

# Cathedral Life Weekly | 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Trinity, 12<sup>th</sup> July 2020

## A Message from Jean Elliott: A breath of Fresh Air

It's great to be back from furlough and it feels as though we're taking our first steps together into a new season. There is still much we need to do differently and to take special care over, but the Easter candle has been lit, we are able to welcome people to the cathedral building again and the time for new opportunities and new beginnings is here.

I'm glad it's summer! (I'm hoping there are at least two or three months of mainly sunshine ahead and that we haven't already had our allocation!) For our children and family ministry, at least, outside seems the way to go. We are delighted that this Sunday (12<sup>th</sup> July), Junior Church will be happening in the beautiful Guy Harlings garden. We are very blessed to have access to such a special outside space and we are looking forward very much to welcoming families there this Sunday and for the Sundays to come. There will be thirty places available each week. Please click on this link to request your free ticket. <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/junior-church-at-guy-harlings-gardens-tickets-112642942072>

We are also looking forward to starting 'Muddy Church' one Sunday afternoon very soon. At first, this too will take place in Guy Harlings Garden, although eventually we hope to venture further afield, discovering and enjoying God's creation, worshipping God creatively together and exploring the Bible in different outdoor settings. Thinking about this has reminded me that much of Jesus' ministry took place outside and he delighted in using illustrations from his surroundings in his teaching about the kingdom of heaven. Guy Harlings garden is full of magnificent trees and these will be the focus of our first Muddy Church. Look out for Zacchaeus who first encountered Jesus while sitting up a tree!

I'm hoping too, that we will be able to invite families to the Garden during the school summer holidays, to relax and enjoy a 'Summer Space', away from the many pressures they are under. Jesus promised that where two or three gather together in his name, he is in the midst, and quite probably numbers will be small at any one time, giving lots of opportunities to spend quality time together.

Whatever the weather, we look forward to a breath of fresh air in more ways than one as the refreshing wind of the Holy Spirit inspires and equips us for the days ahead.



*Jean Elliott*

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## ***Come, let us worship***

*The Dean writes*



Today the Cathedral opens for public worship for the first time in over 100 days. It is an important moment – but also just a first step! It is wonderful to have the acting Bishop of Chelmsford, Peter Hill, with us to preside and preach. And there is much of course that is familiar – the building itself and the shape of our worship. But we continue to adapt to the times we are living through, so many things will feel far from normal.

The building itself has been re-arranged to ensure social distancing, and there is hand sanitiser at the door. Everyone comes in through the south door and at the end we all leave through the north door. Both government and church guidance are clear that there can be for the time being no singing and those leading the service will wear masks (with additional visors for those distributing communion. Communion will be brought to people in their places, rather than people coming forward.

The biggest difference for the moment is that we can only have limited numbers gathering together in the building, so we are having to regulate numbers by a simple booking system. You can find details on the Cathedral website, and the booking system may need to change, but for this Sunday people should register in advance by ringing Laura Dolton on 01245 294470 on **Friday 10th July** between **12 midday and 3pm**.

It is great news that **Junior Church** will also be running this Sunday at 10.30am in Guy Harlings Gardens. This will be an All Age Service, and places must be booked in advance here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/junior-church-at-guy-harlings-gardens-tickets-112642942072>

The 10.30 am Eucharist will continue to be live-streamed on Facebook and then on to You Tube in the normal way, as will the Daily Prayer at 7.45 am and 5.15 pm, which will continue to be led by the Dean and Canons from their homes.

This is all going to seem quite challenging but is part of an exciting journey. As you will know from my Dean's Letters, I am very eager for us not to see this as a journey "back to normal" for two reasons: the first is that the experiences we are living through at the moment are likely to change things permanently, and in ways that we cannot yet fully grasp. The second is that the church is always changing – apart from the basics. Like bread, wine, oil, water, and the Scriptures themselves, most of what we do in church are traditions less than three generations old.

I therefore want to invite all of us to engage in a robust conversation as we go forward. It is likely that it will not be until into the new year that we will be able to sit down all together face to face, so – as I have been from the beginning – can I encourage you to think, reflect and pray about what God is inviting you to notice about what we have lived through over the last 100 days and what the future may hold?

## Study with Us:

**Study Notes on the Sunday Gospel: 12<sup>th</sup> July**

Romans 8.1-11  
Ps 65.8-13  
Matthew 13.1-9,18-23



### **‘Listen! A sower went out to sow.’**

Throughout Chapter 12, Jesus has been encountering mounting hostility, and it looks as if his mission to the House of Israel has failed. Chapter 13, which we read today and over the course of the next two Sundays, uses parables in order to explain.

