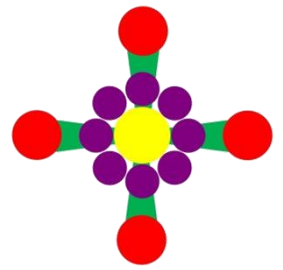


The Benefice of
Harden, Wilsden, Cullingworth, Denholme
5 July 2026



The Fifth Sunday after Trinity

Opening sentences

One thing I have asked of the Lord,
this is what I seek:
that I may dwell in the house of the Lord
all the days of my life;
to behold the beauty of the Lord
and to seek Him in His temple.

The Lord is here
His Spirit is with us

Opening Prayer

Almighty God,

to whom all hearts are open,

all desires known,

and from whom no secrets are hidden:

cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,

that we may perfectly love you,

and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Who is it that you seek?

We seek the Lord our God.

Do you seek Him with all your heart?

Amen. Lord, have mercy.

Do you seek Him with all your soul?

Amen. Lord, have mercy.

Do you seek Him with all your mind?

Amen. Lord, have mercy.

Do you seek Him with all your strength?

Amen. Christ, have mercy.

Declaration of faith

To whom shall we go?

You have the words of eternal life,
and we have believed and have come to know
that You are the Holy One of God.

Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ,
King of endless glory.

Today's Scripture Readings

Romans 7:15-25a

I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. But in fact it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me.

So I find it to be a law that when I want to do what is good, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God in my inmost self, but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind, making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!

So then, with my mind I am a slave to the law of God, but with my flesh I am a slave to the law of sin.

Thanks be to God for the gift of his word

Matthew 11:16-19, 25-end

‘But to what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to one another,
“We played the flute for you, and you did not dance;
we wailed, and you did not mourn.”

For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, “He has a demon”; the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, “Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax-collectors and sinners!” Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds.’

At that time Jesus said, ‘I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

‘Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.’

Thanks be to God for the gift of his Holy Word

When Rest Finds Us in Unexpected Places

I've been preparing for a Bishop's Panel in July, where I am part of a group that discerns if people are called to train as vicars and that means tackling a mountain of paperwork, the kind that needs focus, quiet, and a mind that behaves. With ADHD, that's not always how my brain works. I can care deeply about something and still find myself stuck, circling tasks I genuinely want to do. It's the everyday version of Paul's words in Romans 7: *"I do not do what I want..."* Not because of laziness, but because the wiring of the mind doesn't always cooperate.



So last week, in the middle of the heatwave, I took myself away on retreat. No distractions, no household tasks, no familiar patterns pulling me off course. Just space and that space turned out to be near a lake in North Yorkshire, cool water, quiet air, and the chance to read, pray, think, and then throw myself into the lake whenever the heat or the anxiety got too much.

It was there, with paperwork on my lap and my feet in the water, that Jesus' words from Matthew 11 felt suddenly close: *"Come to me... and I will give you rest."* Not rest from responsibility, but rest from the pressure to manage everything alone and everything at once. Rest from the shame of struggling with paperwork and concentration, rest from the fear that our limitations make us less useful to God.

The lake didn't magically make the paperwork easier, but it made me gentler with myself and in that gentleness, Christ's invitation became real, a shared yoke, not a solo burden. A reminder that God meets us not in our perfection, but in our honest humanity.

For anyone carrying their own mountain of tasks, worries, expectations, or simply the weight of being human, hear this... Jesus doesn't ask us to be endlessly capable. He asks us to come and sometimes coming to him looks like stepping away, finding quiet, cooling down, and letting grace meet us exactly where our minds are. I pray we all find times of refreshment this week

Love Alison

Prayers with Astrid Hansen

Lord, we come before you, joining in prayer and praise wherever we are, as part of the family of the Church throughout the world. We come in worship and thanksgiving, and because you have invited us, we come with prayers of intercession, bringing our anxieties to you and trusting in your mercy. We thank you for the beauties of nature, for the countryside around us and for days of sunshine and flowers we have enjoyed, but we remember too those who have suffered from extremes of weather, farmers facing poor yields of produce for the market or feed for livestock, and those whose health is affected by changes we are not accustomed to, here and in many other countries. We pray that wherever human greed or carelessness or lack of concern is contributing to climate change, there may be repentance and changing of ways.

Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.

Lord, we pray for the needs of the world. As we hear so much of war, distrust and hatred, let us pray for political leaders whose decisions may act far beyond their national boundaries. Lead them to speak and act with wisdom and humanity. Lord, we pray for the countries where war, terror and oppressive regimes continue to bring so much misery – for the people of Ukraine, Sudan and the whole complex situation throughout the Middle East, for all who have lost homes and family, for refugees from these and other conflicts that don't make our news headlines. Lord we pray for the people suffering and afraid in the Ebola outbreak and for the people who put themselves at risk by staying to work among them to relieve suffering and prevent spread of the disease; and we hold before you the people of Venezuela, all who have lost loved ones, those who are still desperately searching, those who cannot begin to imagine what their future may hold.

We pray and give thanks for all those brave people trying so hard to help, regardless of their own safety.

Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.

Lord, we pray for our own country where we have so many blessings but still so many problems. Lord guide our leaders, national and local, in their responses to the many needs and obligations before them.

We thank you Lord for our own communities, our families, friends and neighbours, and we pray for those around us in need at this time, any who are anxious or ill, waiting for treatment or perhaps recovering more slowly than they had hoped, any who mourn, whether a recent or a long-felt loss. Lord, we hold before you the life and work of the churches of this Benefice and pray with thankful hearts for our churchwardens and officers, for all who lead our worship and for Daniel and his family as we look forward to their arrival among us.

Merciful Father,
**accept these prayers for the sake of our son,
our saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father in heaven
Hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come,
your will be done
On earth as it is 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.**

Blessing

May the peace of the Lord Christ go with you,
wherever He may send you.

May He guide you through the wilderness,
protect you through the storm.

May He bring you home rejoicing
at the wonders He has shown you.

May He bring you home rejoicing
once again into our doors.

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

Amen

