

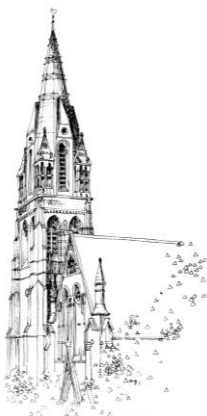
MAYFIELD SALISBURY PARISH CHURCH
EDINBURGH

Online Worship Material Available 8.00am Every Sunday

Sunday 12 July 2020

THE FIFTH SUNDAY
AFTER TRINITY

BENEDICT

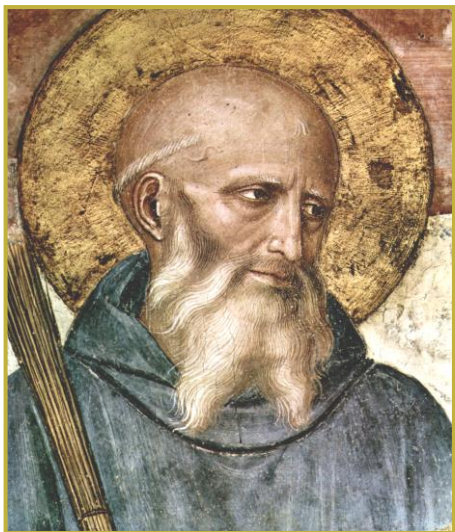


You sought to start a simple school of prayer,
A modest, gentle, moderate attempt,
With nothing made too harsh or hard to bear,
No treating or retreating with contempt,
A little rule, a small obedience
That sets aside, and tills the chosen ground,
Fruitful humility, chosen innocence,
A binding by which freedom might be found
You call us all to live, and see good days,
Centre in Christ and enter in his peace,
To seek his Way amidst our many ways,
Find blessedness in blessing, peace in praise,
To clear and keep for Love a sacred space
That we might be beginners in God's grace.

Malcolm Guite
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AS A DIVERSE PEOPLE, THE CHURCH GATHERS TO WORSHIP ALMIGHTY GOD



St Benedict of Nursia (c. 480–543) Detail from a fresco by Fra Angelico (c. 1400 – 1455) in the Friary of San Marco.

Welcome **Revd Helen Alexander** [Click to view](#)
Good morning to the members and friends of the congregation of Mayfield Salisbury Parish Church, and welcome to this worship online for the 5th Sunday after Trinity.

Yesterday the calendar of the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches commemorated St Benedict whose famous Rule became the basis for one of the great monastic movements in medieval Europe. Noted for its humane and moderate approach to community life based on the twin foundations of work and prayer, the Rule still guides Benedictine communities to the present day.

Here is a sonnet for St Benedict by Malcolm Guite:

**You sought to start a simple school of prayer,
A modest, gentle, moderate attempt,
With nothing made too harsh or hard to bear,
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That sets aside, and tills the chosen ground,
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You call us all to live, and see good days,
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To clear and keep for Love a sacred space
That we might be beginners in God's grace.**

I invite you now to join me in a short period of silence in preparation for worship.



Scripture Sentences

Let me hear what God the Lord will speak,
for he will speak peace to his people,
to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts.
Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him,
that his glory may dwell in our land.
Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet;
righteousness and peace will kiss each other.
Faithfulness will spring from the ground,
and righteousness will look down from the sky.

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the
Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us pray

Father of mercy and of peace, bless us and help us as we seek first to cultivate that attitude of heart receptive to your gracious word, and let us be open to the benediction of this hour.

If we have risen today with sorrowful hearts, or anguish of soul, speak peace to our hearts and calm our restless minds in the name of him who shared our sorrow and suffered pain and anguish for our sakes; even Jesus Christ our Lord.

If we are haunted by regret and the trauma of past memory, bless our hurts and those whose injuries we may have caused, and bless us all with the healing hands of him who preached mercy to the poor in spirit and lightening of the loads of those who are heavy burdened.

If it is hard for us to surrender to a power other than our own, or to raise our eyes beyond the immediate concerns of everyday, help us to know that it is in bending in humility that we are enabled to walk tall with true and supple strength, and that it is in looking beyond ourselves we may be granted a vision of the unity of all things through the grace of the Holy Spirit to whom with you and the Son be glory.

The Collect

Almighty God who has made us for yourself and for whom our hearts are restless until they find their rest in you, grant us peace in your service, and the joy of seeing you face to face in the world to come; through Jesus Christ our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Reading

Psalm 65

[Click to read](#) [Click to view](#)

HYMN 124

Lobe den Herren

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty

[Click to view](#)

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation;
praise God, my soul, for in him are your health and salvation;
come all who hear,
into his presence draw near,
joining in glad adoration.