#### ***Jesus left the house***

It is generally thought that this house is the one he lived in in Capernaum. Such crowds gathered round him. It is estimated that the crowd will have been of several thousand people. He got into a boat and sat there - sitting down is the traditional position for a rabbi teaching his people. The sea is the Sea of Galilee.

#### ***He told them many things in parables***

Parables are multi-layered stories from everyday life, with a twist. They are designed to disturb and get the audience to work out their deeper meaning. A parable is easy to remember, to reflect on, and understand its hidden message. It challenges everyday assumptions. It is also a nonconfrontational way to defuse hostility.

#### ***A sower went out to sow...***

Jesus knows he is addressing Galilean farmers who would easily connect with sowing seeds. He builds on their experience of using a lot of seed and getting a poor yield. At first sight, the sower appears wasteful, throwing seed onto unprepared ground. However, we could also focus on the generosity of the sower who tries to get seeds to grow even on infertile land.

#### ***A crop of a hundredfold***

The 'fold' is the relationship between the amount of seed sown and the amount harvested. In first-century Galilee, a yield of tenfold to fifteenfold would have been the norm. Here the yield is much greater (a hundred, sixty, thirtyfold). This is an indication that the parable is not really about actual seeds but is a metaphor (which is one way of translating the Greek word "parable").

#### ***Let anyone with ears listen!***

With these words, Jesus is inviting his audience to listen carefully, not just to the words they hear but also to their deeper significance. There are different ways to listen to and profit from what we hear, just as there are different soils which give different yields.

#### **Daily Gospel Readings for this week, to use in your daily prayer:**

Monday:	Matthew 10. 34 – 11.1	Thursday: Matthew 11.28 - end
Tuesday:	Matthew 11. 20 - 24	Friday: Matthew 12. 1-8
Wednesday:	Matthew 11. 25 - 27	Saturday: Matthew 12. 14 - 21



## Pray with Us:

Sea Sunday: We remember all those whose lives are lived on your great oceans and give thanks for the work and inspiration of The Mission to Seafarers and pray for all agencies who work amongst seafarers.

Lord God, Creator of land and sea, bless those who work at sea. Be with them in fair weather and foul, in danger or distress. Strengthen them when weary, lift them up when down and comfort them when far from their loved ones. In this life, bring them safely to shore and, in the life to come, welcome them to your kingdom. For Jesus Christ's sake, Amen. (From the Mission to Seafarers).

Pray for All Saints, Writtle

Pray for the Anglican Church of Papua New Guinea, The Most Revd Allan Migi, Archbishop

Pray for those who are unwell: Jean Cooper, Rita James, Winnie Towers, Jill Withams and all those in need of our prayers.

## News

**On – line giving:** via the website: A huge **thank you** to everyone who has used the on-line giving link and donated recently. We really appreciate your gift as we continue to work in these challenging times. If you would like to donate on-line, simply go to the home page of the website and click on the link, or click <https://givealittle.co/campaigns/0c7bf37c-62f7-4011-b9f0-854ead22f93a>

The Cathedral has been **live streaming services** now for three months and many other resources too have moved on-line. As lockdown restrictions ease, we would like to know what you enjoy, what you want more of and how we can do what we currently do, better. Could you help us by answering ten questions so we can plan the way forward for our digital Cathedral? There are links to complete a short survey on our Face Book page, on the Church at Home page of the Cathedral website, or by following this link. <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/QNHM8MT> It will take less than five minutes and will really help us to shape our future mission. Many thanks.

**Book Group:** This month we are reading Honour by Elif Shafak, a novel which explores the experience of living between different societies. We will be meeting via Zoom to discuss the book on Monday July 27th at 7.30. All are welcome to join us – email [sallydilley@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:sallydilley@tiscali.co.uk) for more information.

I am on leave next week so please send any notices to [laura.dolton@chelmsfordcathedral.org.uk](mailto:laura.dolton@chelmsfordcathedral.org.uk)

### Being Resourced:

**If you would like** to receive the Dean's letter emailed to you once a week and you do not already receive it, please email [clare.broome@chelmsfordcathedral.org.uk](mailto:clare.broome@chelmsfordcathedral.org.uk)

**Growing in Faith** resources in a weekly email. If you would like to receive it, please sign up via the 'Church at Home' page of the website or email [imogen.nay@chelmsfordcathedral.org.uk](mailto:imogen.nay@chelmsfordcathedral.org.uk)

**Stations of the Resurrection:** How do we encounter the Risen Lord in this time of darkness? Join with the Rev'd Canon Imogen and others as they lead us through personal encounters with the Risen Jesus, look at the website, or sign up to the Growing in Faith mailing, details above.