

St Columba, Corby
Order of Service –5th September 2021

Song – Praise him you heavens

PRAISE HIM, YOU HEAVENS

And all that's above.

Praise Him, you angels

And heavenly hosts.

Let the whole earth praise Him.

Praise Him, the sun, moon

And bright shining stars.

Praise Him, you heavens

And waters and skies.

Let the whole earth praise Him.

*Great in power, great in glory,
Great in mercy, King of heaven.
Great in battle, great in wonder,
Great in Zion, King over all the earth.*

Praise Him, you heavens,

And all that's above.

Praise Him, you angels

And heavenly hosts.

Let the whole earth praise Him.

Praise Him, the sun, moon

And bright shining stars.

Praise Him, you heavens

And waters and skies.

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Russell Fragar

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Greeting

Good Morning and welcome to our Harvest service for the 3rd October 2021,
it's great to have you with us and you are very welcome.

We begin our service in prayer.

The heavens declare the glory of God

The skies display the works of his hands

*God of light and God of night
Creator of seed and mountain
raindrop and fountain
We bring our offering of praise.
God of right and God of might
Lover of child and childless
rich and homeless
We bring our offering of praise.*

Do you not know? Have you not heard?

**The Lord is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth**

Let's sing together -

Song – Come ye thankful people, come

**COME, YE THANKFUL PEOPLE, COME,
Raise the song of harvest home!
All is safely gathered in
Ere the winter storms begin;
God, our Maker, doth provide
For our needs to be supplied;
Come to God's own temple, come,
Raise the song of harvest-home.**

**All the world is God's own field,
Fruit unto His praise to yield;
Wheat and tares together sown,**

Unto joy or sorrow grown;
First the blade, and then the ear,
Then the full corn shall appear:
Lord of harvest, grant that we
Wholesome grain and pure may be.

For the Lord our God shall come
And shall take His harvest home,
From His field shall in that day
All offences purge away,
Give His angels charge at last
In the fire the tares to cast,
But the fruitful ears to store
In His garner evermore.

Even so, Lord, quickly come,
Bring Thy final harvest home;
Gather Thou Thy people in,
Free from sorrow, free from sin;
There, forever purified,
In Thy garner to abide:
Come, with all Thine angels, come,
Raise the glorious harvest-home.

Collect

*Creator God,
You made the goodness of the land,
the riches of the sea
and the rhythm of the seasons;
as we thank you for the harvest,
may we cherish and respect
this planet and its peoples through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Amen

Confession

Loving God we remember how you came to earth to show us how to love;
Yet often we let you down and do not love one another.

*Lord Jesus, we remember how you call us
to follow you;*
**Yet often we do not seem
to hear your voice.**

*Holy Spirit you guide us to
bring joy to others;*
Yet often we think only of ourselves

*Father God,
we know that we let you down
in many ways,*
**Father forgive us, and by your Holy Spirit help us to be more like Jesus
Amen.**

Song – Give thanks

**GIVE THANKS with a grateful heart.
Give thanks to the Holy One.
Give thanks because He's given
Jesus Christ, His Son.**

(Repeat)

**And now,
Let the weak say 'I am strong.'
Let the poor say 'I am rich,'
Because of what the Lord
has done for us.**

(Repeat)

**Give thanks with a grateful heart.
Give thanks to the Holy One.
Give thanks because He's given
Jesus Christ, His Son.**

(Repeat)

**And now,
Let the weak say 'I am strong,'
Let the poor say 'I am rich,'
Because of what the Lord
has done for us.**

(Repeat)

(Last time)

.....Give thanks!

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A reading from the gospel of Matthew, chapter 6:25-33

“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?

“And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labour or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith?

So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

This is the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Reading taken from the New International Version

Sermon by Kevin Montgomery

"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life."

What a simple sentence, what a hard instruction. How many of us if we were truly being honest would admit to ourselves, or indeed to others that sometimes we worry?

In fact, a gentleman named Walter Kelly once said, "When I don't have anything to worry about, I begin to worry about that!" And if we're honest sometimes that might be us as well.

Jesus however goes on to list all the things we shouldn't worry about. Don't worry about your life, what you will eat or drink, or about your body, what you will wear.

Normally of course in this country there aren't too many people who worry about where the next meal is coming from, or having clothes to wear, most people have got at least that and a roof over their heads.

Recent weeks have seen stories in the press, that are making people worry though.

There might not be any turkeys available at Christmas! There might not be enough Christmas Trees!

Britain could run out of meat in the next few weeks! Empty shelves in supermarkets!

And of course, the big one of the last week - no fuel available, I can't get petrol!

I'm sure there have been more than a few people driving anxiously around looking for a petrol station that has some fuel available in it. All wondering how they are going to get where they need to go. If they can get to work in the car or not.

There's a lot of worry around even amongst Christians, the followers of Jesus.

