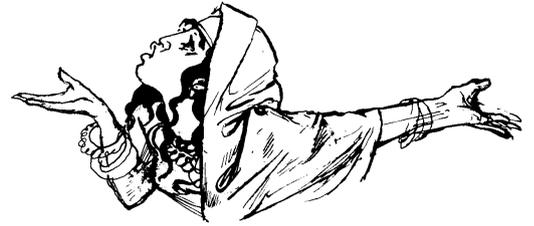


**SERVICE SHEET**  
**16th August - Trinity 10**



**Canticle - A Song of Mercy and Truth**

**O God, will you not give us life again,  
that your people may rejoice in you?**

**Show us your mercy, O Lord,  
and grant us your salvation.**

**Truly, his salvation is near to those who fear him,  
that his glory may dwell in our land.**

**Mercy and truth are met together,  
righteousness and peace have kissed each other;**

**Truth shall spring up from the earth  
and righteousness look down from heaven.**

**Righteousness shall go before him  
and direct his steps in the way.**

*Psalm 85.6,7,9-11,13*

**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**

Let your merciful ears, O Lord,  
be open to the prayers of your humble servants;  
and that they may obtain their petitions  
make them to ask such things as shall please you;  
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.

**Amen**

**New Testament**

**Romans 11.1-2a,29-32**

<sup>1</sup> I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin. <sup>2</sup> God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew. for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. <sup>30</sup> Just as you were once disobedient to God but have now received mercy because of their disobedience, <sup>31</sup> so they have now been disobedient in order that, by the mercy shown to you, they too may now receive mercy. <sup>32</sup> For God has imprisoned all in disobedience so that he may be merciful to all.

## **Psalm 133**

1 How very good and pleasant it is  
when kindred live together in unity!

**2 It is like the precious oil on the head,  
running down upon the beard,  
on the beard of Aaron,  
running down over the collar of his robes.**

3 It is like the dew of Hermon,  
which falls on the mountains of Zion.  
For there the LORD ordained his blessing,  
life for evermore.

**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 15.10-28**

<sup>10</sup> Then he called the crowd to him and said to them, 'Listen and understand: <sup>11</sup> it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but it is what comes out of the mouth that defiles.' <sup>12</sup> Then the disciples approached and said to him, 'Do you know that the Pharisees took offence when they heard what you said?' <sup>13</sup> He answered, 'Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. <sup>14</sup> Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if one blind person guides another, both will fall into a pit.' <sup>15</sup> But Peter said to him, 'Explain this parable to us.' <sup>16</sup> Then he said, 'Are you also still without understanding? <sup>17</sup> Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth enters the stomach, and goes out into the sewer? <sup>18</sup> But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this is what defiles. <sup>19</sup> For out of the heart come evil intentions, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, false witness, slander. <sup>20</sup> These are what defile a person, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile.'

<sup>21</sup> Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. <sup>22</sup> Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, 'Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon.' <sup>23</sup> But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, 'Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us.' <sup>24</sup> He answered, 'I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.' <sup>25</sup> But she came and knelt before him, saying, 'Lord, help me.' <sup>26</sup> He answered, 'It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs.' <sup>27</sup> She said, 'Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table.' <sup>28</sup> Then Jesus answered her, 'Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.' And her daughter was healed instantly

## Sermon

Matthew 15 (10-20) 21-28

May I speak in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Our Gospel passage this morning appears to be in two parts – one <sup>a conversation about</sup> ~~a parable about~~ tradition, purity and faithfulness to God, and the other an encounter between Jesus and a Canaanite woman. I would like to focus primarily on the second part in my sermon today, but as is so often the case in the Bible, the two seemingly separate incidents are related and should be also understood together.

So, the Canaanite woman who wouldn't give up.

Some roles trump all others. Yes, she is a Gentile. Yes, as a citizen of Tyre or Sidon she probably worships Herod. Yes, she is a Canaanite. **However, she is also a Mother with a child in trouble**, and in the desperate cry of a concerned parent, she asks for the help of the one who has a reputation for healing the sick. Her appeal is a compelling one. She calls him "Lord" and appeals respectfully and cross-culturally to the "Son of David" with her cry for help on behalf of her daughter who is tormented by a demon.

Jesus' attitude and language in this encounter are actually pretty shocking. She asks for deliverance for her demon-possessed daughter. Yet first he is silent in the face of her cries, refusing to even acknowledge her. Jesus is present but absent, distanced, unreachable, an invisible wall between them. Then he speaks to tell her that his mission is only to the people of Israel. He then underlines the statement by telling her that the 'food' for the children, the people of Israel, should not be discarded to dogs – Canaanite people like her.

