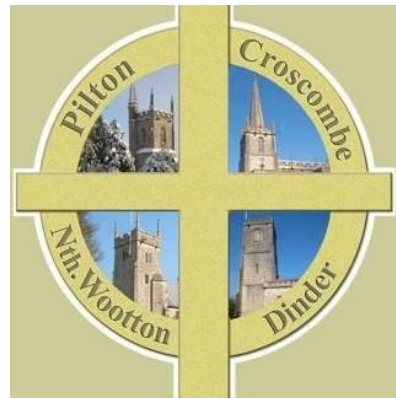


***Pilton with Croscombe,  
North Wootton and Dinder.***

***Morning Worship for 29th  
August***



Grace, mercy and peace  
from God our Father  
and the Lord Jesus Christ  
be with us all. Amen

We come from scattered lives to meet with God.  
Let us recognize his presence with us.

*Silence is kept.*

As God's people we are together even if  
physically apart so let us worship him together.

## **Hymn: Creation sings the Father's song.**

(This may be new to some of you but hopefully you will enjoy it.)

<https://youtu.be/rAE0vUurnUM>

## ***Prayers of Penitence***

Lord God, we have sinned against you;  
we have done evil in your sight.

We are sorry and repent.

Have mercy on us according to your love.

Wash away our wrongdoing and cleanse us from  
our sin.

Renew a right spirit within us

and restore to us the joy of your salvation,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

May the Father of all mercies  
cleanse us from *our* sins,  
and restore us in his image

to the praise and glory of his name,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**All Amen.**

### ***Praise***

Let everything be said and done in the name of  
the

Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God through Jesus  
Christ.

Sing psalms, hymns and sacred songs:

let us sing to God with thankful hearts.

Open our lips, Lord:

and we shall praise your name. Amen.

### ***The Collect***

Almighty God, who called your Church to bear  
witness that you were in Christ reconciling the  
world to yourself: help us to proclaim the good  
news of your love, that all who hear it may be  
drawn to you; through him who was lifted up on

the cross, and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

## ***The Word***

This week we have a lyrical version of psalm 45 sung by Shane and Shane.

<https://youtu.be/yCTFpPmQyHQ>

## **Psalm 45**

### **Ode for a Royal Wedding**

<sup>1</sup> My heart overflows with a goodly theme; I address my verses to the king; my tongue is like the pen of a ready scribe.

<sup>2</sup> You are the most handsome of men; grace is poured upon your lips; therefore God has blessed you for ever.

<sup>6</sup> Your throne, O God, endures for ever and ever.  
Your royal sceptre is a sceptre of equity;  
<sup>7</sup> you love righteousness and hate wickedness.  
Therefore God, your God, has anointed you with  
the oil of gladness beyond your companions;  
<sup>8</sup> your robes are all fragrant with myrrh and  
aloes and cassia. From ivory palaces stringed  
instruments make you glad;  
<sup>9</sup> daughters of kings are among your ladies of  
honour;  
at your right hand stands the queen in gold of  
Ophir.

## **Song of Solomon 2: 8-13**

The voice of my beloved!  
Look, he comes,  
leaping upon the mountains,  
bounding over the hills.  
My beloved is like a gazelle

or a young stag.  
Look, there he stands  
behind our wall,  
gazing in at the windows,  
looking through the lattice.  
My beloved speaks and says to me:  
'Arise, my love, my fair one,  
and come away;  
for now the winter is past,  
the rain is over and gone.  
The flowers appear on the earth;  
the time of singing has come,  
and the voice of the turtle-dove  
is heard in our land.  
The fig tree puts forth its figs,  
and the vines are in blossom;  
they give forth fragrance.  
Arise, my love, my fair one,  
and come away

## **The Gospel Reading Mark 7: 1-8, 14, 15, 21-23**

Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him, they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders; and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it; and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles.) So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, 'Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?' He said to them, 'Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written, "This people honours me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; in vain do they worship

me, teaching human precepts as doctrines.”

You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition.’

Then he called the crowd again and said to them, ‘Listen to me, all of you, and understand: there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile.’ For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.’

Song: Purify my heart

<https://youtu.be/9Y8zP34AhuU>

**Sermon** by Chris



This week after quite a few weeks in John's Bread of Life discourse we are back in Mark. Before we start just a quick recap as we come straight back into chapter 7. We have seen healings, parables, and immediately before this reading we have heard of John the Baptist's beheading and the feeding of the 5000.

It is easy to listen to this reading and make judgements on the officiousness of the Pharisees or the carelessness of the Disciples, depending on where you come at it from.

However maybe all is not as it seems.

Firstly we need to remember that the Jews had commandments and laws given from God and then strong rituals and traditions which had become rules given by men.

Today we are thinking about washing of hands before eating. Some of the rituals around this action can be traced back to the first Priests as they went into the temple and followed the rules prescribed from God. They were designed to make sure the Priests were ritually clean to enter God's presence. Over the years these had been adopted as traditions for everyone not just priests and became human laws.

One of the reasons for the kosher laws, beyond hygiene was also to make sure they had a strong cultural heritage. Remember Roman rule was designed to assimilate you into Pax Romana and to continually resist that you needed a strong identity.

So maybe the Pharisees weren't being so legalistic and antagonistic, one of their important roles was to make sure the Jewish nation retained its identity under God. But the disciples

also were not breaking the central commandments sent from God, they were ignoring the laws made by man. I had never really thought about it but the commentary I was reading said not everyone worried about keeping every rule.