My son has just come up positive for Coronavirus, now he's not too bad at the moment, only feeling a little off, not too unwell. I could sit and worry about him, how he's feeling, whether he'll get a bad dose, get long covid and be ill for months. I could do that. Jesus says though "Can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?" It's a way of saying this isn't going to do you any good you know. It's wasted effort, wasted energy. It's not going to make one bit of difference to the outcome at all.

I can talk to God instead, pray, seek Him, ask for His healing, trust in Him that whatever happens God is in control.

Jesus gives us some beautiful imagery, the birds of the air don't sow or reap or store away in barns and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. See how the

flowers of the fields grow, they do not labour, yet I will tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendour was dressed like one of these.

As far as I know Solomon looked pretty good in his finery, shiny, sparkly and every inch the King, yet Jesus tells us 'how much more will he clothe us, us of little faith?'

I'm not sure that I'm ever going to be dressed like Solomon, it's really not my style, but I certainly have clothes on back, food to eat and drink available.

Instead of worrying Jesus calls us to seek first His kingdom and His righteousness and all these things will be given to us.

Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Part of the problem we have of course is that we can see that in practice this doesn't always seem to work out quite that way.

We have a Foodbank that operates out of this very church in order to provide food to those that don't have it. For many weeks now we have had two homeless men sleeping in our church doorway. We see images on our TVs of people starving, we can certainly read of people living in poverty and desperate for food and clothes and a roof over their head.

You might be thinking, I don't see how this works out in practice.

Indeed if not having to worry about food, drink, clothes and shelter was universally true then three of the five marks of mission wouldn't exist.

The Anglican marks of mission talk about proclaiming the good news of the Kingdom, teaching, baptising and nurturing new believers.

They also talk about responding to human need by loving service, transforming unjust structures of society, challenging violence, pursuing peace and reconciliation, striving to safeguard the integrity of creation, sustaining and renewing the life of the earth.

On casual reading it all feels like something doesn't add up here. Like we have a jigsaw box and when we start putting it together it appears to be two

different jigsaws in the same box and even then there's only about half the pieces for each one.

You might also be thinking, isn't this harvest? This doesn't feel a lot like a harvest sermon. Isn't harvest supposed to be thanking God for his provision.

Well, yes it is.

So lets start again shall we.

"Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness and all these things will be given to you."

That's a key, a key that unlocks the door of truth in this passage. I'm not sure it's something we're always all that good at. Certainly if we look around the world today we can probably spot an awful lot of people who most certainly aren't doing that, they might not even be aware that the concept even exists.

But it still opens the door of truth, of understanding this passage.

It's only when we seek first his Kingdom and his righteousness that we can start to see change, to see things as Jesus sees them here.

We can see the harvest and not worry, there is plenty of provision in this world. In fact the estimate is that there is enough food produced to feed 10 billion people. The population of the earth is 7.6 billion so the question has to be why do we have hunger?

Do you know - I think the beginning of the scripture might hold the answer to this one. Worry. People worry. People worry and they get insecure. People worry and they think I must just buy enough to do me for an extra day, I probably won't need it but just in case. Maybe an extra two days. Or three. Depending on your financial circumstances you might think, maybe I'll buy a couple of weeks worth extra.

Do you remember the great toilet roll saga of 2020? People were worried about there not being enough toilet roll available, so they started panic buying. Suddenly the supermarket shelves were empty and some people began running out of toilet roll. There was probably enough toilet roll in the country for everyone to have an entire pack of toilet rolls each, but some people had

enough toilet rolls tucked away to build a 20ft statue of their favourite celebrity with them.

Worry. Worry. Worry. If people hadn't worried there would have been no problems. The same is very likely true of petrol. If people didn't panic and fill up unnecessarily then there probably wouldn't be a shortage.

Worry. Worry. Worry. We can see how it causes problems.

As Christians Jesus clearly calls us not to worry, not to be insecure, the harvest is plentiful, it is good.

Instead he calls us to loving service, to respond to human need. Last week Ian asked us to bring food for the Foodbank - an act of loving service, to respond to human need. Jesus calls us to that too. Jesus calls us to more than that, he calls us to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge those things that we see are wrong, to pursue peace and reconciliation, to safeguard creation.

He calls us to all these things not because we worry about it, because we have an unhealthy obsession about it, but because we have sought His Kingdom, His heart for us and for others. By faith we are called to care about these things, to have concern for them. Worry sits and wrings its hands, looking on at a poor situation, Care gets up and offers a hand.

We might not be able to change the world by ourselves or even as a church, but we can help change one person's world, or a small part of people's worlds each time we try.

Many of you will know that we are involved in the Hope into Action project, to take on a house and give people a chance to rebuild their lives, those have been made homeless before given the opportunity to have a roof over their heads, to have some stability, to grow, to be cared for and loved. That house is ours now, and we take the first steps into getting it ready for our new tenants, whoever they may be.

It's one way of caring, of showing concern. Do we worry about who we're going to get as tenants? No! We seek God and his Kingdom, seek His righteousness and trust Him.

There are over 70 Hope into Action houses now, each one helping to transform the lives of the people who live in them. I would call that a harvest wouldn't you?

