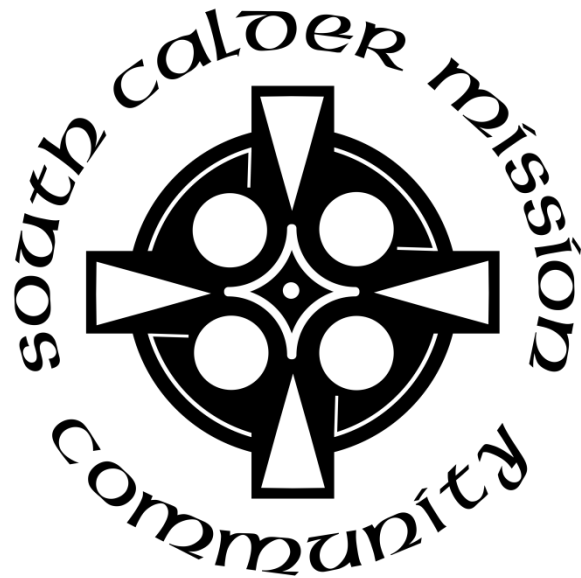


Into his Courts with Praise...



A Service of the Word
for
Sunday 26 July 2026
Eighth Sunday after Trinity.

A Service of the Word for Sunday morning

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INTRODUCTION

*"In all these things we are more than conquerors through him
who loved us."*

Romans 8:37.



THE CONFESSION

The grace of God has dawned upon the world with healing for all.
Though we have grieved him, yet he will heal us if we confess our
sins in penitence and faith.

**Almighty God,
I confess that I have sinned against you
in thought, word and deed;
I have not loved you with all my heart;
I have not loved my neighbours as myself.
Have mercy upon me,
cleanse me from my sins,
and help me to overcome my faults,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Receive God's forgiveness

May the Father forgive us
By the death of His Son
And strengthen us
To live in the power of the Spirit
All our days. **Amen.**

PRAISE

O Lord, open my lips...
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.
Give me the joy of your saving help...
and sustain me with your life-giving Spirit.

THE COLLECT

Lord God, your Son left the riches of heaven
and became poor for our sake:
when we prosper save us from pride, when we are needy save us from
despair, that we may trust in you alone;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Suggested hymn to sing or read **Be thou my vision.**

THE WORD OF GOD.

1 Kings 3:5-12.

At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, 'Ask what I should give you.' And Solomon said, 'You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart towards you; and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love, and have given him a son to sit on his throne today. And now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people, so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted.

Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil; for who can govern this your great people?'

It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. God said to him, 'Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches, or for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, I now do according to your word. Indeed I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you and no one like you shall arise after you.

Psalm 119:129-136.

Your testimonies are wonderful; ♦
therefore my soul keeps them.
The opening of your word gives light; ♦
it gives understanding to the simple.
I open my mouth and draw in my breath, ♦
as I long for your commandments.
Turn to me and be gracious to me, ♦
as is your way with those who love your name.
Order my steps by your word, ♦
and let no wickedness have dominion over me.
Redeem me from earthly oppressors ♦
so that I may keep your commandments.
Show the light of your countenance upon your servant ♦
and teach me your statutes.
My eyes run down with streams of water, ♦
because the wicked do not keep your law.

Romans 8: 26-39.

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family.

And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written,

'For your sake we are being killed all day long;
we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.'

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Suggested hymn to sing or read Hail the day that sees him rise.

GOSPEL

Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52.

He put before them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.'

He told them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.'

'The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.'

'Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.'

'Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

'Have you understood all this?' They answered, 'Yes.' And he said to them, 'Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.'

REFLECTION – Yeast and mustard.

What do mustard seeds, yeast, pearls, fish and Kings have in common? Apart, that is, from each being part of the lectionary set for today. A first thought might be that they are completely un-connected, but is that really so?

Let's look at the Old Testament reading first. The Lord God appears to Solomon in a dream and asks what he should give to him. Solomon thanks him for the gifts he already has and says;

And now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in.

Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil.

Not asking for great power but instead to have wisdom. Just a small thing? We know that Solomon did grow to be wise. From his weakness grew great intellect and strength of mind.

God said to him, 'Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches, or for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, I now do according to your word.'

Solomon, perceiving that he was vulnerable in his inexperience, asked for help and was granted it.

Paul, writing in the letter to the Romans understands that we can't always manage without some help.

The Spirit helps us in our weakness.

Indeed he seems to suggest that we need some help even to ask for help;

We do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words.