Even without the dehumanizing use of the word ‘dog’, the word “Canaanite” is charged with theological significance. It stirs up memories of ancient foes – idol-worshipping enemies over against whom the people of Israel defined themselves.

Yet the key to this part of the passage is not Jesus’s words, but rather his silence, and the woman’s determined, unwavering persistence in the face of it. And it is that persistence that I would like to focus on today as an example of faith.

The high point of the passage is her cry for mercy ‘Have Mercy on me, Lord, Son of David’. **“Kyrie Eleison” – Lord have mercy.** The words of the prayer that ring down through the centuries, chanted in cloisters, screamed out on battlefields, muttered in refugee camps. And recently, in our current unprecedented time of turmoil, how many times must it have been said: **“Kyrie Eleison” – Lord have mercy** whispered by front line workers, by the isolated and afraid; spoken wordlessly from the hospital bed.

It is the cry of the soul in extremis, a raw witness to the depth and the misery of the human condition. And on this occasion, Jesus is silent in the face of it. And this reminds us of the harsh reality, that sometimes it can *feel* like our prayers are met with silence.

But, remarkably, the woman is undeterred by Jesus’ indifference. Still she keeps crying out for mercy.

Despite being seemingly ignored, **she has faith, she trusts God will have mercy on her.**

In a book I’ve been reading about the theology of trauma, Christopher Southgate writes about how when we are faced with a sense of being abandoned by God, it is

okay to acknowledged that sense of abandonment, of being met with silence, and even to feel angry about it, but ultimately ‘despite it all’, we can and should continue to trust in God, to have faith, to persist, just as the Canaanite woman did in her passionate plea for her daughter.

Crying out to God in this way has been highlighted by the theologian David Ford as being significant theme in scripture which, he suggests, has been overshadowed by a greater emphasis on other types of biblical statement – such as proclamation of good news, or the giving of instruction. But he suggests that cries in the Bible, such as this one from the Canaanite woman, are incredibly important to our understanding of how faith is lived out. Ford argues that our path to understanding in faith all begins with our cry, elicited by God. Just as everything changes with the cry from the Canaanite woman, ‘Kyrie Eleison’ to the son of David. It is her cry that is the turning point of the encounter, her persistent cry meant that Jesus eventually heard her and responded.

Her trust that God is a God of mercy is a model of faith. When Jesus firstly says his mission is to the people of Israel, she doesn’t object. Instead she is undeterred and seizes on it as the grounds of her own hope: “even the dogs”, she says, “eat the crumbs that fall from their masters’ table”. She grasps the fundamental truth of God as a merciful God: To quote Exodus, and Romans, **“I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion”**

The woman comes to Jesus with a crystal, unshakable conviction that God’s mercy is enough for her daughter and for herself.

With her persistence in faith the story moves away from silence to affirmation. None other than Jesus identifies her actions as being of great faith, and the healing of her daughter confirms God's mercy upon them.

But what about the earlier part of the passage?

Here Jesus is saying that religious faithfulness to God is not about worshipping tradition uncritically. In this incident, people who are socially accepted emphasize external differences and miss matters of the heart. Yet in the second incident, a woman who is socially marginalized, outside tradition, breaks through external differences to claim God's mercy.

The Gentile woman refuses to allow even Jesus to let "tradition" become an external barrier, blocking access to the grace of God. As Karoline Lewis observed, "The woman, aware of her location and the limitations placed on her, does not succumb to them but brings them into the light and calls them into question: "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table."

Then Jesus, responding to her persistent cry of faith, enacts the parable of what he has just argued. By granting the healing and mercy that the woman asks for, he travels into 'unwashed' territory, outside the bounds of culture and tradition. What would it mean for us as Christians, or even the church, to follow Jesus here and listen more to the cries of the marginalised, those that tradition and culture considers 'unclean' or 'unwanted'?

**Kyrie Eleison, Lord have Mercy.** The prayer that echoes down the centuries, to the world today, struggling to adapt to a global pandemic which has left many feeling abandoned and lost, even by God. Cries for mercy, seemingly met with silence. The reality is that Jesus does not always come through for us as we expect.

Inside this story and inside all our own stories, Jesus doesn't always conform to what we hope for. But, as in this story, and our own stories, Jesus does come through eventually. This is our Christian hope and a cornerstone of our faith – trust in God's grace and mercy, even in your darkest hour. Persist in faith.

