

Dear friends

Once again, a weekly update, with a video worship and reflection for this week. Let me know if you would prefer me to remove your name from this mailing list and of course I will. But I hope you are finding them helpful, and especially for those who are not able or ready to come to our services in church.

<https://youtu.be/4jqO3zcWB3s>



Worship and Reflection for the Ninth Sunday after Trinity

An Act of Worship for the Ninth Sunday after Trinity from the Kingsbury and Baxterley group of Parishes, with a reflection from Revd Carole on the readings fr...

[youtu.be](https://youtu.be/4jqO3zcWB3s)

We are continuing with the gradual return to services in the church buildings. For now, it still seems wisest and safest to have just one service on any Sunday morning. The weekly midweek service on Wednesdays at 9.30am at Wood End has been going well, and I am pleased to say that we will be following a similar pattern for Hurley. We shall have a simple service every Thursday morning at 11am in Hurley Church, beginning this coming week (Thursday 13 August), and I hope that will be a convenient time for at least some of you. As time goes by, I look forward to Sunday services resuming in all five churches, so these are just first steps in reopening the buildings for worship.

As you may heard, the wearing of face coverings in places of worship is now a legal requirement, for all who are not exempt for health or other reasons. We have had clarifying guidance from the Church of England that those who are leading worship, reading or preaching are not required to wear masks where that would hamper communication, but we will all be taking what measures we can to ensure the safety of everybody when attending worship in church. Thank you to everybody for helping in this.

Some sad news to share this week. Celia Postans, for whom we have been praying throughout the time of her illness these last few years, died on Wednesday. Her funeral will be on Monday 24th August at 1.30pm in Baxterley Church, the church she loved and did so much for, with bingo nights and so much besides. I'm sorry that the restrictions means that attendance at the funeral can be by family invitation only, but there will be an opportunity at a later date for a larger

gathering to remember and celebrate Celia's life. I am sure you will join me in holding her husband Richard, and all her family and friends in your prayers.

Remembering all who mourn, please also pray for all others for whom funerals will be taking place in the coming weeks. As well as Celia's, there will be services for Marie Rich, from the congregation at Wood End, and Ruth will be taking that service on Tuesday 18 August at 1pm at Sutton Coldfield. That same day at Kingsbury Church at 12 noon I shall be conducting the service for Ronald Chapman. On Tuesday 25 August at 1pm is the service for Maria Gardner, at Sutton Coldfield. Again, attendance is by invitation only at all these services.

Do download the weekly newsletter from the parish website. We will not be producing printed copies for the foreseeable future, but I am grateful to Carole for continuing to put the digital version together.

I hope to see some of you over the course of the week at one of the services or times of prayer, and would, as ever, be very happy to have a chat and catch up by phone with those for whom that is not possible.

With warmest wishes

John

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The Kingsbury and Baxterley Group of Churches

Worship for the Ninth Sunday after Trinity

Greeting

The Lord be with you
and also with you.

Opening Prayer

Come , creator Spirit, source of life;
sustain us when our hearts are heavy
and our wells have run dry,
for you are the Father's gift,
with him, who is our living water,
Jesus Christ our Lord.

First Reading: Romans 10.5-15

Gospel Reading: Matthew 14.22-33

Reflection

Reflection for Trinity 9 (9-8-20) – 'Faith & Trust'

'You of little faith, why did you doubt?'

It is a fairly common saying, even these days. You know how it goes, someone says they believe 'X' will happen because of 'Y', and in our heart of hearts we have our doubts on the outcome and often are even brave enough to say so. Whether we do this out of 'lived experience', or just a 'gut feeling', the doubt is the same. Then our misguided doubt is put to shame because 'X' does happen as predicted and we are branded as having little faith! (On the other hand, we do tend to feel justified in our doubt if 'X' is not the actual outcome but let us not dwell on that scenario for today and go with 'X' does happen as anticipated).

I'm sure there are often times when we feel we are called to 'walk on water' – and that can be any impossible task we feel we are unable, perhaps unqualified to do. Our knowledge base isn't enough to get us up that mountain that seems too steep to climb. There are plenty of obstacles in our human lives that seem unsafe to tackle and make us feel uneasy. Seemingly insurmountable difficulties that get in the way of our perception of 'do-able'. Possibly our perception of the current pandemic is one such example of a hurdle of life that makes us wonder if we might sink in the process. Think, 'if they don't find a vaccine soon, we are all going to have to live in semi isolation for the rest of our lives'. That might seem a bit dramatic, but it is how some genuinely feel at the moment. So, do we have faith that the world medical researchers will find that 'golden fleece' of a vaccine? This leads me to wonder about 'trust' - do we trust that there will be enough money put aside for such research?

More and more I feel that faith is reliant upon trust, and indeed trust can be reliant on faith. The two are not the same but they are intertwined with each other. Sometimes we have faith that something will turn out as expected but then our trust in our convictions, may be in our own abilities, begins to wane and falter.

Let us now turn our attention to Peter in our Gospel story. Peter has faith in Jesus and fully believes, for a time, that Jesus will make him able to walk on water. He gets out of the boat when invited to do so by Jesus, but he doesn't take too many steps before his lack of trust – most likely in his own ability rather than a lack of trust in his faith in Jesus – makes him falter and he begins to sink. Jesus understands this faltering and as soon as Peter cries out 'Lord, save me', Jesus immediately reaches out and catches Peter. And this is what I think we must take from the story – for it is about overcoming hurdles rather than actually walking on water. Even though our faith in Christ Jesus might be very strong in our hearts and minds, when our trust in our own abilities to do as Jesus asks fails, we only have to cry out to Jesus and immediately Jesus will reach out to save us from ourselves. No questions asked – except maybe a little jibe about doubting! If we think about it, if our human traits didn't always mean that our trust in what we are capable of, and our trust in our faith in Jesus didn't get side-lined, it would mean that we could always 'walk on water'; always overcome the biggest obstacles. With Jesus, everything is possible. From our first reading, Paul gives us a clear indication of this in his letter to the Romans saying, 'Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved'. So if we ever feel we are floundering, or a world situation seems too big to even contemplate, let alone overcome, remember that to have faith in Jesus and to *call* on Him in times of trouble means that Jesus will immediately reach out and catch us, calming the storm inside us. He will not let us fall. Amen.

Confession

Jesus Christ, risen Master and triumphant Lord,
we come to you in sorrow for our sins,
and confess to you our weakness and unbelief.

We have lived by our own strength,
and not by the power of your resurrection.
In your mercy, forgive us.

Lord, hear us and help us.

We have lived by the light of our own eyes,
as faithless and not believing.
In your mercy, forgive us.

Lord, hear us and help us.

we have lived for this world alone,
and doubted our home in heaven.
In your mercy, forgive us.

Lord, hear us and help us.

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.

Prayers of intercession

Collect

Gracious Father,
revive your church in our day,
and make her holy, strong and faithful,
for your glory's sake
in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

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.

Blessing and Dismissal

The God of all grace,
who called you to his eternal glory in Christ Jesus,
establish, strengthen and settle you in the faith;
and the blessing...