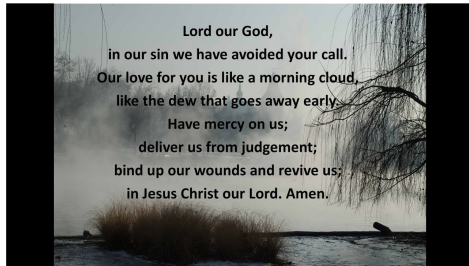


Dear friends

Once again, I'm sending out a weekly email with some worship and a reflection for this Sunday. As usual, the Youtube video will be posted on the parish facebook page, and the link is here.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NDjuHZydsRw&feature=youtu.be>



## Worship for the Third Sunday after Trinity

A Short Act of Worship for the Third Sunday after Trinity from the Kingsbury and Baxterley Group of Churches, with a reflection from Revd John White on the Bi...

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

And again, the text of the worship and reflection are attached to this email, and the reflection is also available on our Dial-a-Sermon phone line (01827 211 125). Also, with thank to Sarah, here are the links to hymns to accompany this act of worship:

625 - Take My Life and Let it Be - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GFs\\_C134zQM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GFs_C134zQM)

511 - O Lord, my God (How Great Thou

Art)- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nvpj7\\_CRGWQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nvpj7_CRGWQ) (Sing it loud - this is my favourite Hymn!!)

413 Lord of all Hopefulness - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b8mti7VL3gg>

195 - From Heaven you came - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h\\_ptJ0EC3iM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h_ptJ0EC3iM)

I am intending that worship and reflections will continue to be available in this way for some time to come, including after the moment when services are again being held in church buildings. As you may well have heard, the government's announcement last Tuesday gave the date of 4th July as the day from which places of worship can once again hold public services, subject to measures being in place to ensure they are COVID secure. This does NOT mean that all churches everywhere will be starting services again next Sunday; some will, but many (I suspect most) won't. We are still waiting for the government, and hence also the bishops, to issue the detailed guidance about the necessary measures, including restrictions on numbers of people in church. This week I shall be writing to all PCC members, as the decision as to when and how to reopen is one for PCCs to make. There are likely to be a range of feelings around, with some no doubt keen to be in church again as soon as possible, and others much more wary, and I would very much value you letting me know in a quick reply to this email your own thoughts, hopes, or fears, whether or not you are on the PCC. There is no pressure from the wider church leadership (bishops, archdeacons, area dean) on any church to resume public worship earlier than they feel it right to do in their own situation, and I am keen that we move ahead in a way with which we are all confident.

Thank you to those who have joined in with our zoom gatherings, for night prayer on a Tuesday evening at 8pm and for a catch up and chat on Thursdays at 10.30am. If you've not yet tried it and would like to, you will of course be very welcome - email me for more information if you would like to know more.

Your prayers for those who have been bereaved are much appreciated, especially when funerals are still necessarily smaller gatherings than in normal circumstances. The forthcoming funerals that have been arranged are for Catherine Embleton (29th June at 2pm), Lynne Dow (1 July at 12 noon), and George Seedhouse (10 July at 1pm). Please also pray for couples who have weddings planned, and particularly for Ben and Laura who were originally hoping to get married at Merevale yesterday; with the lifting of restrictions they are now hoping to get married just a little later - the date is still to be finalised but will probably be in the second half of July. Please also pray for those who would have been ordained this week but will in many cases be starting new ministries initially as licensed lay ministers with an ordination to follow.

As I said earlier, I shall be continuing to circulate information and worship links each week, even after public worship resumes. If you would prefer not to be on the circulation list, let me know and I will take your name off, but I hope you've been finding these a helpful way of staying in touch and having resources to worship at home in these very strange times.

With very best wishes

John

Revd Dr John White

Priest in Charge of Kingsbury, Baxterley with Hurley and Wood End and Merevale with Bentley

The Vicarage, Church Lane, Kingsbury, Tamworth B78 2LR

01827 874252

## Worship for the Third Sunday after Trinity

### ***Opening Prayer***

God of our days and years,  
we set this time apart for you.  
Form us in the likeness of Christ  
so that our lives may glorify you.

**Amen.**

### ***Confession***

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

**Lord our God,  
in our sin we have avoided your call.  
Our love for you is like a morning cloud,  
like the dew that goes away early.  
Have mercy on us;  
deliver us from judgement;  
bind up our wounds and revive us;  
in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

May the God of love  
bring us back to himself,  
forgive us our sins,  
and assure us of his eternal love  
in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### ***Collect***

God our saviour,  
look on this wounded world  
in pity and in power;  
hold fast to your promises of peace  
won for us by your Son,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ  
**Amen.**

***Old Testament Reading: Jeremiah 28.5-9***

***Gospel Reading: Matthew 10.40-end***

***Reflection***

## Reflection for the Third Sunday after Trinity

Jeremiah 28.5-9 Matthew 10.40-end

How good are you at checking the ID of the person who calls at your door and asks to come into your house to read the meter? I must admit, I can sometimes get lazy, and take it on trust that the person with the clipboard is who they say they are; but the genuine official won't ever mind you asking to see their badge. It is evidence of who they are and of their authority, a sign that they are doing the job that they have been sent and authorised to do.

