

## Sunday Worship at Home 18<sup>th</sup> July Trinity 7



### Opening Prayers:

This is the day that the Lord has made!

**Let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

Lord, direct our thoughts and prayers  
to worship you in spirit and in truth;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

### Invitation to confession:

Hear the good news that the love of God is beyond measure  
and you are included in that love.

Lord, you are gracious and compassionate:

**Lord have mercy**

Lord, you are loving to all:

**Christ have mercy.**

Lord, be with us in the times we fail:

**Lord have mercy**

May almighty God have mercy upon you,  
forgive your sins and bring you to everlasting light. Amen

### The Collect (Special Prayer for the day)

Gracious Father,

by the obedience of Jesus you brought salvation to our wayward world:

draw us into harmony with your will, that we may find all things restored in him,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ **Amen**

**The Collect** Generous God, you give us gifts and make them grow:

through our faith is as small as a mustard seed,

make it grow to your glory and the flourishing of your Kingdom;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

### The Gospel of Mark 6.30-34, 53-end.

The apostles gathered around Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught. He said to them, 'Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while.' For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves. Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they hurried there on foot from all the towns and arrived ahead of them. As he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things. When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret and moored the boat. When they got out of the boat, people at once recognized him, and rushed about that whole region and began to bring the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. And wherever he went, into villages or cities or farms, they laid the sick in the market-places, and begged him that they might touch even the fringe of his cloak; and all who touched it were healed. This is the Gospel of the Lord.

## Reflection on the Gospel

Jesus saw a great crowd and had compassion on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd. Shepherds of Jesus' time lived with their flocks. They protected them, cared for them if they fell sick, found them when they were lost and guided them in the right way. The shepherd had only one concern, the welfare of their flock. They led the flock, and the flock followed the shepherd. I'm sure you are familiar with the lines of the 23rd Psalm, "Your rod and your staff, they comfort me". These were the tools of the shepherd's trade. The Rod was a short club used as a weapon to defend the shepherd and his flock against attack. The staff was more like the modern-day shepherd's crook, used to guide and control the sheep. Now as we know, things will be changing over the next weeks as restrictions are relaxed. We all want to get back to normal as quickly as possible, but we know COVID is still around, with infections currently doubling every week, so to use a non-shepherding analogy: If you have successfully protected your house from floods with sandbags but the floodwater has not all gone, when it starts raining again is not the time to throw the sandbags away! Since the start of the pandemic the church leaders here have done what we consider necessary to keep all of the congregation safe. Jesus had compassion on the crowd because they were like sheep without a shepherd, but it was up to the crowd to decide whether they wanted to be his sheep. We will continue to exercise our responsibility to keep you as safe as possible, some restrictions will be relaxed but some will remain for a while longer. It will be your choice to follow them, and I urge you to act out of **personal responsibility, not personal choice; there is a difference.** Personal choice is choosing what the selfish me wants to do and personal responsibility is about doing what is right for everyone. Please accept the guidance of the shepherd's for just a while longer, and hopefully, the journey to the green pastures on the other side of our dark valley will be quicker and easier. Amen

### The Creed

We believe in God the Father,  
from whom every family in heaven and 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**

**Be still and Pray:** For your families and all those you love. For the Church throughout the world, especially the churches in our Benefice; for those who attend services and those who are still shielding at home. For world leaders to govern with care and compassion for those they lead. Pray for yourselves with all your joys and sorrows and those in our communities who are ill awaiting hospital treatment or recovering. Keep in your hearts the memory of those who have died recently. May they rest in peace and rise in glory. Amen.

### The Lord's Prayer:

Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses; as we forgive those who trespass against us; lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever **Amen**

**Blessing:** The God of hope fill you with joy and peace in believing; and the blessing, of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be with you, today and always. Amen

*Reverend Eddie*