******Sunday 10th July 2022**

**Trinity 4**

**The good lawyer – are we missing something?**

**Call to worship**

Come to God with your longings:  
our heavenly Father knows them all.  
Come to God with your belongings:  
our loving Saviour holds them all.  
Come to God alone and together:  
the Holy Spirit is here for all.

## A gathering prayer

Father God, you give us so much, and yet we long for more.  
Help us to open ourselves to you today, and draw us closer to you.  
Help us to be open to one another, and draw us closer together.  
**Amen.**

**First impressions**



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| --- | --- |
|  | For artist's details, see  [https://www.rootsontheweb.com/lectionary/2022/120-july-august-2022-c/issue-120-illustrators.](https://www.rootsontheweb.com/lectionary/2022/119-may-june-2022-c/issue-119-illustrators) |

**Questions for the image**

* How do you go about weighing up your options?
* Have you ever had an assumption challenged?
* What helps you to decide the right thing to do?

**Worship song. Come let us sing of a wonderful love. 72**

**Robert Walmsley (1831–1905)** [come let us sing of a wonderful love - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3BZfXTCUbr8)

1 Come let us sing of a wonderful love,  
tender and true;  
out of the heart of the Father above,  
streaming to me and to you:  
wonderful love  
dwells in the heart of the Father above.

2 Jesus, the Saviour, this gospel to tell,  
joyfully came;  
came with the helpless and hopeless to dwell,  
sharing their sorrow and shame;  
seeking the lost,  
saving, redeeming at measureless cost.

3 Jesus is seeking the wanderers yet;  
why do they roam?  
Love only waits to forgive and forget;  
home! weary wanderer, home!  
Wonderful love  
dwells in the heart of the Father above.

4 Come to my heart, O thou wonderful love,  
come and abide,  
lifting my life till it rises above  
envy and falsehood and pride:  
seeking to be  
lowly and humble, a learner of thee.

**Saying Sorry to God**

St Paul says

‘Be imitators of God;

love as Christ loved;

do not grieve the Holy Spirit;

put away all anger and bitterness,

all slander and malice.’

So let us confess our sins to God,

who forgives us in Christ. Amen

*cf Ephesians 4.30 – 5.1*

**Amen.**

## ****Assurance of forgiveness****

When we belong to the Lord.  
Salvation is ours.  
We are washed clean.  
Forgiven and free to live in joy with the Lord.  
**Amen.**

**Prayer for the Day**

O God, the protector of all who trust in you,  
without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy:  
increase and multiply upon us your mercy;  
that with you as our ruler and guide  
we may so pass through things temporal  
that we lose not our hold on things eternal;  
grant this, heavenly Father,  
for our Lord Jesus Christ's sake,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

Optional Children’s Worship Song [I belong to God](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5KKs94pyBiE), Victory Kids Worship

**Bible passage**



Luke 10:25-37 New International Version

The Parable of the Good Samaritan

**25**On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

**26**“What is written in the Law?” he replied. “How do you read it?”

**27**He answered, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=luke%2010:25-37&version=NIV#fen-NIV-25391a)]; and, ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=luke%2010:25-37&version=NIV#fen-NIV-25391b)]”

**28**“You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.”

**29**But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbour?”

**30**In reply Jesus said: “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. **31**A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. **32**So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. **33**But a Samaritan, as he travelled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. **34**He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. **35**The next day he took out two denarii[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=luke%2010:25-37&version=NIV#fen-NIV-25399c)] and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Look after him,’ he said, ‘and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.’

**36**“Which of these three do you think was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?”

## 37The expert in the law replied, “The one who had mercy on him.”

## Reflection

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**Children may choose to use the Activity Sheet**

As the sun comes out people rush to the beaches and the life guards have an intense time keeping them safe in the water. They are called to numerous situations where people suddenly get in to trouble and unable to make it back to shore. Sometimes from invisible rip currents, and sometimes just because we underestimate the strength and skill needed to swim back in. Do you know about the ‘float to live’ publicity campaign by the RNLI? It educates on how to respond when in trouble in the water; lying flat looking upwards, with arms and legs spread out, and breathing calmly before calling and raising an arm to alert others. Tragically people die every year in the very process of trying to save others who are struggling in the water.

