

**Sunday 1 August 2021**

**Trinity 9**

**Rev’d John Reeve Vicar**

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**Churchwardens :**

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[www.stmatthewsnetleymarsh.co.uk](http://www.stmatthewsnetleymarsh.co.uk)

**Sunday Worship**

**8.00am** Holy Communion **11.30am** Morning Worship

**COVID Step 4 Easing Restrictions**

For our Sunday worship at both 8.00am & 11.30am we will be maintaining social distancing in the seating arrangements and in movement within the church. Communion will still be distributed at the chancel step (consecrated bread/wafer only).

Congregational singing at 11.30am has been re-introduced and face coverings are discretionary at both 8.00am & 11.30am.

Please do continue to sign in manually or use the Track and Trace link as you enter the church building.

During the week the church will now be open, with sanitizer to be used on entering and leaving church.

For christenings, weddings and funerals face coverings will be required unless social distancing can be maintained (there would have to be less than 35 people present).

**Church Summer Sale** – **Saturday 4 September. Mark this in your diaries so we can support the church in its funding.**

The **‘Netley Marsh BIG Challenge’ –**

Take a look at the video clip telling the story of Sue Wheeler’s fantastic knitting challenge! We have an **Instagram portal – ‘Friends of Netley Marsh Church’** – so follow the Challenges there – and if you’ve got family who use Instagram let them know and ask if they can follow our page. This is a great way to communicate with our community.

**Rev’d John’s Marathon Challenge**  – 3 marathons have now been completed –John’s legs are really feeling it! – a further 5 to go! If you wish to contribute go to John’s just giving page : <https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/revdjohn>

**Meditation Spa is back** – John is leading Forest sessions on 5 & 19 August. Participants are from the wider community and the church community. Details are in the attachment.

**Middle East Matters Group :** the Group’s Statement of Purpose is attached – if you would like to participate or find out more about this church group then don’t hesitate to speak or contact Ros or Angela.

**Church Cleaning!** We need to begin regular Church Cleaning again.

Could anyone that used to be on the Rota List, and would be happy to continue, or anyone who might be prepared to join the list and is interested in finding out more about it please contact: Angela Bonning 023 80 870648.

The more volunteers we have the fewer times you would need to do a duty, (we usually work in pairs).

**From John – our Vicar**

When ordering our lives, setting the priorities by which we are going to live, we must always consider how we can be of service to others. Living in service to others is such a pivotal basis for what we do each day, but the idea of ‘service’ can be somewhat off-putting! In these 21st century days we shy away from being a ‘servant’ – it’s not in our self esteem handbooks, and we recoil from being ‘at the service of others’. Our society is very comfortable in telling others what they should do or think, but less comfortable being at the mercy of others.

The gospel of Jesus places service at the heart of our discipleship. Jesus teaches his disciples he came to serve, not to be served. And we are invited to walk in his steps.

Perhaps this is why St.Paul’s teaching in the fourth chapter of Ephesians underlines the importance of living with complete humility – ‘be completely humble...’ Again humility is not the ‘go to’ quality we look for in somebody who is going to make their mark on life! Too often humility is linked with a passivity rather than a positive quality of rejoicing in our limitations and dependence on a higher power. Yet, as humility gets worked into the way we see the world and see each other, we are liberated into a service which can only bring blessing.

Humility is a choice. When we choose it, we pray with a wonderful openness to what is around us, we look for answers to emerge from the events as they unfold, and we listen to the mood and feeling of each encounter. A genuine humility very naturally allows for the ‘don’t know’ moments to be owned and embraced. Perhaps it is this ease with ‘not knowing the answers’ that truly uncovers the quality of humility.

The scientific journey has made this quality an essential pre-requisite for any discovery of new knowledge. If we set out on any journey knowing the answers, then the journey is destined to be tedious and uninspiring, but if we set out already articulating ‘I don’t know’ we have immediately grasped hold of something which will inevitably shape our engagement. The great American writer of the 20th century, James Baldwin, wrote that the ‘world is so lost because so many people know everything’.

Humility naturally carries with it a gentleness and patience which book-end the quality. It is not passive, very much on the front foot, but there’s no hint of ‘my way or no way’ – it’s a quality which holds people together, honouring with gentleness and patience the unity, ‘joining and holding together every ligament’ so the body can move and have its function.

When humility is absent, there may be a lot of noise and fanfares about how worthy any action may be, but there will be lacking a desire to hold people together, and there will always be a certainty that ‘my ideas are better than yours’. Sometimes even acts of service get tainted by this background noise. And when it does, the impact of the service is always diminished.