When Jesus sends out his disciples, he sends them out with the authority to act in his name, to be his representatives in the places to which they are sent. And so, in commissioning them, he tells them, "Whoever welcomes you, welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me."

But then Jesus goes on to say, "Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet's reward". It's the same principle. Prophets act and speak in the name of God who sends them. To welcome the prophet is to welcome the God whose authority they carry and whose words they bring.

So do we welcome prophets? At this point I can sense my reflection starting to become a bit of a sequel to last week's. I said then that prophets are those who see things we would rather not see and say things we would rather not hear. Prophets are the carriers of the uncomfortable truths. So it follows that welcoming prophets is not easy, because by their nature they tend to be rather unwelcome figures. They provoke. They challenge. They disturb.

On the flip side, the prophets who are easy to welcome are probably not true prophets. These are the ones who deliver a message that has been framed to fit the mood, the prejudices and the wishes of the hearer. The scriptures remind us again and again that not all who call themselves prophets are the genuine article. If a so-called prophet turns up at your door, you might just want to check their identity and authority before you offer them a welcome.

Today's Old Testament reading reflects this tussle between the true and the false prophet, and invites us to reflect on how we tell the difference. The passage is set at a critical moment in the history of God's people. The mighty Babylonian army of Nebuchadnezzar is at the gates. Judah's king Jeconiah has been taken prisoner and carried off to Babylon, along with many of the treasures from the temple in Jerusalem. The prophet Jeremiah warns the leaders and people of Judah that worse is to come if they do not change their ways. A much greater destruction and exile will follow, and it will be a generation or more before the people will return to their land.

it is an unwelcome message from an unwelcome prophet. Jeremiah is regarded as a traitor, advocating submission to a foreign power. Far more welcome is the reassuring and patriotic message brought by the other who call themselves prophets, including Jeremiah's rival Hananiah. This crisis will soon be over, they say. The God of Israel will defeat the Babylonians and their gods. The king and the temple treasures will be returned to Jerusalem. Within just a couple of years, God's people will live in peace and triumph, their enemies solidly defeated.

And Jeremiah's response to this optimistic prophecy is laden with sarcasm: "Amen! Yes! That sounds great! May the Lord do as you say and deliver that quick and easy victory." But, Jeremiah goes on: "The prophets who preceded you and me from ancient times prophesied war, famine and pestilence". The true prophets of old did not bring the cheap reassurance offered by Hananiah and his friends. Time alone will tell who now is the true prophet. The one whose words come true will be shown to be the one whom God has sent.

The difference between Hananiah and Jeremiah, between the false prophets and the true, is the difference between optimism and hope. The two are easily confused, and they do have similarities. They each speak of a tomorrow that is brighter than today. But hope is a very different thing from optimism.

Optimism is the unthinking assumption that everything will turn out okay. Optimism deals in the cheap, the easy, the quick solutions. Optimism is a shallow thing, because it is not rooted in reality, but just floats loose on a sea of wishful thinking. But hope? Hope is the real deal. Hope does not turn away from an honest, unflinching assessment of the reality of the situation we are in. Hope does pretend that all is sweetness and light, or even that we can see the light at the end of the tunnel. Unlike optimism, hope can sustain us even in the deepest darkness, because it is not derailed by setbacks or disappointments. Hope does not lie, but gives us confidence that the light is there, even when far off and out of sight.

Jeremiah may seem to be the rather unwelcome prophet of doom. But that's not the whole story. Ultimately he is sent as the prophet of hope. He offers a message that is not the optimistic wishful thinking of Hananiah, promising sunlit uplands in the immediate days ahead. Jeremiah knows that the people of God have much still to suffer and to endure; but God's promises are more enduring still. However long the exile, a return to the land and to the temple will come. Wait on the Lord, and the Lord will redeem us, however long that wait might prove to be. And that is a message to be warmly welcomed.

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

#### ***Affirmation of Commitment***

Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship,  
in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?

**With the help of God, I will.**

Will you persevere in resisting evil,  
and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

**With the help of God, I will.**

Will you proclaim by word and example  
the good news of God in Christ?

**With the help of God, I will.**

Will you seek and serve Christ in all people,  
loving your neighbour as yourself?

**With the help of God, I will.**

Will you acknowledge Christ's authority over human society,  
by prayer for the world and its leaders,  
by defending the weak, and by seeking peace and justice?

**With the help of God, I will.**

May Christ dwell in your hearts through faith,  
that you may be rooted and grounded in love  
and bring forth the fruit of the Spirit.

**Amen.**

### **Blessing**

God the Father,  
who has given to his Son the name above every name,  
strengthen you to proclaim Christ as Lord;  
and the blessing of God Almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always.

**Amen.**