The message from this passage is one of hope, about the power and strength and faith. When we are struggling, when bad things happen, when we feel abandoned by God and ask 'How could a loving God let this happen?' we should lament, question, even be angry, but always be undeterred in our cry of Kyrie Eleison – trusting that however abandoned we might feel, God is a God of mercy who will hear our prayers.

Amen

Revd Mel Clarke

**FOR YOUR PRAYERS**

**ST MICHAEL**

***Those newly in need of prayer***

Nick Rutter, John and Sonia Doidge, Jeyan Anketell, Richard Keay

***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***

**ST JOHN**

***Those who are ill and their carers:***

Pat Crowe, Jo Hearn, Ann Kinson, Allan Law

**Post Communion Prayer**

God of our pilgrimage,  
you have willed that the gate of mercy  
should stand open for those who trust in you:  
look upon us with your favour  
that we who follow the path of your will  
may never wander from the way of life;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen**

# CHURCH NOTICES

## WARNING

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

*Simon*

## WORSHIP NEWS

### SUNDAY WORSHIP IN CHURCH – 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

**CHURCHES OPEN FOR PRIVATE PRAYER** **St Michael's Lichfield** is open between 2.00pm and 4.00pm on Tuesday and Thursday afternoon's only.

**St John's at Wall** is open on Wednesdays and Sundays from 10.00am to 4.00pm. In both churches there is provision for hand sanitization, cleaning and social distancing.

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

**Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> August 6.00pm**

**Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:office@stmichaelmaryjohn.org.uk)

### CHURCH CHARITY DONATIONS

We have missed collecting for 3 of our charities, due to the church being closed for the last few months. The charities are Embrace the Middle East, Pathway and USPG. If you would like to donate to all or any of these charities, can I ask you to do so directly to them. You can find details of the charities online and their instructions regarding donations. If anyone has any problems with this please contact me on 01543 251863 or email me at [brendaliptrot@outlook.com](mailto:brendaliptrot@outlook.com) ( I will be away from 11<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> August) We are intending to collect for WaterAid as usual at the Harvest Festival Service, using the white envelopes. Many thanks, *Brenda Liptrot*

**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*

## **OTHER NOTICES**

**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 19<sup>th</sup> August 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.

**CONGRATULATIONS to Josh Sneddon** on being appointed as School Captain at King Edward's for the coming year. He follows Will Stevens and Charlotte Bull, who also held the post. The School Captain is assisted by two girls and two boys in the student leadership team and David Baker and Andrew Dyson have both filled those roles in recent years. David Baker has been awarded his PhD in the past year and Bethan John is close to completing hers. Bethan is also singing in the Chester Cathedral Nave Choir. There are many other success stories and they demonstrate the very high calibre of young people that we have at St Michael's, all helped by our very supportive congregation. *Ted Green*

**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*

### **ENGLAND'S SAINTLY LANDSCAPE**

Trevor James has recently published his book "England's Saintly Landscape" and has made 20 copies available to St Michael's for sale, at £10, proceeds go into Church funds. To buy a copy of Trevor's excellent book please 'phone Lyn Shiel (01543/320437) for details.

**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*

# **PARISH DIARY**

## **Sunday 16th August**

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 Worship	Zoom

## **Monday 17th August**

### **OFFICE CLOSED**

8:15am	Morning Prayer	Zoom
2:30pm	Study Week: Biblical Interpretation Revd Dr Stephen Barton	Zoom

## **Tuesday 18th August**

8:15am	Morning Prayer	Zoom
2:00pm	Private Prayer	St Michael's
2:30pm	Study Week: Education, Mary Hawes & Murray Wilkinson	Zoom

## **Wednesday 19th August**

All day	Private Prayer	St John
8:15am	Morning Prayer	Zoom
10.30am	Bible Study	Zoom
2:30pm	Study Week: Inter Faith Relations Bishop Michael	Zoom

## **Thursday 20th August**

### **OFFICE CLOSED**

8:15am	Morning Prayer	Zoom
2:00pm	Private Prayer	St Michael's
2:30pm	Study Week: Social Justice, Rev Canon Dr Ellen Loudon	Zoom

## **Friday 21st August**

8:15am	Morning Prayer	Zoom
2:30pm	Study Week: Liturgy, Revd Dr Sarah Brush	Zoom

## **Saturday 22nd August**

## **Sunday 23rd August**

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