**THE UPDATE #287 (19 October 2025) for the Forest of Galtres Benefice*.***

**The Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity 2025**

*Welcome to this week’s update.*

***This update is out early as I am on retreat this week.***

*The video reflections from the diocese are on hold for the time being. Just for a change I have recorded a video reflection for this week – see the link below. There is also a written reflection from me. We continue to pray for the Holy Land as well as Ukraine, prayers below. The monthly What’s On for Benefice Services in September is attached as a separate page.*

**From me:** We have been praying for the Holy Land for over two years now and it seems that we have at long last a move towards peace, if anything it doesn’t mean we stop praying it means we pray harder for an end to that war and for lasting peace!

Blessings  
Steve

**A clock with a red arrow and black text

AI-generated content may be incorrect.**

**REMINDER!**

Next weekend - **Saturday 25th** (probably when you go to bed) you will need to put your clock back one hour as British Summer ends.

**Here is a video reflection on Luke 18.1-8 that invites us to pause, listen, and pray.  
Ctrl & click here** à[**https://youtu.be/kE4F5JGHs3M**](https://youtu.be/kE4F5JGHs3M)

***Coming to church this week* 10.00am Holy Communion at Stillington**

**19 October 10.00am Morning Worship at Sutton**

**6.00pm Celtic Worship at Marton**

***Coming to church next week* 10.00am Holy Communion at Sheriff**

**26 October 10.00am Morning Worship at Stillington**

**Bible Sunday 10.30pm BCP Holy Communion at Farlington**

**A reflection on Luke 18.1-8 & 2 Timothy 3.14-4.5 for the 18th Sunday after Trinity 2025**

In Luke’s Gospel, Jesus tells a story of a widow who refuses to give up. Though the judge she pleads with has no regard for God or people, she persists until justice is done. Jesus offers this parable so that his disciples ‘should always pray and not give up’ (*Luke 18.1*). Faith, he teaches us, is not passive waiting but an active, prayerful perseverance – a daily trusting in the God who hears, who loves, and who acts.

Paul’s words to Timothy echo that same call to steadfastness. ‘Proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favourable or unfavourable; convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching.’ (*2 Timothy 4.2*) Paul is realistic: following Christ and leading his people will not always be easy. There will be times when the message of the Gospel meets resistance or indifference. Yet Timothy, and we, are called to hold fast to what we have learned, to keep faith in God’s word, and to keep proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ with courage and grace.

Leadership, in the Church or in any walk of discipleship, often involves making decisions that not everyone will agree with. Those choices are rarely made lightly. They are the fruit of prayer, discernment, and the seeking of the Holy Spirit’s wisdom. As followers of Christ, our task is always to act faithfully and lovingly, remembering that we are ultimately answerable to God, the One before whom we will give account for how we have used the gifts and responsibilities entrusted to us.

We often speak of *Living Christ’s Story –* our diocesan vision – and it is a powerful reminder of what we are called to be. To live Christ’s story is to be part of God’s mission of love in and for the world today. It is a call to be a *flourishing and sustainable Church* of followers of Jesus, a community where faith is lived, hope is shared, and love is made visible.

Paul puts it beautifully in his second letter to the Corinthians:  
‘You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, to be known and read by all; and you show that you are a letter of Christ, prepared by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts. *(2 Corinthians 3.2-3)* What a powerful image that is! Each of us is a living letter of Christ, a witness to his love, mercy, and truth in the world. The way we live, speak, lead, and serve tells Christ’s story far more eloquently than any words on a page. When we forgive, when we persevere in prayer, when we choose grace over bitterness, when we serve one another with patience, Christ’s story is written anew in our lives.

So let us not lose heart. Let us continue to pray, to teach, to lead, and to love – even when the times are not ‘favourable.’ For God is at work in and through us, shaping a Church that flourishes not because it avoids difficulty, but because it trusts deeply in the God who never fails. As we live Christ’s story together, may we be strengthened by the Spirit, faithful in our calling, and joyful in our witness so that all who encounter us may glimpse something of the living Christ written upon our hearts. Amen.

***A Prayer for the Holy Land:***

**O God of all justice and peace  
we cry out to you in the midst of the pain and trauma  
of violence and fear which prevails in the Holy Land.  
Be with those who need you in these days of suffering;  
we pray for people of all faiths – Jews, Muslims and Christians and for all people of the land.  
While we pray to you, O Lord, for an end to violence and the establishment of peace,  
we also call for you to bring justice and equity to the peoples.  
Guide us into your kingdom  
where all people are treated with dignity and honour as your children  
for, to all of us, you are our Heavenly Father.  
In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.**

***A Prayer for Ukraine:***

**God of all peoples and nations,**

**Who created all things alive and breathing,**

**United and whole,**

**Show us the way of peace that is your overwhelming presence.**

**We hold before you the peoples of Ukraine and Russia,**

**Every child and every adult.**

**We long for the time**

**When weapons of war are beaten into ploughshares**

**When nations no longer lift up sword against nation.**

**We cry out to you for peace;**

**Protect those who only desire and deserve to live in security and safety**

**Comfort those who fear for their lives and the lives of their loved ones**

**Be with those who are bereaved.**

**Change the hearts of those set on violence and aggression**

**And fill leaders with the wisdom that leads to peace.**

**Kindle again in us a love of our neighbour,**

**And a passion for justice to prevail**

**and a renewed recognition that we all play a part in peace.**

**Creator of all hear our prayer**

**And bring us peace. Make us whole. Amen.**