

In our cycle of prayer with the Lagunda Parish in Sweden, we pray for Carin and her team and we pray for equality in families and society. We remember all students who have been on placement with us over the years.

Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father open all hearts to your words of healing and peace. We pray for all who lead internationally, for national leaders and local council leaders; that they may lead with honesty and integrity making the way for justice and equality for all people.

Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

God of love give strength to all in any need this day. We remember those who are sick in mind, body or spirit. In a moment of silence we name the people known to us who need our prayers this day..... help us recognise your love in our frailty and send on all for whom we pray your healing touch.

Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

God our protector in the hour of death, we pray for those whose lives are drawing to a close and for those who have died this week, our loved ones departed and all whose anniversary occurs at this time..... May they rest in your peace and rise in glory. Open to all the gate of heaven, that we may truly be inheritors of your salvation.

Lord in your mercy **Hear our prayer**

In a moment of silence, we offer our own personal prayers this day.

Lord in your mercy **Hear our prayer**

Rejoicing in the fellowship of all your saints, we commend ourselves and the whole creation to your unfailing love.

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

Hymn

**The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want;
He makes me lie in pastures green.
He leads me by the still, still waters,
His goodness restores my soul.**

*And I will trust in You alone,
And I will trust in You alone,
For Your endless mercy follows me,
Your goodness will lead me home.*

**He guides my ways in righteousness,
And He anoints my head with oil,
And my cup, it overflows with joy,
I feast on His pure delights.**

And I will trust in You alone,....

**And though I walk the darkest path,
I will not fear the evil one,
For You are with me, and Your rod and staff
Are the comfort I need to know.**

And I will trust in You alone,....

**The Rectorial Benefice of the East Vale
Morning Prayer
Sunday 11th October, 2020 | Trinity 18**

Hymn

**Rejoice, the Lord is King:
Your Lord and King adore!
mortals, give thanks and sing,
and triumph evermore.**

*Lift up your heart,
Lift up your voice!
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!*

**Jesus, the Saviour, reigns,
the God of truth and love;
when he has purged our stains,
he took his seat above;**

Lift up your heart,....

**His kingdom cannot fail,
he rules o'er earth and heav'n;
the keys of death and hell
are to our Jesus giv'n:**

Lift up your heart,....

**He sits a God's right hand
till all his foes submit,
and bow to his command,
and fall beneath his feet**

Lift up your heart,....

The Gloria

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

Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father.
**Glory to God, glory in the highest,
peace to his people, peace on earth.**

We worship you,
glory in the highest,
give you thanks,
glory in the highest,
praise you for your glory.
**Glory to God, glory in the highest,
peace to his people, peace on earth.**

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,
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer,
receive our prayer.

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

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 glory of God the Father.

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

Amen. **Amen.**

The Collect

Almighty and everlasting God, increase in us your gift of faith that, forsaking what lies behind and reaching out to that which is before, we may run the way of your commandments and win the crown of everlasting joy; 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.

First Reading

(Isaiah 25:1-9)

A reading from the prophecy of Isaiah.

O Lord, you are my God; I will exalt you, I will praise your name; for you have done wonderful things, plans formed of old, faithful and sure. For you have made the city a heap, the fortified city a ruin; the palace of aliens is a city no more, it will never be rebuilt. Therefore strong peoples will glorify you; cities of ruthless nations will fear you. For you have been a refuge to the poor, a refuge to the needy in their distress, a shelter from the rainstorm and a shade from the heat. When the blast of the ruthless was like a winter rainstorm, the noise of aliens like heat in a dry place, you subdued the heat with the shade of clouds; the song of the ruthless was stilled. On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-matured wines, of rich food filled with marrow, of well-matured wines strained clear. And he will destroy on this mountain the shroud that is cast over all peoples, the sheet that is spread over all nations; he will swallow up death for ever. Then the Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces, and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the Lord has spoken. It will be said on that day, Lo,

this is our God; we have waited for him, so that he might save us. This is the Lord for whom we have waited; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Responsorial Psalm (Psalm 23)

R/ I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever

The Lord is my shepherd; therefore, can I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures and leads me beside still waters. **R:/**

He shall refresh my soul and guide me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. **R:/**

You spread a table before me in the presence of those who trouble me, you have anointed my head with oil and my cup shall be full. Surely goodness and loving mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever. **R:/**

Second Reading (Philippians 4:1-9)

A reading from Paul's letter to the Philippians

My brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved. I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. Yes, and I ask you also, my loyal companion, help these women, for they have struggled beside me in the work of the gospel, together with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life. Rejoice in the Lord always; again, I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

This is the word of the Lord **Thanks be to God**

The Gospel (Matthew 22:1-14)

Alleluia! Alleluia!
Give thanks to the risen Lord.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Give praise to his name.

