



Heacham Parish Church



**Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> July 2021 – Trinity 8**

*Opening music - Alison plays "Primeiro kyrio do sexto tom" (First melody on the 6th tone) by Manual Rodrigues Coelho. A Portuguese Renaissance organist who wrote many liturgical organ and choral pieces during his long tenure at the court of Philip II in Lisbon.*

This is our Service of Worship for 8<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Trinity. Although we join this at various times, from various places and in various ways we come together as one body, the Church of Jesus Christ.

Welcome in the name of Christ.  
God's grace, mercy and peace be with you  
**and also with you.**

We come from scattered lives to meet with God.  
Let us recognize his presence with us.  
*Silence is kept.*  
As God's people we have gathered:  
let us worship him together.  
Lord, direct our thoughts, and teach us to pray.  
Lift up our hearts to worship you in spirit and in truth,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

Loving God, we have come to worship you.  
**Help us to pray to you in faith,  
to sing your praise with gratitude,  
and to listen to your word with eagerness;  
through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.**

Song: **My hope is built on nothing less**

My hope is built on nothing less  
than Jesus' blood and righteousness;  
no merit of my own I claim,  
but wholly trust in Jesus' name.

*On Christ, the solid rock, I stand –  
all other ground is sinking sand,  
all other ground is sinking sand.*

When weary in this earthly race,  
I rest on His unchanging grace;  
in every wild and stormy gale  
my anchor holds and will not fail.

*On Christ, the solid rock...*

His vow, His covenant and blood  
are my defence against the flood;  
when earthly hopes are swept away  
He will uphold me on that day.

*On Christ, the solid rock...*

When the last trumpet's shall sound,  
O may I then in Him be found!  
clothed in His righteousness alone,  
faultless to stand before His throne.

*On Christ, the solid rock...*

Prayers of penitence

The grace of God has dawned upon the world with healing for all.

Let us come to him, in sorrow for our sins, seeking healing and salvation.

**God our Father,  
long-suffering, full of grace and truth,  
you create us from nothing and give us life.  
You give your faithful people new life in the water  
of baptism.  
You do not turn your face from us,  
nor cast us aside.  
We confess that we have sinned  
against you and our neighbour.  
We have wounded your love and marred your image in  
us.  
Restore us for the sake of your Son,  
and bring us to heavenly joy,  
in Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.**

Almighty God,  
who in Jesus Christ has given us  
a kingdom that cannot be destroyed,  
forgive us our sins,  
open our eyes to God's truth,  
strengthen us to do God's will  
and give us the joy of his kingdom,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

Bible reading – Ephesians Ch 2 v 1–10 Read by Pam

## A reflection - on these verses by Penny

Many thoughtful people are more depressed about the state of humanity today than ever before. Yes, every generation has had its 'doom mongers' who major on a particular theme but today we are better informed by the world-wide media than any previous generation has been, and this makes us aware of the extent of evil present in our world today. We see economic problems, social conflict, the effects of global warming, the absence of accepted moral guidelines, and over all these a pandemic. Across the world, humanity is incapable of creating a just, free, humane, and peaceful society. It is with this background that these verses from Ephesians become ever more relevant.

Here Paul contrasts **what man is by nature**, the human condition, with what he can become by faith. He's writing to the Church in Ephesus whom he addresses in the first two verses. In verse 3 he broadens this out to all humanity. This is the state of humanity in general, including Paul and his fellow evangelists, before they heard and responded to the gospel. He is devastatingly blunt in three ways:

1. You were "dead in your transgressions". This is spiritual death, the separation from God which is the inevitable result of sin. Unable to understand and appreciate spiritual things, he possesses no spiritual life. Thus, the unbeliever is not sick, he is dead. He does not need resuscitation he needs resurrection. Our world is one vast graveyard filled with people who are the walking dead.

2. You were "enslaved". Firstly, to the 'ways of the world'. We all experience peer pressure "everybody does it" to behave to the social norm. Secondly, "to the ruler of the kingdom of the air" i.e., the devil. We are tempted to disobedience. The beginning of man's spiritual death came when God told Adam

that if he ate the forbidden fruit, he would surely die. The serpent tempted him with "you will not surely die". Thirdly, "to the cravings of our sinful nature" Our self-centred human nature. This includes wrong desires of the mind as well as the body.

3. You were "condemned". We are "by nature objects of wrath". Wrath is God's response to sin. He hates the sin but loves the sinner and "the wages of sin is death". Paul portrays our lost human condition in terms of death, slavery, and condemnation.

Turning to **what man can become by faith** Paul starts "BUT God....." has taken action to reverse our condition of sin. Paul spells it out twice.

"By grace you have been saved, through faith."

That means he has

'made us alive' with Christ.

'raised us up' with Christ

'seated us with him in the heavenly realms'

Thus, mirroring three events of Christ's saving career.

Resurrection, ascension, and session.

Why did God do this? To restore the human race which he had created. He applied His mercy, His love, and His grace to rescue us from our just deserts. Salvation is more than forgiveness. It is delivery from death, slavery, and sin those three conditions of man which Paul described earlier. Grace is God's free undeserved mercy towards us, and faith is the humble trust in which we receive our salvation. Jesus likened that to the attitude of an innocent child.

What are we now? We are 'God's workmanship' (the literal meaning of the word is work of art or masterpiece) that he has created in Christ. Salvation has made each one of us a new

creation. We are created in Christ to fulfil good works designed by God. This is the purpose for which we have been 'tailor made'. Therefore, we have come from being spiritually dead, enslaved and condemned to a new creation in the image of God to do his good works because **"it is by grace you have been saved through faith"**

*Affirmation of faith*

Do you believe and trust in God the Father,  
source of all being and life,  
the one for whom we exist?

