

Connected

Sunday 25th July 2021
8th Sunday after Trinity

Sermon Snippets

1 Thessalonians 5: 12 - 28

This week we are continuing to explore 1 Thessalonians, (5: 12-28), and considering the theme of Authentic Church.

I will explore two key themes from this week's sermon that both tie in with the Bible passage.

The first is true holiness. I was assisted by Rowan Williams' book *Being Disciples* (2016, London: SPCK), and inspired by verse 23 of our passage - see the 'Verse For The Week' on page 2.

Sanctification is to make holy. I grew up with a false idea of what true holiness is all about. True holiness is not about being perfect (as I thought). The mark of a truly holy person is treating other people well. The truly holy person will (mostly) be affirming, supportive, loving and unafraid to enter messy situations in order to help and support others and to reveal God in that messiness. Similarly a holy church does all these things for its church members and the wider community.

The second theme is releasing the Spirit, taken from the verse 19: "Do not quench the Spirit." In this vein, I will look at the theme of "rewilding the church", inspired by Steve Aisthorpe's book *Rewilding the Church*. (2020, Edinburgh: St Andrew's Press.)

In recent years environmentalists have recommended rewilding as a strategy for conservation care. This is when we stop or partially stop deliberately managing the natural environment, instead letting nature take over and seeing what happens. The theme of rewilding has been used to help us understand releasing the Spirit for mission. Instead of repeating the processes which aren't working, new seeds must be sown in mission in order to regenerate the church so the new people are reached.

Let's stay on the safe side!



I have to confess that this is the strapline Tesco's are using – but I thought it expressed things just about right!

We are entering a new phase for our Sunday services – with a loosening of restrictions at a time of rising infection rates amongst young people. There are a number of different perspectives within our church family – ranging from delight that legal restrictions are no longer . . . to a genuine concern and anxiety for the health of themselves and others.

Our approach is to be cautious, as the C of E has put it: "recognising we are many members within one body that are called to be responsible to and for one another, respecting the more vulnerable whose suffering is our suffering".

You should all have received a letter saying that for the time being we're recommending the way we run our Sunday services will remain as it is except for the relaxation of one restriction - singing. I'm greatly looking forward to singing with you all (even for most of us if it's behind a mask initially!) – there's something about praising God in song with others that encourages us all.

So – let's stay on the safe side as we care for one another.

Tom



Verse For The Week

May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

(1 Thessalonians 5: 23)

Prayer Pointers

Monday

The devastation caused by flooding in Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands is difficult to comprehend. We pray for people who have lost loved ones, their homes and livelihoods and for the authorities trying to deal with it.

Tuesday

We pray for Larissa, her husband and family, as she starts her curacy with us, and for Tom as he guides and supports her.

Wednesday

As the rise in Covid cases grows we pray for the NHS. Heavenly Father, we do give you thanks that we are blessed with an NHS and pray that the increase in patients is not overwhelming. We lift to you all who are suffering and pray for them and their families, that they get the treatment they need and return home.

Thursday

We pray for the emergency services as the holiday season gets under way. Keep *them* safe Lord as they save others. Help us all to be responsible in what we do so we don't call them out unnecessarily.

Friday

We bring before You, Heavenly Father, Nicky and Angeline and the Team and the youth work at Christ Church, and also the summer camp Tom helps with each year. May they bring spiritual blessings and happy memories.

Saturday

We lift our Sunday services to You that they may honour your name and be filled with the Holy Spirit. For Tom, Larissa, Ian and Terry, for welcomers, readers, prayers and all who are there and listening at home.

Notices

Ladies Together Afternoon Tea



It has been such a long time since we last met together, so we'd like to invite the ladies to two Afternoon Tea events over the summer.

The first is on Monday 2nd August, and the second is on Monday 23rd August, both starting at 2.30pm. We will be using the back room of the Spire Centre, and we hope to make use of the garden if the weather is nice enough. If you'd like to come, please contact Chris Webber.

Christians Against Poverty

[Click on this link](#) to view the latest news from CAP. Please do have a read and pray for this important work in our town.

Gardening at Emmanuel

Calling all gardeners! A team of people will be gathering on Friday 30th July from 10am to midday to make the grounds at Emmanuel nice to look at. Please just come along, or for more information please contact Carl.

It's That Time of Year again!!

Last year the faces of over nine million children worldwide lit up because of the generosity of people who donated to Operation Christmas Child, otherwise known as the Christmas Shoebox Appeal.



At Christ Church and Emmanuel we will be asking for donations again this year. More details will follow in due course, but in the meantime here is a link to the [Samaritan's Purse website's gift suggestions](#).

Watch this Sunday's Service

at www.ccwsm.org.uk

Go to the 'Church Life' menu and click on the 'Sunday Services' page.

Coffee time after the Service...



Holiday Club Events - for the whole family!

We would love to see you all at the following....

- Friday 30th July - On the beach (Uphill end) at 3pm for a Sandcastle Competition!
- Sunday 1st August - In Church we will have a special Holiday Club Sunday Service at 10:30am. The service will be followed by a trip to Ashcombe park (bottom end, behind the playground) where you can bring your picnic lunch and join in with some games! (12.30pm start)

** If the weather is bad and we have to cancel either of the outdoor events, we will put a notice on the website at <https://ccwsm.org.uk/holiday-club-2021/> and on our Facebook page www.facebook.com/ccwsm



I was licensed as a lay curate by Bishop Ruth, at the Bishops' Palace Chapel, Wells, on Thursday 1 July 2021, alongside fifteen other lay curates. We received our licences which gives us permission to carry out the duties of a deacon (which is a first-year ordained curate). I was amused that my licence reads that Bishop Ruth was well assured of my "godly life and conversation, training and knowledge of the Holy Scriptures and of Christian doctrine!"

Bishop Ruth preached on Matthew 10:40-end on the theme of welcome. This could be a hint of the Bishop's charge that we will receive at our ordination in September. Particularly poignant moments in the service included when we were asked to confirm our sense of call, and when Bishop Ruth prayed that each lay curate be "envisioned afresh" to serve and to be "an instrument of God's love." While this is all a little daunting, I am so excited, to have been called to serve in the benefice and I am very much looking forward to getting to know you all.

The Singing of Hymns

The thoughts of St Augustine (354-430 AD)

"At times indeed it seems to me that I am paying them greater honour than is their due - when, for example, I feel that by those holy words my mind is kindled more religiously and fervently to a flame of piety because I hear them sung than if they were not sung; and I observe that all the varying emotions of my spirit have modes proper to them in voice and song, whereby, by some secret affinity, they are made more alive.

When I remember the tears I shed, moved by the songs of the church in the early days of my new faith; and again when I see that I am moved not by the singing but by the things that are sung - when they are sung with a clear voice and proper modulation - I recognise once more the usefulness of this practice.

Though I am not propounding any irrevocable opinion - to approve the custom of singing in church, that by the pleasure of the ear the weaker minds may be moved to a feeling of devotion. Yet whenever it happens that I am more moved by the singing than by the thing that is sung, I admit that I have grievously sinned, and then I should wish rather not to have heard the singing. See in what a state I am!"

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