This harvest, certainly give thanks for the provision we have, give thanks that generally we do have food, drink, clothes and shelter. But Seek His Kingdom and His heart as well, that we raise our eyes to those around us. We don't worry about them but the heart brings care, concern and compassion.

Seek first His Kingdom and we will change lives. By faith, in thankfulness and through love we can help change the world, one small step at a time.

Forget worry, embrace the Kingdom, and let's know the heart of God this harvest.

Song – Praise God from whom all blessings flow

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise Him all creatures here below.
Praise Him above, you heavenly host,
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.*
(Repeat)

**Give glory to the Father,
Give glory to the Son,
Give glory to the Spirit
While endless ages run.
“Worthy the Lamb”
All heaven cries,
“To be exalted thus:”
“Worthy the Lamb”
Our hearts reply,
“For He was slain for us.”**

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise Him all creatures here below.
Praise Him above, you heavenly host,
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.*
(Repeat)

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise God from whom all blessings flow.*

(Repeat)

Dave Clifton and Andy Piercy.

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By Faith

We say together;

By faith

**I gaze up to the heavens
and know
within its vastness
that this is your creation
planned and effected within eternity**

By faith

**I pluck an ear of corn
and know
within its symmetry
lies the chemistry of life
the potential of creation within my hand**

By faith

**I listen for your voice
and know
the whisper that I hear
breathed a world into existence
yet listens to the prayer within my soul**

By faith

**I strive to do your will
and know
the door that I approach
may lead me to shadows
where my role is to become your light**

By faith

I cling to your word
and know
the strength that I receive
has its source within the love
that is at the centre of all things
Amen

Song – We Plough the Fields and Scatter (Trade Justice Version)

We plough the fields, and scatter
The good seed on our lands,
But nations who are deep in debt
Are left with empty hands,
The world is full of people
Who struggle to survive,
While we have food in plenty,
O God our care revive!

Some good gifts around us
Have been acquired by stealth,
Forgive us, Lord, and move our hearts,
That we may share our wealth.

The fields of many countries
Are tilled to pay their debt,
While labourers go hungry,
With basic needs unmet.
Their goods, unfairly traded,
Make losses for our gain,
As most of all the profits,
In wealthy hands remain.

Some good gifts around us
Have been acquired by stealth,
Forgive us, Lord, and move our hearts,
That we may share our wealth.

Your beautiful creation
Is fast becoming spoiled,
And deserts overrun the land

**Where once the farmers toiled.
Forgive us this pollution
Of much that you have made,
And show us the solution,
For fair and equal trade.**

**Some good gifts around us
Have been acquired by stealth,
Forgive us, Lord, and move our hearts,
That we may share our wealth.**

Prayers

For the beauty of a country scene
We praise you Lord for sight
For the coolness of a mountain stream
We praise you Lord for touch
For nightingale in tuneful flow
We praise you Lord for ears
For the taste of fruit that we have grown
We praise you Lord for senses

Creator God, for daily bread
and all who work
to bring your harvest home
we bring our thanks today.

Forgive our ingratitude
we who have so much
yet waste what you have given.

For those whose harvest is poor,
whose crops have withered,
water tainted, children starve,
help those who bring relief
and bestow on us
an unaccustomed generosity,
that all might share from your garden
and all might sing your praise.

Creator God, provider of all

we bring our thanks today.
And we bless each other
that the beauty of this world
and the love that created it
might be expressed through our lives
and be a blessing to others
now and always
AMEN

The Lord's Prayer

As our saviour taught us so we pray.

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen**

Song – Great is thy faithfulness

**GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS,
O God my Father,
There is no shadow of turning
with Thee;
Thou changest not,
Thy compassions, they fail not;
As Thou hast been
Thou forever wilt be.**

***Great is Thy faithfulness!
Great is Thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning
new mercies I see;
All I have needed
Thy hand hath provided,
Great is Thy faithfulness,
Lord, unto me!***

**Summer and winter,
and springtime and harvest,
Sun, moon and stars
in their courses above,
Join with all nature
in manifold witness
To Thy great faithfulness,
mercy and love.**

***Great is Thy faithfulness!
Great is Thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning
new mercies I see;
All I have needed
Thy hand hath provided,
Great is Thy faithfulness,
Lord, unto me!***

**Pardon for sin
and a peace that endureth,
Thine own dear presence
to cheer and to guide;
Strength for today
and bright hope for tomorrow,
Blessings all mine,
with ten thousand beside!**

***Great is Thy faithfulness!
Great is Thy faithfulness!***

*Morning by morning
new mercies I see;
All I have needed
Thy hand hath provided,
Great is Thy faithfulness,
Lord, unto me!*

Thomas O. Chisholm (1866–1960), William M. Runyan (1870–1957)
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Blessing and Dismissal

We look to our loving God for our blessing;

The love of the Lord Jesus draw us to himself. The power of the Lord Jesus strengthen us in his service, the joy of the Lord Jesus fill our hearts; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among us.

Amen

Go in Peace to love and serve the Lord.

In the name of Christ. Amen.