Praise to the Lord, who in all things is wondrously reigning,
shields you from harm and is gently yet firmly sustaining.
Have you not seen
how your heart's wishes have been
granted by God's wise ordaining?

Praise to the Lord, who with blessing and power will defend you;
surely his goodness and mercy shall daily attend you;
ponder anew
what the Almighty can do:
God will for ever befriend you.

Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in me adore him!
All that has life and breath, come now with praises before him!
Let the Amen
sound from God's people again:
gladly for ever adore him.

Joachim Neander (1650-1680)

Translated Catherine Winkworth (1827-1878) (alt.)

Played by Kate Pearson

Sung by Susan White

WE LISTEN FOR THE SPIRIT OF GOD

Readings

Genesis 25: 19 – 34

[Click to read](#) [Click to view](#)

Romans 8: 1 – 11

[Click to read](#) [Click to view](#)

St Matthew 13: 1 – 9

[Click to read](#) [Click to view](#)

Readers: Tom Mole and Kay McIntosh DCS

‘Tell me a story. In this century, and moment, of mania, Tell me a story.’⁽¹⁾

These words by the 20th Century American writer Robert Penn Warren implicitly acknowledge that narrative has great capacity to teach us about life.

Stories invite us to delve into what it means to be human, whereby for good or ill we may identify with characters and their situations, or learn about other societies, cultures and ways of looking at things that are different from our own. Story can also help us connect to our societal, national and international past. The current popularity of Hilary Mantel’s great trilogy of the life and times of Thomas Cromwell is a contemporary example.

More than half of our Old Testament is narrative in which it can sometimes be hard to distinguish myth, history, folktale and fiction in the unfolding drama of the Hebrew people as the chosen race of the Abrahamic God, and the mixed fortunes of the nation of Israel. However, unless you’re a dedicated textual scholar, what’s important is that we might learn about ourselves, our religious heritage, and how we might open up somehow to the illusive mystery of God.

This week’s story within the Old Testament’s grand-narrative introduces what we might call the Hebrew version of the terrible twins Esau and Jacob whose uneasy relationship began in their mother Rebecca’s womb, continued into adulthood, and was to be seen as the basis for the enmity between the tribes of Edom and Israel.

Their story continues the theme of the purposes of God for the chosen people and the gradual understanding that this purpose was to unfold in surprising ways, often against the cultural norm that favoured the older son in a family. As the fortunes of Israel had rested upon Isaac rather than Abraham’s first born Ishmael, so it was to be with Isaac’s the younger son Jacob rather than his brother Esau, albeit Esau was the senior by a mere whisker. God’s mysterious purposes were unpredictable, as the prophet Isaiah knew: ‘...my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord’⁽²⁾ - surely no bad thing for people of any generation to bear in mind.

But the story of Jacob and Esau is no less illuminating for its insights about human nature, specifically family functionality, or dysfunctionality to be more accurate. This ancient nomadic family was no idealised model of domestic bliss. It’s much more true to life.

1. Robert Penn Warren *Tell Me a Story* New and Selected Poems 1923 – 1985 Random House 1985
2. Isaiah 55: 8



Esau Selling His Birthright by Hendrick ter Brugghen c. 1627

Read the beautifully told story in Chapter 27 of Genesis along with today's lesson and you're led into a skilfully observed family drama featuring intense sibling rivalry, no doubt fostered by parental favouritism whereby Esau was singled out for the attention of his father Isaac, and Jacob was his mother's boy. Esau's rough and ready somewhat boorish nature whereby his stomach ruled his head proved no match for Jacob's devastating ability to use his calculating head to serve his own ends. Perhaps he'd learned from his mother Rebecca who may have been an impressionable doe-eyed beauty when first married but, whether by natural tendency or marital disappointment had turned out to be a first-rate schemer and manipulator for whom her ageing husband, short-sighted in more ways than one was, in a manner of speaking, a complete push-over. While Jacob inveigled his older brother to trade his birth-right for a square meal, Rebecca devised the strategy that made this an actuality, dressing Jacob in his brother's clothes, wrapping his arms and neck with animal skins to make them feel like Esau's, and sending him to his blind father with a savoury supper to receive the coveted blessing. Once the deed was done, no hindsight and regret on Isaac and Esau's part could revoke its effect, and the benefits, material and otherwise belonged forever to Jacob and his descendants.

Thankfully this archetypal pattern isn't necessarily repeated in most ordinary families. Yet the skilful Biblical narrators were astute observers of human nature. There was no attempt to gloss over human fallibilities and failings. 'Families and how to survive them'⁽³⁾ was the name of the game; and who

3. John Cleese and Robert Skinner wrote the bestseller *Families and How To Survive Them* Cedar Books 1993

would argue that in a great many cases, it still is, to a greater or lesser extent. And difficulties can be passed down through generations, oftentimes with little or no conscious awareness on the part of the participants until some circumstance might prompt investigation and reflection.