I was trying to think of an equivalent today – one that came to mind, which isn't quite as strong is the drinking alcohol, some branches of Christianity encourage no drinking of alcohol but not everyone follows that particular advice, and not doing so does not distract from their faith in God. Maybe the disciples fall into a similar category, we know they take their faith seriously but maybe in Galilee they never worried about that rule, would have been rather onerous for fisherman out on the sea of galilee to obey all the rules.

Whether the Pharisees were just making a point or whether they had legitimate concerns Jesus sees a good teaching opportunity.

Firstly Jesus addresses the Pharisees. He does criticize them but notice his criticism is that 'you abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition.' It is the human precepts he is most worried about, the Pharisees have made them as important as the divine laws. I am sure today we can think of examples where various institutions and individuals have become legalistic and lost site of what is actually important.

Secondly he addresses the crowd. He reminds them that nothing eaten affects the heart and soul, they cannot blame them for the negative things everyone does. People should concentrate on purifying their hearts and keeping themselves close to God.

It is strange reading this in a time that washing hands has become so important. However maybe it is reminder that the motivation is as important as the action, we wash and gel our hands to keep ourselves and each other safe from germs. Just imagine if someone saw a video of a church service now, would they realise the hand washing was for that reason or would they think it was a crucial part of our liturgy and therefore make it a rule? Just a thought.

Our other reading today is in total contrast Song of Songs or Song of Solomon

It's like no other book in the bible, it enters the world of personal relationships, intimate and sensual in places, and playful in others. Above all it is beautiful Hebrew poetry.

God is not mentioned, nor are any religious traditions or law. It is also the only book where a female voice dominates (for those that like

stats 56 verses against 36), a voice that is confident and who knows themselves as an equal.

Traditionally it was thought King Solomon wrote it, and that is one reason it is in the canon, that is possible but not definite.

Why was it written is a question that has challenged scholars for years, some of the various theories which you may have heard are an allegory for the love of God for Israel, Jesus and the Church or an individual, a fertility rite or a love poem celebrating young love.

It is the last explanation I want to think about today and why it is worth reading.

The most obvious reason is that God is love and God created love, it is something to be celebrated, however it sounds a bit strange to our cultural frame of reference. There is language that many would consider erotic so not

always comfortable for everyone. This particular passage is one often used for weddings.

Human love is a gift from God. Yesterday I took a wedding (the first one for a long time) and in the service we talked about love being a gift from God therefore something that should be celebrated. We all need love in our lives so, as we think about this reading, we can both think about the joy of spring coming each year and about our own experiences of unconditional love from whatever source. It is a celebration of that love, and that is why I am glad this reading is in the lectionary – we need to celebrate love as an antidote for all that is going on in this world.

As we watch the headlines and listen to people talking it is so easy to concentrate on the negatives right now. I found myself doing that this week, all began to seem rather depressing. But readings like this draw us away from those

negative experiences and remind us that love is everywhere. God is everywhere.

Amen

**Hymn** I will offer up my life

<https://youtu.be/ihUko9M6dpA>

*We continue with the Apostles' Creed*

**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 from Sue***

**Let us pray to the Father through the Son  
and in the power of the Holy Spirit.**

Heavenly Father, we give thanks for the hope and sustenance we receive in knowing that you love us. We thank you for the gifts we receive from you each and every day as individuals and as members of your Church. We pray for Christians across the world especially where it is difficult and dangerous to be free to worship as people choose.

In our own parishes we pray for discernment for the future for our worship and for wise, compassionate ways to be the Church in our communities.

**Lord in your mercy, *hear our prayer.***

Loving Lord, the news is so full of problems and anxieties for the future. We bring before you the situation in Afghanistan: the threats against personal freedom, and the ordinary citizens living in danger and fear; we remember those affected

by the bombing and we pray for the safety of those working to bring support and relief.

**Lord in your mercy, *hear our prayer.***

There is so much beauty around us but we tend to forget that when we hear and see so many problems in the world. We pray that resources will be wisely used and shared; we pray for people whose homes and livelihoods are threatened because of extreme weather conditions and natural disasters, especially the people of Haiti. We think too of refugees trying to escape from oppression, danger and poverty.

**Lord in your mercy, *hear our prayer.***

As life begins to open a little and the new school year begins we pray for new beginnings, for safety and well-being when people mix in larger groups. We pray for children starting new pre-schools, schools and colleges that they will have

happy, fruitful years with settled environments and opportunities to learn and develop. With village organisations making tentative starts, we pray that people will come together and build up the common life.

**Lord in your mercy, *hear our prayer.***

Compassionate Lord, hear our concerns for people we know and know about amongst our own families, friends and neighbours. We remember people who feel lonely, unloved or despondent, maybe because of their life situations, their health, or because of difficult life issues. We continue to pray for people in areas where Covid cases are very high, locally and in other parts of the country. We bring these prayers and our own concerns to the Lord a moment of quiet.

Grant your healing peace and love to all in need

**Lord in your mercy, *hear our prayer.***

Lord of eternal life, we rejoice in the fellowship of all your saints and pray that we may come to share with them and with St Michael and all angels in your eternal kingdom.

**Lord in your mercy, *hear our prayer.***

Lord God, you give us life, you give us love, you give us yourself. Inspire us to do our best to give our lives and our love to you today and in the days to come this week.

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

We continue in prayer as we say the prayer Jesus taught us all:

**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.**

**Hymn: O Lord my God**

<https://youtu.be/USM71JqV30o>

***Conclusion***

*The service ends with a Grace.*

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
and the love of God,  
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,  
be with us all evermore.  
Amen.