

Worshipping at Home

Sunday 4th October 2026

Call to worship

Let us come and wait for our Saviour. Let us come and wait for his transforming power. Let us come and experience his abiding love. Let us come and worship him. **Amen.**

Hymn 293: All heaven declares

Prayers

Lord, we cannot earn your love. You lived and died and rose for us. All that we do is as nothing in comparison. We draw near in faith, for we would know you. We offer our righteousness, for we would love you. We enter your holiness, for we would become like you.

Lord, we come mindful that we are stewards of your world. Teach us to care for your creation and honour others with humility and love. By your Spirit, embolden us to protest against injustice; to be a voice for the voiceless, and a champion of the vulnerable.

Forgive us Lord, when we opt for a quiet life rather than confronting wrong or injustice. You hear the cry of the oppressed. Forgive us, Lord, for ignoring the cry of our neighbour or the plight of the poor. You hear the cry of the hurting.

Forgive us, Lord, for paying lip service to ecological concerns, but failing to change our lifestyle. You hear the cry of the earth. Forgive us, Lord, when we exploit the weak and vulnerable to satisfy our indulgent consumerism.

You hear the cry of the weak.

Forgive us, Lord, when we automatically expect others to respond to our needs, but we fail to heed theirs. You hear the cry of the voiceless.

Lord, we thank you that you do not treat us as we serve, but run to meet us at the first sign of our turning. Hear our cry and forgive us once more.

Amen.

Readings: Isaiah 5:1-7 and Matthew 21:33-46

Hymn 255: The Kingdom of God is justice and joy

Reflection

These are difficult and challenging words from Jesus who is in full prophetic utterance. He pulls no punches in this parable. He warns the Jewish leaders that if they reject the words of the messengers of God, they will lose the blessings that God has given to them (just as the tenants in the story lose the vineyard due to their bad behaviour). With hindsight, we know now that Jesus was also one of the main protagonists in the story: when he talks about the vineyard owner's son, he's referring to himself (with the vineyard owner being God).

There is also a warning to us in this parable. In today's Church that we must listen to God and to the messengers of God in order that we may produce fruit (or goodness) for our communities and for our world.

Jesus clearly was the master storyteller and in these short stories we can explore the depths of his messages and their meanings. Today I believe that we also receive prophecy through film. I am a fan of science fiction and my wife loves a good disaster movie, especially one that depicts the end of the world, or rather the narrow escape from the destruction of the whole world. Film studio prophets constantly

warn us of the dangers of climate change, nuclear war, pandemics, and the risk of not controlling gene-editing or the advancement of artificial intelligence. The medium of film and TV is a relevant and convenient way to get their message to the masses.

To Ponder:

What film or TV programmes have you watched that have messages of warning to humanity, and what were those warnings?

In what ways have any of these films or TV programmes caused you to think and act differently in how you contribute to your community and to your world?

Prayer

God, help us be aware of our world and of each other; help us to listen to the warnings that are given us through others; and help us to live in a way that we can contribute to a better society and a better world.

Amen.

Hymn 682: God of grace and God of glory

Prayers of Intercession

God of all creation, thank you for calling us to be stewards of your earth and your treasures. For calling us to tend your Gospel, to share the fruits of your Spirit, to encourage your disciples in their daily lives, and to work together for the good of all – joyfully, humbly and urgently.

Living God, you came to our world through Christ to help, to heal, and to save. So now we pray for all those in any kind of need.

Reach out to them in your love.

We pray for the sick and suffering, the poor and hungry, the oppressed and exploited, the lonely and unloved, the aged and infirm, the frightened and anxious, the sorrowful and the bereaved, the helpless and the hopeless.

Reach out to them in your love.

Living God, there is so much need around us; in our neighbourhood, our town, our country and our world. There are so many people crying out for help.

Reach out to them in your love.

Show us where and how we can respond. Give us the means, the will, the commitment and the love to reach out in your name, offering something of ourselves to others, even as he offered his all for us.

Reach out to them in your love, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

We share together the Lord's prayer: Our Father...

Hymn 498: God of all power and truth and grace

Prayer of sending

Go in Jesus' name, restored and renewed. May you know God's face shining on you, and God's Spirit flowing through you. So that your life may be fertile ground for good news. **Amen.**

Service compiled by Rev'd Barbara Evans-Routley

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