I wonder if you remember in April last year two young men Joaquin Garcia and Folajimi Olubunmi-Adewol jumped into the freezing cold River Thames at London Bridge after hearing a woman’s scream at about midnight. The woman had jumped in to the water, presumably to end her life, but had called out in panic when she hit the water. Mr Garcia, a trainee chef, reached the lady and was able to call out instructions of how to float as a plank. But for some reason, the cold or a strange current meant he was unable to get in to that position himself, and gradually began swallowing water and sinking. After 15 minutes a rescue boat picked them both up, but tragically the other lad who jumped in to help had died in the water, Folajimi Olubunmi-Adewol. The assistant coroner later said of Folajimi "The courage to jump to help a complete stranger in the Thames at night is quite astonishing. Many of us would like to think we would do the same in that situation, but few of us would have the courage and determination."

These two young men had their whole lives ahead of them but they jumped. They didn’t have to – they could have waited for trained rescue services. But they jumped.

The bible passage in Luke is a very familiar parable, but let’s focus today on the choosing of radical compassion when we are unprepared. The lawyer comes to Jesus seeking to know more of God, and how to have eternal life. He is probably not asking for a long life, but eternal life in the sense of living in God’s kingdom and values in both the now and eternity. His answer to his own question of what he must do, pleases Jesus: *“‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’[*[*a*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=luke%2010:25-37&version=NIV#fen-NIV-25391a)*]; and, ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’[*[*b*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=luke%2010:25-37&version=NIV#fen-NIV-25391b)]” But Jesus wants to further challenge him and us, to a compassion and love which is costly and often uncomfortable.

Jesus tells a parable, shocking to hear in that the hero was a despised Samaritan. An ethnic group which the Jews had felt antagonism towards for centuries, and the least likely people to come to the rescue. Jesus makes the enemy, the ‘other’, the hero of the story. As we hear the parable today, we are also shocked at the indifference of the Priest and Levite, and cannot imagine being so callous. But before we look down upon the priest and Levite, there is a context to the story. Priests and Levites who worked in the temple in Jerusalem often lived 18 miles away in Jericho and after a long two week shift would return home along this road with their wages in food. Because of strict Jewish laws their food/meat was not allowed to be contaminated. If it got contaminated by contact with blood for instance, it would have to be thrown away. In stopping to touch and minister aid to the badly beaten man, they may have lost the food their family needed and were waiting for. Of course, this doesn’t excuse their actions. But any number of excuses could pass through their heads allowing them to walk on by, unseen by others. Perhaps they pretended to themselves not to see the man, perhaps he was already dead, I might get attacked myself etc. The road was renowned as dangerous.

While we may not anticipate ever ignoring a badly beaten person on the road, the parable might challenge us to question are there times when we avoid engaging with someone who is in need, and especially when we are busy with important stuff? Not an obvious need like injuries, but a need for company, a need for help, a need for love. We too may have any number of excuses which feel justified at the time. Someone else will be in a better position to help; they won’t want me interfering. If I get involved now, it will mean I let others down – it’s not the right time. It might be particularly difficult to reach out to people who are very different to ourselves, who talk and think differently to us. Let’s ask ourselves honestly, who do we find it most difficult to come alongside and listen to? Whose need do we have anxiety about getting involved with?

I feel challenged by this parable that it is not enough to want to help people in need, but am I willing to come up close and personal, to come in openness and without judgement. To see that person as I would want to be seen in that situation myself, an equal needing understanding and help. Because the Samaritan does come up close, gets right in, tenderly cares for the man and continues with costly ongoing care. He can see the need only by coming up close. Unguarded.

