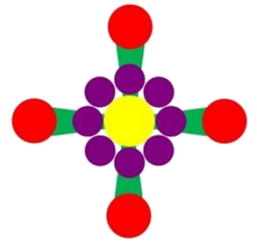


**The Benefice of
Harden, Wilsden, Cullingworth, Denholme
Sunday 13 July 2025
The Fourth Sunday After Trinity**



Today's Liturgy was prepared by Liz

Call to worship

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Creator God, you are big, and we are small: help us to worship you. Lord Jesus Christ, you are perfect, and we get things wrong: help us to turn to you. Holy Spirit, you are powerful, and we are weak: help us to trust you.

Loving God, when we are hesitant, encourage us; when we are afraid, reassure us; when we are struggling, bless us; when we are complacent, challenge us; when we are divided, unite us and wherever we are, use us to encourage, reassure, bless, challenge and unite others, in Jesus' name.

Amen.

Confession

God our Father,
we come to you in sorrow for our sins.
For turning away from you,
and ignoring your will for our lives;
Father, forgive us:
save us and help us.
For behaving just as we wish,
without thinking of you;
Father, forgive us:
save us and help us.
For failing you by what we do,
and think and say;

Father, forgive us:
save us and help us.
For letting ourselves be drawn away from you
by temptations in the world about us;
Father, forgive us:
save us and help us.
For living as if we were ashamed
to belong to your Son;
Father, forgive us:
save us and help us.
May the God of love and power
Forgive us and free us from our sins
Heal and strengthen us by his Spirit
And raise us to new life in Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Blessed are you, the God of our ancestors,
worthy to be praised and exalted for ever.
Blessed is your holy and glorious name,
worthy to be praised and exalted for ever.
Blessed are you, in your holy and glorious temple,
worthy to be praised and exalted for ever.
Blessed are you who look into the depths,
worthy to be praised and exalted for ever.
Blessed are you, enthroned on the cherubim,
worthy to be praised and exalted for ever.
Blessed are you on the throne of your kingdom,
worthy to be praised and exalted for ever.
Blessed are you in the heights of heaven,
worthy to be praised and exalted for ever.
The Song of the Three 29–34
Bless the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
worthy to be praised and exalted for ever.

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 Readings

First reading: Colossians 1:1-14

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,
to the saints and faithful brothers and sisters in Christ in Colossae:
Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

In our prayers for you we always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. You have heard of this hope before in the word of the truth, the gospel that has come to you. Just as it is bearing fruit and growing in the whole world, so it has been bearing fruit among yourselves from the day you heard it and truly comprehended the grace of God. This you learned from Epaphras, our beloved fellow-servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf, and he has made known to us your love in the Spirit.

For this reason, since the day we heard it, we have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you may lead lives worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, as you bear fruit in every good work and as you grow in the knowledge of God. May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light. He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Second reading: Luke 10:25-37

Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. ‘Teacher,’ he said, ‘what must I do to inherit eternal life?’ He said to him, ‘What is written in the law? What do you read there?’ He answered, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself.’ And he said to him, ‘You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.’

But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, ‘And who is my neighbour?’ Jesus replied, ‘A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan while travelling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, “Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.” Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?’ He said, ‘The one who showed him mercy.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Go and do likewise.’

Reflection with Alison

Now that we’re in July, many of us are starting to see the fruit of our gardening efforts. There’s a quiet satisfaction in noticing new growth—ripening tomatoes, swelling courgettes, or the first blush of strawberries. But not everything always flourishes. I planted some red pepper seeds earlier this year, full of hope and good intentions. But I didn’t keep them indoors where they needed warmth. I didn’t tend to them properly. As a result, they’ve grown—but not as well as they could have, and I now doubt I’ll see a pepper.

That small disappointment has made me think about our spiritual lives. In *Colossians 1*, Paul prays that believers will grow strong in faith and bear fruit in every good work. But just like a garden, that kind of fruitfulness doesn't happen by accident. It takes attention. It takes care. It takes daily decisions to stay rooted in God, to seek His wisdom, and to live in His strength.

Then in *Luke 10*, Jesus gives us a picture of what a fruitful life looks like in action—the Good Samaritan. He sees someone in need, and instead of passing by, he stops. He gets involved. He loves with compassion that costs him something.

These two passages come together with a simple truth: a life that is truly rooted in Christ will bear fruit that blesses others. But like those red pepper seeds, if we leave our hearts untended—if we drift, ignore the need for care, or rely on our own strength—our growth can become stunted.

This July, as we look at our gardens, let's also look inward. Are we tending to our faith? Are we creating space for God to nourish our hearts? Are we growing in love that takes action?

May we be like well-tended plants—growing strong, bearing fruit, and ready to respond when love is needed most.

Amen

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.

Prayers of Intercessions with Astrid

Lord we thank you for the comfort and guidance of your holy word, for the reminders we have read today of how you would have us live and love. We pray for all who spread the message of your love by spoken or by written words and by their lives.

Today we pray for Richard and Heather at the start of this new stage of their lives and ministry, and for those who will lead and guide the work throughout our parishes in the months ahead. We pray for those who lead the process of appointing a new team rector for Hewenden Benefice and for the person you lead to respond to this call.

Lord in your mercy hear our prayer

Lord help us all to bring your words and your love to our communities as we pray for people around us in particular need at this time – those who are ill and facing long delays in treatment, those suffering from early or advanced stages of memory loss and the people who love and care for them, those who are lonely, those who mourn. We pray for those most affected by increasing costs, difficulty finding work, anxiety about their future care needs.

We pray for neighbours we know and those we don't know. Give grace to us all that we may serve you in one another and love as you love us.

Lord in your mercy hear our prayer

Let us pray for the needs of the world beyond our parish boundaries, some we are constantly reminded of, some slip from the news and our minds, overshadowed by yet more reports of disaster. We pray for all suffering in the war in Ukraine, for the people of Israel and Palestine and throughout the Middle East. We pray for the people of Sudan, a country not attacked by external enemies but torn apart by internal armed power struggles. We pray too for communities in different parts of the world devastated by earthquake, fire or flood, remembering that both physical and economic damage to communities and the pain of loss of loved ones continue long after the event. Lord be with your suffering people and with all who work to bring aid and comfort.

Lord in your mercy hear our prayer

Lord you have given us a beautiful world, and we have not cherished it as we should. It is not only the destructive force of war, but human greed, thoughtlessness and complacency that are damaging our lovely Earth. Help us to play our part in cherishing that loveliness. Make us wise and faithful stewards of your creation, living lightly on the Earth so that it may blossom and flourish now and in the future.

Merciful Father accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Amen

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.

The Peace

God is love
and those who live in love live in God
and God lives in them.

Closing prayer

As we go out in the world today, help us to treasure the encouraging words we have heard. May our mouths be full of encouraging words for others. Help us to look out for opportunities to share them this week. Amen.

May God keep us in all our days.
May Christ shield us in all our ways.
May the Spirit bring us healing and peace.
May God the Holy Trinity drive all darkness from us
and pour upon us blessing and light.
Amen.

We go into the world
to walk in God's light,
to rejoice in God's love
and to reflect God's glory.