual Coffee Morning, we will, this year, be holding a cake sale to raise funds for this worthwhile cause. Please come along and buy a cake (or several!) and tell your friends about this too.

JAM JARS If anyone has jam jars to spare could they leave them in a bag at the back of church with my name on and I could pick them up. Or I could collect, ring 255308. Thanks Maggie

LICHFIELD FOOD BANK. Thank you for your continuing support for Lichfield Foodbank. The latest needs are

- Tinned tuna
- Tinned vegetables
- Biscuits
- Tinned fruit

BIBLE STUDY THE BOOK OF DANIEL- Everyone is welcome to join the Zoom meeting on [Wednesday 9th September at 10.30am](#) and listen to the members of the ministry team as they explain the history behind and meaning of the stories in this book. [If you would like a link so that you can join in, please contact Angie in the office.](#)

MAGAZINE EDITOR Would you consider becoming the new editor from January 2021? The role of editor is not an onerous task. **No IT skills required** as Angie puts together the magazine and formats it.

The tasks are

- encouraging people to write articles,
- coming up with ideas for new features,
- gently reminding the Ministry Team members when it is their turn to write the Reflection,
- finding a suitable quotation for the And finally.... feature;
- reading through the magazine before it is printed.

Please do consider whether this is something you could take on – maybe with a friend? I look forward to hearing from you, on 01543 252123 or at dkbull053@hotmail.co.uk

David Bull

PARISH DIARY

Sunday 6th September

8:00am	Holy Communion	St Michael's
10:00am	Holy Communion	St Michael's
10:00am	Holy Communion	St John
11:30am	Private Prayer	St John
6:00pm	Evening Prayer	Zoom

Monday 7th September

8:15am	Morning Prayer	Zoom
7:30pm	St Michael's Standing Committee	

Tuesday 8th September

8:15am	Morning Prayer	Zoom
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Wednesday 9th September

All day	Private Prayer	St John
8:15am	Morning Prayer	Zoom
10.30am	Bible Study	Zoom
10:30am	Interment of Ashes: Debra Neal	St Michael's

Thursday 10th September

OFFICE CLOSED

8:15am	Morning Prayer	Zoom
2:00pm	Private Prayer	St Michael's

Friday 11th September

8:15am	Morning Prayer	Zoom
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Saturday 12th September

10:00am	Churchyard Working Party	St Michael's
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Sunday 13th September

8:00am	Holy Communion	St Michael's
10:00am	Holy Communion	St Michael's
10:00am	Holy Communion	St John
11:30am	Private Prayer	St John