



Team Parish of Christ the King St Aidan's, Brunton Park

Sunday 17th September 2023

Trinity 15

This morning's gospel tells a parable of forgiveness. It's a parable both of extraordinary forgiven-ness, and extraordinary forgiving-ness, and we need to hear the importance of both.

So first of all it's a story of extraordinary forgiven-ness. This slave who comes to the king has racked up a debt of tremendous proportions, and we need to hear the vastness of it. One talent was worth more than 15 years of an average labourer's wages. So to be 10,000 in debt is simply unpayable. And yet this king forgives. In a moment of simple grace the entire debt is wiped clean. This story tells us that no matter the depths we find ourselves in; no matter the weight of the debt that we feel is on our shoulders; no matter the regrets of our past, or the burden of our present, in a moment of loving grace our sin can be completely forgiven. The debt wiped clean, and a completely fresh start given out of sheer merciful grace. This is forgiven-ness of extraordinary proportions.

But it is also a story of extraordinary forgiving-ness. The slave who's 10,000 talent debt is forgiven finds another in debt to him for a far smaller sum. It's still substantial, several months wages, but nothing compared to his own. And yet, instead of showing the same grace, he begins to choke the man and demand payment. For that unforgiving act, he gets his comeuppance, and as he's thrown in jail we're supposed to feel a moment of smugness – 'what kind of person could do such a thing, serves him right!' That is, until the final verse of our parable, as Jesus turns it on us and says: 'This slave is you. When you fail to forgive others as you are forgiven, this slave is you.'

Forgiving is a complicated business. It involves our pain and our resentment. It involves sacrifice, and time, and work, and we may find we can never fully reach the forgiveness we wish we could. And yet this parable tells us that just as God forgives, so we are called to forgive. It tells us that we are people of extraordinary forgiven-ness, and so we must be people of extraordinary forgiving-ness. Forgiveness holds extraordinary power in a broken world. Not to fix what has been broken, but to build a future defined by love and grace in its place. So as forgiven people, may we too learn to forgive.

Exodus 14.19-31

The angel of God who was going before the Israelite army moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from in front of them and took its place behind them. It came between the army of Egypt and the army of Israel. And so the cloud was there with the darkness, and it lit up the night; one did not come near the other all night.

Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The LORD drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night, and turned the sea into dry land; and the waters were divided. The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. The Egyptians pursued, and went into the sea after them, all of Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and chariot drivers. At the morning watch the LORD in the pillar of fire and cloud looked down upon the Egyptian army, and threw the Egyptian army into panic. He clogged their chariot wheels so that they turned with difficulty. The Egyptians said, 'Let us flee from the Israelites, for the LORD is fighting for them against Egypt.'

Then the LORD said to Moses, 'Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots and chariot drivers.' So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at dawn the sea returned to its normal depth. As the Egyptians fled before it, the LORD tossed the Egyptians into the sea. The waters returned and covered the chariots and the chariot drivers, the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not one of them remained. But the Israelites walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. Thus the LORD saved Israel that day from the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. Israel saw the great work that the LORD did against the Egyptians. So the people feared the LORD and believed in the LORD and in his servant Moses.

Matthew 18.21-35

Peter came and said to Jesus, 'Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?' Jesus said to him, 'Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, "Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything." And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow-slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, "Pay what you owe." Then his fellow-slave fell down and pleaded with him, "Have patience with me, and I will pay you." But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. When his fellow-slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, "You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow-slave, as I had mercy on you?" And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.'

TODAY

9:30am: **Trinity 15** : Rev'd Rundell and Mr Bernie Troughton lead our service

THE WEEK AHEAD

Wed 10.00am, Church: **BCP Midweek Eucharist**

7:30pm, Church: **DCC Meeting**

Sat 10am-12pm, Community Room – **Saturday Café**

Sun 24th 9:30am, **Trinity 16** Rev'd Pauline Pearson leads our service with readings from Exodus 16.2-15, Philippians 1.21-30 & Matthew 20.1-16 Gerard at St Columba's

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Wed 27th 7.30pm: **Alpha Course**, Community Room

