

Morning everyone

Just a short email this morning with the link to the youtube worship and reflection today. With thanks to Carole, I'm attaching the digital version of the weekly newsletter which has all the information about what is coming up over the next couple of weeks. Today we will be having services at Merevale at 11am and at Baxterley at 4.30pm, and we are now into our new pattern of midweek worship every Wednesday at Wood End at 9.30am and every Thursday at 11am at Hurley.

Thank you everybody for complying with all the measures to ensure we can worship safely in church, including through the wearing of face masks. I am sure that very soon it will seem quite normal.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SP\\_I0ISAxg&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SP_I0ISAxg&feature=youtu.be)



### Worship and Reflection for the Tenth Sunday after Trinity

A short act of worship for the Tenth Sunday after Trinity from the Kingsbury and Baxterley group of Churches, with a reflection from Revd John White on the Go...

[www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)

With very best wishes

John

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# Worship

## for the Tenth Sunday after Trinity

Almighty God,  
to whom all hearts are open,  
all desires known  
and from whom no secrets are hidden;  
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts  
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,  
that we may perfectly love you,  
and worthily magnify your holy name;  
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Let us return to the Lord our God and say to him:

**Father,**  
**we have sinned against you.**  
**We have done evil in your sight.**  
**We are sorry and repent.**  
**Have mercy on us according to your love.**  
**Wash away our wrongdoing and cleanse us from our sin.**  
**Renew a right spirit within us**  
**and restore us to the joy of our salvation**  
**through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

May God our Father  
forgive you your sins,  
and bring you to the fellowship of his table  
with his saints for ever. **Amen.**

### ***Collect***

Lord of heaven and earth,  
as Jesus taught his disciples  
to be persistent in prayer,  
give us patience and courage  
never to lose hope,  
but always to bring our prayers before you;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

## ***Gospel Reading: Matthew 15.21-28***

### ***Reflection***

Just occasionally, there are incidents and events that signal great changes in the world. Some of those revolutionary moments in human history are obvious and dramatic. Witnesses to the events are left in no doubt that they are seeing history in the making. An example would be Paris, 1789, and the storming of the Bastille, which marked the beginning of the French Revolution. Or, two hundred years later, we could take the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. We know, at the time of its happening, that this is an event that will change forever the way world works.

But some revolutions are quieter and more small-scale. They centre not on massed crowds, but on one or two individuals. It would be easy, at the time, to miss the full significance of the action until later, when its implications and repercussions unfold. These quiet revolutions often start, not with the rich and the powerful, but with an apparently ordinary, hitherto unknown person.

Such as, for example, Rosa Parks. Now, her name is well known and synonymous with the American Civil Rights movement, but it was not always so. Working as a seamstress in a local department store in Montgomery, Alabama, the revolutionary moment came on 1<sup>st</sup> December 1955, when on principle she refused to give up her seat in the coloured section of the segregated bus for a white passenger. Later, she explained that she acted as she did, not because she was physically tired after a day's work, but, as she put it, she "was tired of giving in". And so, she refused to be pushed aside, refused to be treated as second class or worthless; and in so doing, spoke and acted for the countless others who had been similarly mistreated. The Montgomery bus boycotts that followed did not change America overnight; as we know, the struggle for equality and justice is ongoing; but that simple act of resistance on an Alabama bus in 1955, has come to be seen as a moment after which things would never be the same again.

We know the name of Rosa Parks. We do not know the name of the woman in today's Gospel reading, whom Jesus encounters as he travels through Tyre and Sidon. She is described by Matthew as a "Canaanite woman", in Mark's Gospel as "Syro-Phoenician"; either way she is a Gentile, an outsider as far as the Jewish people are concerned. But she shares with Rosa Parks the refusal to accept her status as excluded or worthless. It is not a seat on the bus that she demands, but healing for her daughter who is in desperate need. Jesus has been preaching the Kingdom of God, in word and deed. But who is this kingdom for? Is it just for the Jewish people, the children of Abraham? Or is the kingdom and its blessings a gift for all?

To begin with, Jesus seems to be following the standard, more narrow, line; "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel". When the woman persists in her pleas, his

rejection of her demands becomes even harsher, even offensive: “It is not fair to take the children’s food and throw it to the dogs”. We don’t know Jesus’ tone of voice when he speaks to her then, and whether his words were heard as being as insulting as on face value they appear to be; but it is the anonymous woman’s response that makes and marks this quiet revolution. With wit and courage, she responds to the brush-off with the riposte, “Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters’ table.”

It is, to the best of my knowledge, the only time that anybody ever gets the better of Jesus in an argument. He heals her daughter, he commends her faith, and in so doing affirms her right to be included within the people of God and the inheritors of the Kingdom. From this point on, faith not ancestry is established as the true measure and means of belonging. The rest of the history of the church, as a worldwide movement embracing Jew and Gentile as equals, flows from this moment.

We still don’t know her name: but this Canaanite woman, who refused to be ignored or dismissed or disparaged, led a quiet revolution that has changed everything. Perhaps if we knew her name, she would have been made the patron saint of all those who, in different ways, have become tired of giving in and being excluded. But we know that she, and the nameless, numberless others like her, will not have to settle for crumbs but have a full and honoured place at the table in the banquet of God’s kingdom.

### ***Affirmation of faith***

Let us declare our faith in God.

**We believe in God the Father,  
from whom every family  
in heaven and on earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son,  
who lives in our hearts through faith,  
and fills us with his love.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit,  
who strengthens us  
with power from on high.**

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

### ***Prayers of intercession***

*which may use the response:*

Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

***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.**

***Blessing and Dismissal***

Christ, who has nourished us  
with himself the living bread,  
make you one in praise and love,  
and raise you up at the last day;  
and the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son and the holy Spirit  
be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**