



Church Alive Worship for Sunday 12th July



Welcome to our Church Alive service. Whilst we are not all together in church, we are together in spirit. We have tried to adapt our normal service from screen to paper and have provided links to music where possible if you would like to sing. *A big thank you to Debbie Thomson for recording the songs for us. These can be found on our YouTube channel with the links under the title – just hover and click on it*

Jesus tells the crowds a parable of seed being sown onto different sorts of ground. Later, he explains it to the disciples as an illustration of how different people respond to hearing the word of the kingdom.

Opening Song: Seek Ye First The Kingdom Of God

<https://youtu.be/uNwjCHUJ9qI>

1. Seek ye first the kingdom of God
And His righteousness;
And all these things shall be added unto you.
Allelu, alleluia!

*Alleluia, Alleluia
Alleluia, Allelu Alleluia*

2. Ask, and it shall be given unto you;
Seek, and you shall find.
Knock, and it shall be opened unto you
Allelu, alleluia!

Refrain

3. We shall not live by bread alone,
But by every word
That proceeds from the mouth of God.
Allelu, alleluia!

Refrain



Thanksgiving

What would you like to say thank you to God for today and this week?
Take a moment to say thank you now.

Opening Prayer: *If you are able, and it is safe to do so, light a candle at this point*

Lord, we light this candle, to remind
us that you are the light of the world.
As we gather together in spirit,
make our voices ready to sing your praise;
our hearts open to receive your love
and our minds alive to your Spirit.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



We seek God's healing and forgiveness

We come to God as one from whom no secrets are hidden, to ask for his forgiveness and peace.

For the times when we want our seed planted in neat rows,
when our own plans become more important than yours,

Father forgive us.

For the times we don't see what you want us to see
and just take things at face value:

Father forgive us.

For the times when we want to write our own story;
and are not interested in other people's stories:

Father forgive us.

We hear words assuring us of God's forgiveness

May almighty God have mercy on us,
forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Bible Reading – Matthew 13: 1-9, 18-23, **The Parable of the Sower**, Good News Translation (GNT).

¹ That same day Jesus left the house and went to the lakeside, where he sat down to teach. ² The crowd that gathered around him was so large that he got into a boat and sat in it, while the crowd stood on the shore. ³ He used parables to tell them many things. "Once there was a man who went out to sow grain. ⁴ As he scattered the seed in the field, some of it fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. ⁵ Some of it fell on rocky ground, where there was little soil. The seeds soon sprouted, because the soil wasn't deep. ⁶ But when the sun came up, it burned the young plants; and because the roots had not grown deep enough, the plants soon dried up. ⁷ Some of the seed fell among thorn bushes, which grew up and choked the plants. ⁸ But some seeds fell in good soil, and the plants bore grain: some had one hundred grains, others sixty, and others thirty." ⁹ And Jesus concluded, "Listen, then, if you have ears!"

¹⁸ "Listen, then, and learn what the parable of the sower means. ¹⁹ Those who hear the message about the Kingdom but do not understand it are like the seeds that fell along the path. The Evil One comes and snatches away what was sown in them. ²⁰ The seeds that fell on rocky ground stand for those who receive the message gladly as soon as they hear it. ²¹ But it does not sink deep into them, and they don't last long. So when trouble or persecution comes because of the message, they give up at once. ²² The seeds that fell among thorn bushes stand for those who hear the message; but the worries about this life and the love for riches choke the message, and they don't bear fruit. ²³ And the seeds sown in the good soil stand for those who hear the message and understand it: they bear fruit, some as much as one hundred, others sixty, and others thirty."

Introducing the Theme & Learning Spaces *Not being able to break out into our learning spaces, here are a few thoughts about the theme for today. For young people you can use the Children's and Youth sheets that are being sent out separately.*

The first half of this week's reading presents the picture, familiar to Jesus' audience, of someone sowing seed, probably throwing it across each side of the ground as they walked along a path of beaten earth through a field. Jesus notes reasons, within the story, why the seed falling in each of four different places might be more or less productive. He then calls on the crowd to listen.

The second half of the reading jumps a few verses to where, having answered the disciples' question about why he uses parables, Jesus calls them to 'hear' the parable and he proceeds to explain it. The different growing situations are metaphors for different responses to the word of the kingdom. Various factors affected how the same 'seed' of God's word fared in different circumstances in Jesus' time: distraction by forces against God, by hostility from others, by worries of life and concern for wealth. Beyond that, we may find that the parable helps us understand why people outside the Church today respond in varying ways to the gospel, and it may also reflect how Christians feel that they respond to the ongoing call of God on their lives.

Why might people not understand the word of God or want to listen to those who share it? What do you think of parables as a way of teaching others? Can you relate to any of what happens to the seeds? Can you use your story to help others come to know about Jesus?