Friday 29th 9-12.30: **Macmillan Coffee Morning**, Great Park Community Centre

Sun 1st Oct 9:30am: **Harvest Festival Family Service**

Sun 1st 1:00pm: **Harvest Fellowship Lunch**, St Aidan's Community Centre

Wed 4th 12:00pm: **Lunch Group**, Northern Rugby Club

NOTICES

SUNDAY SERVICE – today's live link: <https://bit.ly/15Trinity23>

ST AIDAN'S COMMUNITY CENTRE AUTUMN FAIR - like our church, the Centre will be celebrating its 60th anniversary of service to the community. The Centre's Autumn Fair is on Saturday, 23rd September, from 2.00pm – 4.00pm.

As on previous occasions, there will be a good range of stalls, games and activities for children, including a bouncy castle, refreshments and a raffle. Various members of our church family are involved and if you feel able to offer your services on the day, please let Ben or Catherine know. We have been particularly asked to make cakes to sell on the cake stall.

MOROCCO AND LIBYA – following the devastating earthquake in Morocco and flooding in Libya, we are collecting for much needed funds, both today and next Sunday. If you are able to do so, please donate either in church, or via our donations link below (please add reference 'appeal').

BIBLE STUDY GROUP - there will be no Bible study until Monday 2 October when we look at Luke 21.5-38. For further information, contact Ken Newitt, kmnewitt@outlook.com.

LUNCH GROUP - will meet on Wed 4th Oct at the Northern Rugby Club at 12:00pm for a 12:30pm meal. Please let Pat or Pauline know if you wish to join us.

NEWSLETTER AND PUBLICITY– please let us know what you think of the new email format. If you'd like to be involved in a working group for the newsletter and general publicity for church, please contact Gerard.

HARVEST COLLECTIONS – we will soon be celebrating our Harvest festival. We will be collecting for Kenton Foodbank and the People's Kitchen again this year. If you are able to donate any items they will be greatly received, and there is a list at the back of church of items that are most needed.

HARVEST FELLOWSHIP LUNCH – following our Harvest Festival service will be providing a 3-course Harvest lunch in St Aidan's Community Centre. Tickets are £10 for adults and £5 for children, obtainable from Ben Pullan, tel. 07977320895 or in church on Sundays (please note that the last day to purchase tickets will be Sunday 24th September).

ALPHA COURSE – From Wed 27th September, 7.30pm at church, we'll be running an Alpha Course. This is a great chance to explore faith and ask questions about what you believe. Whether you're new to church or not sure what you believe, or whether been coming to church for years and just want to learn and talk more about faith, this is a great chance to do that over food, video input and friendly discussion. It's a particularly great opportunity to bring someone you know along who might be interested in what Christianity is all about. Please talk to Gerard if you're interested in joining us.

MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING – Ann Cross and Susan Armstrong are holding a Macmillan Coffee Morning on Fri 29th Sept, 9.00-12.30, (and being a collection point for our Harvest collections). They're looking for prizes that could go on the tombola, and for people to come along and support the event.

DONATIONS - to make a donation to St Aidan's, please use the following link
<https://givealittle.co/campaigns/8a599239-a9bd-4136-8b4b-1dcabb0a2c65>

For Our Prayers: St Aidan's Cycle of Prayer

For the church & community – Mark Edwards and St Cuthbert's and St Matthew's. Our Children and Youth Groups and the Family Service and all involved in our work with children and young people. For Kenton Food Bank.

For the world – all countries facing hardship and conflict. For our own national and political life

For those in need - Gladys Johnston, Esther Wooler, Alan Gregg, Martin Seaton

For those who have died –and on their anniversaries: Ethel Harkness, James Goodlet, Ruth Hay, Susan Hollingshead, Jenny Johnson, Ellen Hall, Joan Renwick , John Havis, Joseph Smith

CONTACTS: Office: 0191 236 7952

Administrator/Newsletter : Janice Charlton infostaidans@gmail.com

Team Rector: Revd Gerard Rundell 07394 792277 rev.g.rundell@gmail.com

Honorary Assistant Priest: Revd Ben Pullan 07977320895 brpullan@gmail.com