**We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Son,  
who took our human nature,  
died for us and rose again?

**We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,  
who gives life to the people of God  
and makes Christ known in the world?

**We believe and trust in him.**

This is the faith of the Church.

**This is our faith.**

**We believe and trust in one God,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**

**Amen.**

Song: **Who is there like You**

Who is there like You,  
and who else would give their life for me,  
even suffering in my place?  
And who could repay You?  
All of creation looks to You,  
and You provide for all You have made.

So I'm lifting up my hands,  
lifting up my voice,  
lifting up Your name,  
and in Your grace I rest,  
for Your love has come to me  
and set me free.  
And I'm trusting in Your word,  
trusting in Your cross,  
trusting in Your blood  
and all Your faithfulness,  
for Your power at work in me  
is changing me.

Prayers of Intercession led by Gordon

Heavenly Father, we look outward to your world, to those countries we will never go to but which we do hear about in our newsfeeds. We continue to pray for the peace of Jerusalem and for a sustainable peace in Israel and Palestine. We pray for the Yemen, Ethiopia and Sudan, and other countries that are still suffering wars. We pray especially for non-governmental organisations as they struggle to work in difficult circumstances and help us to support those charities who work in your Name to support the most vulnerable. We pray for the innocent men, women, and children who are caught up in recent conflicts, and those who are suffering after years of warfare. We pray for the UK and other rich nations, that they will not only provide

vaccines to make us in the West safe but for the aid which is needed to keep people alive across the world. Remind us Lord and disturb us in our comfortableness.

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

Creator God, we pray for the Climate Crisis which is only now being recognised throughout the world. In the last week we have seen devastating floods in Europe, as well as in China. We pray for Scientists, governments, and ourselves, the general public, that we will acknowledge the harm we have caused to our world and work towards solutions. We pray particularly for the COP 26 Climate Change Conference in November. Also, for John Kerry, the US Climate Envoy, as he travels the world seeking concrete commitments from developed countries to do all they can to reduce greenhouse gases. We ask for your intervention in your world and for wisdom and understanding for those who are in positions to change policies worldwide. We Thank you Father that you are raising up projects which can save our beautiful World.

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

Loving God, we continue to pray for the ongoing Covid pandemic, having now entered a period where restrictions have all but been removed. We pray for people to have common sense when it comes to socialising, and when going to areas where lots of other people are gathered. Help us Lord, as we embrace this newfound freedom, to be aware of the concerns and needs of others.

We continue to pray for those working in the care sector, as well as within our National Health Service. In particular, we pray for all the staff and volunteers at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Kings Lynn. Give them all that they need to continue to do their jobs to the best of their ability, nearly eighteen months into the pandemic. In addition, we pray for success for the bid that has been submitted in order for a new hospital to

be built, to replace the current one which is in such a poor state of repair.

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

Heavenly Father we turn to pray for your Church - your people here on earth. Guide all our church leaders worldwide. We pray for all who lead churches that they will take time to listen to your promptings and that we will become a different church as we reopen more and more.

We pray particularly for our own Veronica at this time, and for her family.

Renew us all again with your life-giving Holy Spirit

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

Healing God we pray for those many people we know who are ill in mind, body, or spirit. Those who have long term health conditions, those who are coming to the end of their lives and those who are suffering any kind of illness. Lord we pray for your healing peace to spirits who are weary, fresh hope for those who are losing hope and courage to withstand their pain where it is most severe. Remembering too our hardworking doctors, nurses, and health professionals, give them strength and resilience at this time. We pray too for your peace for those who need it most at this time.

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

Finally, we take time to bring our own lives before you.... In a time of silence let us still ourselves and listen to our Father who we may only hear in the quietest of whispers...

(take time to be still and quiet)

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

The Lord's prayer

Collect for today

Lord God,  
your Son left the riches of heaven  
and became poor for our sake:  
when we prosper save us from pride,  
when we are needy save us from despair,  
that we may trust in you alone;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

Closing prayers

Let us give thanks to the God of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
**who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing.**  
Before the world was made, God chose us in Christ,  
**that we might be holy and blameless before him.**  
Let us praise God for the glory of his grace,  
**for the free gift he gave us in his dear Son.**  
To Father, Son and Holy Spirit  
**give praise and dominion, honour and might,  
for ever and ever.**  
**Amen.**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
you humbled yourself in taking the form of a servant,  
and in obedience died on the cross for our salvation:  
give us the courage to follow you  
and to proclaim you as Lord and King,  
to the glory of God the Father.

**God of power,  
may the boldness of your Spirit transform us,**

**may the gentleness of your Spirit lead us,  
may the gifts of your Spirit equip us to serve and  
worship you  
now and always.**

To God the Father, who loved us,  
and made us accepted in the Beloved:  
to God the Son, who loved us,  
and loosed us from our sins by his own blood:  
to God the Holy Spirit,  
who spreads the love of God abroad in our hearts:  
to the one true God be all love and all glory  
for time and for eternity.

**Amen.**

Glory to God,  
**whose power, at work among us,  
can do infinitely more  
than all we can ask or conceive;  
to him be glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus,  
for ever and ever.**

**Amen.**

*Closing music – Alison plays 'Batalha do sexto tom' (Battles on the 6th tone) by Pedro de Araujo. Another Portuguese Renaissance organist; but he remained in his home town of Braga, where he was the cathedral organist all his adult life.*

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