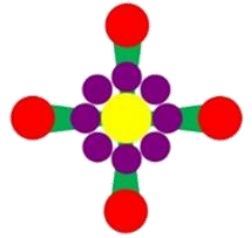


**The Benefice of
Harden, Wilsden, Cullingworth, Denholme
Sunday 25 October 2026
The Last Sunday After Trinity**



Opening Prayers

Jesus said:

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,
and with all your soul,
and with all your mind,

and you shall love your neighbour as yourself.

On these two commandments hang all of the law and the prophets.

The Lord is here; His Spirit is with us.

Prayers of Penitence

Let us speak the truth about ourselves
to our neighbors and to God,
acknowledging what we have done
and what we have left undone.

Confession

Your holiness, O God, commands that we confess:

**We have neither loved our neighbors as ourselves nor honored
ourselves as your beloved creation.**

**We have judged unjustly, regarded others ungenerously, profited at
the losses of those near and distant, borne grudges, desired
vengeance, and kept silence in the face of wrongdoing.**

**We long to live in accord with your desire that your way of
compassion, kindness, and honesty will govern our hearts and
minds, turning us toward lives of peace.**

Forgive us and lead us. Amen.

Absolution

Brothers and sisters, the Holy One who promises forgiveness to those who seek the good hears your confession.

As the crucified and risen child of God, your Redeemer fully knows your sorrow and your desire for reconciled relationships.

You are forgiven. In that promise is the power to love your neighbors and yourselves as beloved of God who created all that exists.

Amen.

Collect

Blessed Lord, who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: help us so to hear them, to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them that, through patience, and the comfort of your holy word, we may embrace and for ever hold fast the hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Readings

Colossians 3:12-17

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Thanks be to God for the gift of His word

Matthew 24:30-35

Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. "From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see all these things, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

Reflection with Liz

Just recently, there has been a programme on television entitled "The Book that changed my life." Inspired by her love of reading and the success of the Queen's reading room, her Majesty Queen Camilla shared the stories of four people whose lives had completely changed. Each of them credited such changes to specific books which had had a profound impact on their lives. For one, the book helped him to reassess the values in his life, helping him to move from a life of crime to a life where he inspired and encouraged prisoners to turn their lives around. Another was able to relate to characters in a book in such a way that he was able to gain self-esteem and self-worth. A third one set out on a completely different route in life and despite personal loss was able to find inspiration from the writings in the book which helped her to persevere on her chosen path. And the fourth found so much inspiration from reading about one person's care of another that he realised that there was value to each person's life, including his own which had been full of despair and lacking in hope, and by recognising that he was able to move forward with renewed purpose and hope. In each case, the changes which had been made were very marked.

But the programme also showed many people whose love of reading had a less dramatic effect on their lives, but whose lives were enhanced by it all the same.

Apparently ten minutes reading each day can help reduce stress by 20%. Others spoke of the peace they found when reading or how they were challenged by some things they read or were affirmed by specific books. Reading helped them to relax or to engage with their emotions. Many felt that books helped them to learn about other parts of the world or to visit far-off places in their imagination. For some it was a brief escapism from difficulties of everyday life. Then there was the joy of being able to share the love of a particular book with someone else and the conversations and camaraderie which followed.

As someone who loves reading – and has a mountain of books waiting to be read – I found the discussions and comments to be fascinating. I could empathise with so many of the readers and was reminded of specific books which have made impressions on my life. I wonder how you feel about books. Do they open up whole new worlds for you? Do they challenge your perceptions of different areas of life? Are there books which you return to repeatedly for inspiration or comfort or solace?

There's one book which probably fulfils such roles for many people and which has no doubt changed the lives of numerous people. It's so special that the church dedicates one day to it. This Sunday is Bible Sunday. What an awesome book the Bible is – one which gives us access to the Word of God and which can mean so much to so many people, helping them to know God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit and to grow closer to them. For some it is a source of inspiration which has helped individuals turn their lives around – or for others a source of help in times of difficulty or hardship – or a source of comfort in times of distress or sorrow – or a source of reassurance that all are loved by their loving creator God. And like the very best of books, the Bible keeps on giving. Each time we open its pages, there are opportunities to learn more, to experience more, to explore our faith in greater depth. Both blessings and challenges can be found inside.

I wonder, do you have particular parts of the Bible that keep drawing you back – maybe to the gospels and Jesus’ mission on earth –or to the power, depth and meaning of the events of Christ’s crucifixion and resurrection - or to the words and music of the psalms – or favourite Old or New Testament stories? Have you favourite verses which you cling to in times of trouble? Or words of praise in joyful moments? Or do different parts of the Bible resonate for you at different times in your life?

There is no doubt that the Bible is full of treasures, blessings and challenges for us all. So, on this Bible Sunday may this be another occasion where you take time to delve into its treasures and through the love of God, his Son Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit may this become a time when, once more, the Bible can become the book which changes your life.

Affirmation Of Faith

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers of intercession with Daniel

Creator God, you give life and light to the world. We rejoice together in the wonder and the fullness of your creation. We give thanks for small seeds that flourish into great trees and bear fruit in abundance. We delight in the gifts of nature and the hope that a good harvest can bring.

Lord, in your mercy: hear our prayer.

Compassionate God, as we celebrate a full harvest table, we remember those whose cupboards are bare. We pray for every family worried about their next meal. For parents skipping meals so their children can eat, and for anyone facing isolation and hunger on their own.

Lord, in your mercy: hear our prayer.

Holy God, thank you that you give us our daily bread and fruit in its season, but beyond this bread we look to the bread of heaven; beyond this fruit we look to the fruits of eternal life and so we pray for your church here in Cullingworth and those who minister to us Sunday by Sunday and help to fulfil our spiritual hunger.

Lord, in your mercy: hear our prayer.

Creator God, we pray for harvests in parts of your world suffering unpredictable climate, changing bureaucracy, natural disaster, disease and war. We pray for all those who provide for our daily needs. For those working on the land, delivering foodstuffs and working in our local markets and shops.

Lord, in your mercy: hear our prayer.

Loving God, we pray for those who are ill and in pain, longing to live full lives, for those who are sad and hurt longing for comfort, for those in hospital awaiting treatment. In a moment of silence, we pray for those on our hearts needing healing.

Lord, in your mercy: hear our prayer.

Merciful Lord, your love reaches beyond the grave. Be with us and with those we love and with those whom we love and have gone before us. We bring before you now those who have recently died or whose anniversary occurs at this time.

Lord, in your mercy: hear our prayer.

Holy God, as we leave this church today, we ask that your guiding hand may be upon our lives. Make us always grateful for the harvest and bounty of your creation and all those who provide for our daily needs; continue to inspire us again with your Spirit that those who have may readily share with those who have not.

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

The Lord's Prayer

Closing Prayer

Loving God, you not only welcome us, you receive us into yourself. Give us courage to be so open to others, Closing Prayers to let them become so dear to us, that we might share not only your gospel but also our lives, through Christ, who makes room for us all. **Amen.**

Blessing

Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind and your neighbour as yourself. And the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit rest upon you, Those you love and those you have prayed for. Today and always.

Amen

Let us go in love and peace to serve the Lord.