I think that the act of costly compassion shown in this parable is linked to the eternal life mentioned by the lawyer. If eternal life is living in communion with God in the present, it is in the generous giving of oneself that we mysteriously find God and his goodness. Even with the costs of that compassion, there can be deeply spiritual moments when we come up close and personal with someone in their vulnerability. That is because the very heart of God is compassion for his created ones in need. In Jesus’ very early public teaching in the temple he chose to quote Isaiah 61 “*18"The Spirit of the LORD is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, 19to proclaim the year of the LORD's favour."*

The parable of the good Samaritan tells of missed opportunities. Missed opportunities to live out God’s kingdom, to show compassion, and missed opportunities to experience the heart of God. Let’s be encouraged to notice those opportunities and resist any temptation to metaphorically walk on by. What is in us that is stopping the flow of grace to another in that moment? We can be honest and pray for courage and grace to live out God’s compassion, even when we may not feel it in our hearts. We can expect the mystery, that helping another in need blesses us too, participating in God’s compassion and trinity.

Some people are desperately unhappy. Many people are lonely in their own way. People might be struggling in ways which we will only see if we choose to set aside our schedule, and get up close. Jump in, we might say.

Who around you might be in need of you getting up close and making time for them? Is there someone who is acting out of character perhaps?

Interestingly the next passage in Luke describes how Mary and Martha opened up their personal home to Jesus. That is certainly getting up close and personal. But homes are havens, places where we can relax. Especially if our lives are full of people, with meetings, work, busy places, home can be the very place we want to be private. And that is so important. But our homes are also places to bring the kingdom of God, places of love and compassion especially for people who are lonely or struggling in any number of ways.

In Don Davis’ Sacred Roots book, he says “ what if our homes became havens to which the world comes for healing.” Wow!!! What opportunities for grace are we missing?

Let’s close now, not in guilt but in hope of finding more of God’s kingdom in the moments of compassion we share. Imagine how our Church and our neighbourhood can change as we seek to live out compassion, as we notice our reluctance, and jump in anyway. We might encounter our living loving God in that very choice.

## Prayer of Thanksgiving and Response

## Almighty God, in a world of so many choices, with so many options, so many routes to take and roads to follow, we give you thanks that in all the mix of life you are there, you are here with us and always will be. We give you thanks that you have inspired so many people to live their lives with love and support and generosity. We give you thanks that you have set hearts on fire with passion and commitment to serve you and our neighbours in the way you would have us do. We give thanks that we can read and share your word, know your truth, feel your peace and have the freedom to choose right from wrong. For all this and so much more, we give you thanks and praise. ****Amen.****

## Worship song

## Let there be love shared among us. 329 Dave Bilbrough 1979 Thankyou music

## [Let There Be Love Shared Among Us Song Lyrics Video - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zEuS7Ut7kqI)

Let There Be Love Shared Among Us,  
Let There Be Love In Our Eyes,  
May Now Your Love Sweep This Nation,  
Cause Us Oh Lord To Arise

Give Us A Fresh Understanding  
Of Brotherly Love That Is Real,  
Let There Be Love Shared Among Us,  
Let There Be Love.

## ****We pray for others****

## Come, Lord Jesus, into situations of imprisonment in our world today. For those imprisoned against their will, exploited and abused... for those imprisoned by special needs that the world doesn’t understand or have time for... for those imprisoned by the darkness of depression and anxiety... for those imprisoned by addictions… for those imprisoned by their pursuit of wealth… for those imprisoned by fears of any kind. Come, Lord Jesus, and set your people free. ****Amen.****

**Lord’s Prayer**

**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.**

## ****Worship Song**** We are marching in the light of God. SOF 1076 [We Are Marching in the Light of God (Siyahamba) - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZQwmjLjoPKQ)

## We are marching in the light of God We are marching in the light of God We are marching in the light of God We are marching in the light of God We are marching marching We are marching Oh Oh We are marching in the light of God We are marching marching We are marching Oh Oh We are marching in the light of God

## We are living in the love of God We are living in the love of God We are living in the love of God We are living in the love of God We are living living We are living Oh Oh……..

## We are moving in the power of God We are moving in the power of God…

## A sending out prayer

Lord, we have come together,  
and now you send us out with your blessing.  
As we go out,  
**come, Lord Jesus!**  
As we go home,   
come, Lord Jesus!   
As we go to work, school or college,  
**come, Lord Jesus!**  
Wherever we are,  
**be with us, Lord Jesus!**  
**Amen.**

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