It is a regular teaching in our benefice churches to look to God for ‘the power’ for any action we endeavour in. It’s why the Lord’s Prayer is such a central prayer as it describes a relationship between us and our Father in heaven, ‘from whom every family in heaven and earth takes it’s name’. We pray and yearn for God’s kingdom, not ours. We pray for forgiveness because we know we’ve missed the target, and a forgiveness which we pass on concurrently to those who let us down. Humility is woven into every line of the prayer, and we gladly assent and say ‘Amen : It is so’.

**Sunday 1 August Trinity 9**

**Collect for Trinity 9**

Almighty God, who sent your Holy Spirit to be the life and light of your Church; open our hearts to the riches of your grace, that we may bring forth the fruit of the Spirit in love and joy and peace; 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 forever. Amen.

**Ephesians 4: 1-16**

As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. **2**Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. **3**Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. **4**There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; **5**one Lord, one faith, one baptism; **6**one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

**7**But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. **8**This is why it[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians%204%3A1-16&version=NIV#fen-NIV-29281a)] says:

“When he ascended on high,  
    he took many captives  
    and gave gifts to his people.”[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians%204%3A1-16&version=NIV#fen-NIV-29281b)]

**9**(What does “he ascended” mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians%204%3A1-16&version=NIV#fen-NIV-29282c)]? **10**He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.) **11**So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, **12**to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up **13**until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

**14**Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. **15**Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. **16**From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

**John 6: 24-35**

Once the crowd realized that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they got into the boats and went to Capernaum in search of Jesus.

### Jesus the Bread of Life

**25**When they found him on the other side of the lake, they asked him, “Rabbi, when did you get here?”

**26**Jesus answered, “Very truly I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw the signs I performed but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. **27**Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For on him God the Father has placed his seal of approval.”

**28**Then they asked him, “What must we do to do the works God requires?”

**29**Jesus answered, “The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.”

**30**So they asked him, “What sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do? **31**Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written: ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John%206%3A24-35&version=NIV#fen-NIV-26289a)]”

**32**Jesus said to them, “Very truly I tell you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. **33**For the bread of God is the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”

**34**“Sir,” they said, “always give us this bread.”

**35**Then Jesus declared, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

**Prayers for Trinity 9**

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, one God, who was, and who is, and who is to come, the Almighty.

**Confession**

Let us make an act of confession.

**Almighty God, our heavenly Father, we have sinned against you, through our own fault, in thought and word and deed, and in what we have left undone. We are heartily sorry, and repent of all our sins. For your Son our Lord Jesus Christ’s sake, forgive us all that is past; and grant that we may serve you in newsness of life, to the glory of your name. Amen.**

The almighty and merciful Lord grant us pardon for all our sins, time for amendment of life, and the grace and comfort of the Holy Spirit. **Amen**

**We sing!**

1 My life flows on in endless song,  
above earth’s lamentation.  
I catch the sweet, though far-off hymn  
that hails a new creation.

Refrain:  
No storm can shake my inmost calm  
while to that Rock I’m clinging.  
Since Love is lord of heav’n and earth,  
how can I keep from singing?

2 Through all the tumult and the strife,  
I hear that music ringing.  
It finds an echo in my soul.  
How can I keep from singing? [Refrain]

3 What though my joys and comforts die,  
I know my Savior liveth.  
What though the darkness gather round?  
Songs in the night he giveth. [Refrain]

4 The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart,  
a fountain ever springing!  
All things are mine since I am his!  
How can I keep from singing? [Refrain]

**Prayers of intercession**

***We pray for the Church : for discernment and patience... for unity and coming together as family, as one;***

***We pray for our community : for neighbours and shared life together;***

***We pray for our families and all who support and befriend us;***

***We pray for the recently departed and those whose anniversary of death occurs at this time;***

***We pray for ourselves : that we may know assurance and grace in all things;***

*Let us draw all these prayers together as we say together*

**: Merciful Father accept these prayers for the sake of your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**We sing!**

1 God is Love: let heav'n adore him;  
God is Love: let earth rejoice;  
let creation sing before him,  
and exalt him with one voice.  
He who laid the earth's foundation,  
he who spread the heav'ns above,  
he who breathes through all creation,  
he is Love, eternal Love.

2 God is Love: and he enfoldeth  
all the world in one embrace;  
with unfailing grasp he holdeth  
every child of every race.  
And when human hearts are breaking  
under sorrow's iron rod,  
then they find that selfsame aching  
deep within the heart of God.

3 God is Love: and though with blindness  
sin afflicts the souls of all,  
God's eternal loving-kindness  
holds and guides us when we fall.  
Sin and death and hell shall never  
o'er us final triumph gain;  
God is Love, so Love for ever  
o'er the universe must reign.

**The Blessing**

**The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be with you, and remain with you always. Amen.**