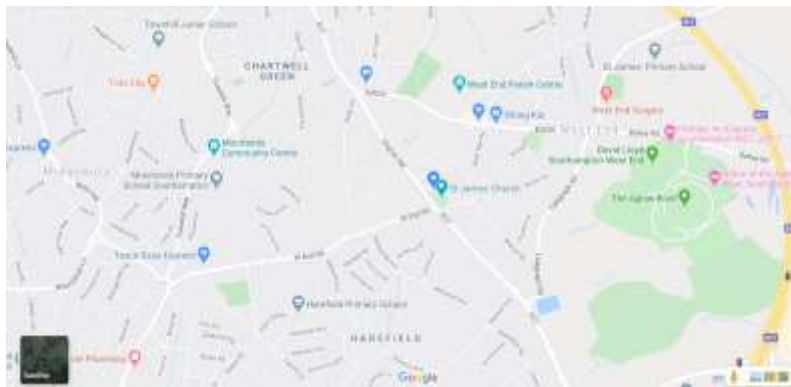
All Age Creative – Seeds



Go out into your garden and try and find as many different seeds as you can that have fallen from the plants and flowers (be careful not to pick any flowers that are still working hard to produce some seeds!) When you have gathered them hold them in your hand and look to see how different they each are and think about what they may grow into. You might like to watch this video of the story:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V9IOhGPrvY> Pray that God will show you something of what he wants you to grow into.

Now think about how you might plant those seeds you gathered: at school, home, church, or local park. If possible, use a map of your local area and place a seed somewhere on it, to show where you will try to share something of God this week. Here is a map that covers some of our parish of West End, Harefield, and Chartwell Green



Picture Reflection – prepared by Brenda



Look carefully at this image.... What do we see in this picture?
When was the last time you read a story aloud? How did you feel?
Why do we find listening to stories so enjoyable and worthwhile?
What was your favourite story as a child? Which authors do you now enjoy reading?
Why did Jesus use story-telling through parables so often in his teaching?
Why are stories powerful?

Song: God Is Love His The Care
<https://youtu.be/1G5VtYOROcw>

1. God is love: his the care,
Tending each, ev'rywhere.
God is love, all is there!
Jesus came to show him,
That humankind might know him!

Sing aloud, loud, loud!
Sing aloud, loud, loud!
God is good! God is truth!
God is beauty! Praise him!

2. None can see God above;
We can share life and love;
Thus may we Godward move,
Seek him in creation,
Holding ev'ry nation.

Chorus

3. Jesus lived on the earth,
Life and hope brought to birth,
and affirmed human worth,
For he came to save us,
by the truth he gave us.

Chorus

4. To our Lord praise we sing,
Light and life, friend and King,
Coming down, love to bring,
Pattern for our duty,
Showing God in beauty.

Chorus

O Lord, Hear Our Prayers *Here are a few suggested topics for you to pray about. If you have specific prayers you would like included in future weeks then do send them to Linda and she will add them in*

We pray for...

Our world: Continuing to suffer through the effects of the Coronavirus; particularly those countries like India and Pakistan where the healthcare systems are under increasing strain...for leadership that expresses compassion and wisdom in their handling of the situation
For an end to systemic racial injustice, for peaceful, safe protests and a more just world to emerge where people have equal opportunities and treatment.

Our communities: For all those living in our parish. For our local businesses that are reopening, to be able to operate safely for both their staff and customers. For those who continue to be fearful of the effects of the relaxation of restrictions. For all who continue to support those who are isolated and alone in our community. For our local police and authorities who continue to operate on the frontline

Our church: For all involved in organising the reopening of our church for worship, for the shape that will take and how best they can use their resources so that God can be known in all that they offer. For all of the members of our church family who have supported their friends and neighbour. For generous giving to enable our work to continue and flourish.

For the sick and the dying: for all who are unwell at this time, for those suffering from long-term illness and worried about their treatments, for all who are caring for family at home. For all those for whom this time is affecting their mental health.

For those who have died; may they rest in peace and rise in glory;
for the sadness of those who mourn and for those who are unable to attend funerals to say their farewells because of the restrictions in place. For all whose world has changed immeasurably following the death of a loved one.

Thanksgiving: For the gift of faith. For our family and friends and those who will be able to come together for the first time in months. For the beauty of creation that gives us joy and hope that God cares for us all.

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

We say the Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.

Song: Sing Of The Lord's Goodness
<https://youtu.be/ezf5vJ0iDp8>

1. Sing of the Lord's goodness,
Father of all wisdom,
come to him and bless his name.
Mercy he has shown us,
his love is for ever,
faithful to the end of days.

*Come, then, all you nations,
sing of your Lord's goodness,
melodies of praise and thanks to God.
Ring out the Lord's glory,
praise him with your music,
worship him and bless his name.*

2. Power he has wielded,
honour is his garment,
risen from the snares of death.
His word he has spoken,
one bread he has broken,
new life he now gives to all.

3. Courage in our darkness,
comfort in our sorrow,
Spirit of our God most high;
solace for the weary,
pardon for the sinner,
splendour of the living God.

4. Praise him with your singing,
praise him with the trumpet,
praise God with the lute and harp;
praise him with the cymbals,
praise him with your dancing,
praise God till the end of days.

Sending Out Prayer

Lord God, the world outside awaits us
with all its troubles and uncertainties
– but also with its opportunities.
Send us out now, in your name,
to look consciously for ways
of seeing you in the world around,
and to act accordingly,
and may we go with your blessing
on our heads, on our hands
on our feet, on our tongues
and on our hearts.
Amen.

The Peace

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord
In the name of Christ. Amen