This is an interesting thought, and one which has helped me when I needed to pray and couldn't quite find the words.

God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

Of course, God, who is all knowing and all seeing, can read our deepest thoughts and needs. He can make them out even when we can't form the thought completely in our own consciousness.

Now coming to Jesus' parables. Five of them in quick succession, although not following directly from last week's telling of the good seed and the bad, the theme does continue. The parable of the yeast in particular interests me. Not just because I've known what yeast can do from an early age. My mother was a baker and my father a brewer. No dried yeast from a packet for my mum, she used live yeast that Dad brought home from work in a jar. I still remember the smell of it. I often went into the brewery with my father and saw the work done by yeast, the foaming head on top of the fermenting vessels, bubbling as it worked on the sugar to produce beer.

Looking at yeast under a microscope as I have done, you ask how it is that a tiny organism like that can do so much. The result is so much greater than the component parts.

This is why the parable of the yeast follows the parable of the mustard seed. Both are tiny and apparently insignificant. From the mustard seed grows a great plant. From the yeast the bread is leavened. Think about

breadmaking. Think how the dough rises from the action of the yeast. We end up with something greater than we began with. Jesus tells us that this leavening is like the Kingdom of Heaven. And as the dough begins to grow as soon as the yeast is mixed in, he is telling us that the Kingdom of Heaven is already begun. It has started to grow.

So let us be part of it, tiny and insignificant seeds we may be, but we can grow this Kingdom too. Even in a small way, like the yeast starting to work.

And we are not alone, to quote Paul;

I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Even if we begin to pray and don't know what to say, we do know that God is listening and;

The Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

Let us open ourselves to hear the will and the word of God and become part of his Kingdom.

Amen.

Brian Pateman.

Suggested hymn to sing or read ***At the name of Jesus.***

THE CREED

**All I believe in God the Father,
 whose loving care is the pattern for family life.
 I believe in Jesus, the Son of God,
 who lives in my heart through faith,
 and fills me with his love.
 I believe in God the Holy Spirit,
 who strengthens me with power from on high.
 I believe in one God;
 Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

THE PRAYERS

A time of quiet prayer for

- *The universal Church - Bishops, synods and all leaders church*
- *The leaders of the nations*
- *The natural world and the resources of the earth*

Lord Jesus, you are the Prince of Peace.

**Look upon our divided world
to be with those who are victims of violence.**

**We pray for the people of Ukraine
and all who have been subjected to the cruelty of others.**

Help us to know the gift of your peace

in the power of your Spirit and

we ask you to soften the hearts

of those who can stop the fighting.

**Creator God, we ask for your aid as your children of light
living in the darkness of our world.**

Amen.

Cumbria Ecumenical Spirituality Group.

Finishing with the South Calder Mission Community prayer...

**Heavenly Father we thank you for the life of your Church
in this place, and in all the villages of the South Calder
Mission Community;**

**for all who have served and worshipped you in years gone by,
for all who make up your family in our churches today,
for the faith we have in common, and for the people and
traditions which make each church unique.**

**By your Spirit, guide and equip us,
that together we might find new ways
to reach out to our local community,
to show your love to our neighbours,
and to encourage them**

to follow the Lord Jesus in their lives.

Father, we offer ourselves to your service,

In the unity of the Holy Spirit,

And in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

and the Lord's prayer...

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come;
thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven.**

Give us this day our daily bread.

**And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.**

And lead us not into temptation;

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,

the power and the glory,

for ever and ever. Amen.

THE CONCLUSION

*Suggested hymn to sing or read **The Kingdom of God is justice and joy.***

The following prayer is said

Be with me, Lord, as I finish my prayer today.

May my lips always speak the truth;

may my eyes which have read your word

see only what is good;

and may my life as well as my worship

be always pleasing in your sight,

for the glory of your name. Amen.

And now may the Lord who brought us to birth by his Spirit,
strengthen us for the Christian life.

May the Lord who provides for all our needs
sustain us day by day.

May the Lord whose steadfast love is constant as a mother's care,
send us out to live and work for others.

And the blessing of God Almighty.

the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,

be with us and remain with us always.

Amen.

So now may I go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

In the name of Christ. Amen.

Links for the hymns

Be thou my vision.

<https://youtu.be/DORM8ttY1ws>

Hail the day that sees him rise.

https://youtu.be/_k1xflx1d1w

At the name of Jesus.

https://youtu.be/_7w-tDjlpqk

The Kingdom of God is justice and joy.

<https://youtu.be/KXZsAM4T7iU>