**Jesus is Lord of all the earth,
he is the king of creation.**
Alleluia! Alleluia!...

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Listen to the gospel of Christ according to Saint Matthew. **Glorify to you, O Lord.**

Once more Jesus spoke to the chief priests and the elders of the people in parables, saying: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come. Again, he sent other slaves, saying, "Tell those who have been invited: Look, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding banquet." But they made light of it and went away, one to his farm, another to his business, while the rest seized his slaves, maltreated them, and killed them. The king was enraged. He sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. Then he said to his slaves, "The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. Go therefore into the main streets and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet." Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both good and bad; so the wedding hall was filled with guests. "But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding robe, and he said to him, "Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding robe?" And he was speechless. Then the king said to the attendants, "Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." For many are called, but few are chosen.'

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

**Spread the good news o'er all the earth,
Jesus has died and risen.**
Alleluia! Alleluia!...

The Homily **Rev Angela**

In our gospel reading this week Matthew moves from parables about vineyards to a parable about a wedding banquet, all of which seem to be berating the behaviour of religious leaders in Jesus' time. Jesus frequently offers to us an image of the Kingdom of God as a wedding banquet, full of good things to eat and drink with a generosity beyond compare. The listeners of this parable would have considered themselves to be the invited guests at this banquet and would therefore have been shocked that the invited guests did not turn up to the banquet after the invitation. Who would have refused such an invitation from the King?

Hosting a large party can be quite a difficult task, with venue, food and entertainment to organise but sometimes the biggest problem comes when you get to the guest list. Weddings seem particularly tricky, at what point do you stop, especially with the extended family, do you stop at cousins or 2nd cousins, do you invite people's children and then you get to friends and work colleagues. You become afraid that you might offend somebody that's not on the list. Getting the guest list right can be a daunting process, when the list gets so large you end up losing track of the reason you invited people in the first place.

In this parable, after the King had been rejected by his first guests, the King decides to invite whoever the servants could find in the town. However, when the new guests arrived, they didn't realise that in accepting the invitation they also had certain obligations. It seemed that if you're not in the correct dress for the banquet, the King would remove you from the banquet. This sounds like those times when you receive an invite that says the dress code is 'smart casual' and you agonise about what the host expects that to be. It also reminds us that although many are invited to the Kingdom of heaven not all are accepted. God invites us all to the feast giving us salvation, yet he also asks us to repent of our sins. This parable cautions us against the exclusive belief about the Kingdom of heaven. The parable teaches humility, those who assumed they were invited but did not turn up were quickly replaced by others. To accept the invitation is also to accept the obligation and full commitment to God. That was the same for the early church as it is for us today.

This brings us nicely to Paul's letter to the Philippians, where Paul is leaving the church in Philippia to fend for itself. Paul is full of encouragement as the church steps out on its own. Like guests at the banquet they need to fully commit to what it is to be a Christian in the church. Paul knows they will cope without him, but he makes a conscious decision to tell them not to worry too much.

How many of you are worriers? Some are worse than others and for some it affects what they do or what they say. Worry can turn into anxiety. There seems always to be something to worry about especially in these uncertain times.

Paul says to the church instead of worrying, rejoice in all that God gives you and rejoice in the knowledge that God is with you always. That is a good mantra for us to take on, rejoice in all things. Paul then goes on to say do not worry but bring everything before God in prayer and supplication. I must admit that our daily zoom morning prayer has been a lifeline in lockdown and has allowed us to bring those worries to God every day since the 23rd of March; it has been a blessing that we will continue and allows us to find something to rejoice in each day. Paul

goes on in this wonderful passage, to tell the Philippians to look for the good in everyone and everything - to try and find something good in every person and situation. He explains that they should be looking for what is honourable, pleasing and excellent. We are asked to look for the good and rejoice in all that we see. Whether it's a small act of kindness or something more significant we should rejoice.

We are told that we should tell a joyful story and that will allow us to build and be part of God's Kingdom in our communities. It allows us to be invited and invite others to the wedding banquet with the full knowledge of our commitment to God and as Paul tells us in this wonderful piece of teaching for the early church we should encourage one another in faith, rejoice in the Lord, be gentle, do not worry and bring everything to God in prayer. Do these things and the peace of God will guard your hearts and minds. Paul's message ends with these words - keep doing the things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me and the God of peace will be with you. That message is not just for that early church, it's a message for us today in whatever difficult times we find ourselves and in doing those things we will be worthy guests invited to the banquet in God's Kingdom.

Hymn

**In the Lord I'll be ever thankful,
in the Lord, I will rejoice!
Look to God, do not be afraid;
lift up your voices: the Lord is near,
lift up your voices: the Lord is near**

Repeat until end

The Intercessions

Heavenly Father, sure in your promise to hear us when we pray, we offer our prayers for the church, the world and all in any kind of need this day.

Heavenly Father bless your church that it may reveal your love in the world. We pray for June our Bishop, our clergy team in the Benefice all lay leaders that minister amongst us this day, renew our confidence that we may rejoice in the Lord. We pray that our outreach and mission be rooted in your purposes on earth, that your Kingdom may come in our communities.

Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**