We need to tread sensitively. Families can go horribly wrong and when they do, need all the help available. Fortunately however, while some intergenerational conflict is to some extent inevitable, in the end most of us remain more or less content with the family into which we're born, sometimes valuing family ties more and more as we grow older. And those who become parents generally devote their attention to shaping the future for their children's benefit and good. As the ancient story tellers of Israel knew, the family is the setting for much pride and joy as well as struggle and disappointment, and their tales can be a source of recognition and relief as well as hope for us today.

Turning to the New Testament, we find that story is central there too in the meta-narrative of the birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ, and we prize the individual stories that make up the Gospels, including the particular parabolic tales beloved of Jesus.

The point of his kind of rabbinic teaching is that people are left to make of it as they will. You've to work at the answer and apply it to yourself rather than being spoon-fed a single meaning that's applicable to all.

There are instances in the Gospels when Jesus is heard to explain his parables, though most believe that this reflects the interpretation of early Christian communities written into the finalised text.



Jesus talking to his twelve disciples by James Tissot

Matthew includes such an explanation of the parable of the sower that we heard today whereby the seed is the message of the Gospel, the fruitfulness of which depends on the capacity or willingness of the individual hearers to act upon it.

All well and good, but this isn't necessarily the only meaning to be read into the parable. It can also be helpful to focus on the harvest that we're to understand was to be unbelievably large, far in excess of that which would normally be expected from even most fruitful Palestinian field. Looked at this way, the point is not so much the capacity or willingness of each of us to contribute to the work of the kingdom, but more the lavish indiscriminate generosity of the divine sower of the seed. This makes it less about our effectiveness as individuals or even as individual churches and congregations, important as these may be, and more about the generous gift of life to the church universal in which we are all invited to participate.

The abundant blessing that was promised to Jacob and his descendants, despite their shortcomings and failings is of the same order and scale as that promised to the church. It is more dependent on the generosity of God than on our individual or collective achievement.

RESPONSE TO THE SPIRIT OF GOD WITHIN

Kate Pearson [Click to view](#)
'Lied' by Louis Vierne (1870-1937)

Thanksgiving and Intercession – Revd Helen Alexander [Click to view](#)

We make our prayer for all people of the earth whatever their situation and circumstance, colour and creed, giving thanks for the great diversity of nations, and the gift of each for those who have eyes to see and hearts to receive. We pray for expansion of vision and collaboration in good and useful purpose that the welfare of the whole may prove more than the sum of its parts.

In these difficult and testing times we pray that wisdom and open mindedness may overcome mistrust and competition, and that the clutch of insecurity and fear may be replaced by an openhanded willingness to enter into dialogue and diplomacy for the sake of overcoming poverty, disease and death, and for furthering the cause of peace and security throughout the world.

We pray for leaders of the nations, balancing the welfare of their citizens with their joint responsibilities for the future of the world. And we pray for the earth, shared by us all and with all living things: for wise cultivation and the treasuring of wild places; for the welfare of animals and the valuing of species; for increasing mindfulness in respect of thoughtless policies and developments devised by those who are bent on self-seeking and gain.

On this day that is celebrated by many groups and churches as Sea Sunday, we pray for the oceans of the world and all who do business in their waters: for fishermen and sailors; for those who serve in the great navies of the world; for all who guide ships to safe anchorage and harbour; for great ocean liners connecting people to far- away places even as we think too of tiny vessels upon which livelihoods of families and communities depend.

We remember families in this country and beyond: those struggling with want, unhappiness and fear; children who are neglected and unloved as well as all those millions upon millions who are faithfully nurtured with kindness and care. We delight with all whose partnerships and marriages are graced with loving connection and concern, even as we pray for those that are threatened by pressure, misunderstanding and deep enduring conflict.

We pray for the church here and abroad, cautiously opening doors again for prayer and worship, hospitality and service. We give thanks for lessons learnt: that faith does not depend on buildings, glorious and precious though they may be; that nature can become a great cathedral and the quietness of a small secluded place become a sanctuary of prayer; that faith endures in the hearts and minds of millions upon earth.

We pray for our communities and neighbours, remembering those we love and treasure beyond words. We offer our thoughts and concern for those who are ill or facing an uncertain future; for those who are dying and all who grieve. And we remember with thanksgiving those whom we have loved, lost and love yet who are gathered into the arms of God within the Community of Saints; through Jesus Christ our Lord to whom be glory for ever.



The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, which 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. 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.

HYMN 243 **Touch the earth lightly**

[*Click to view*](#)

Tenderness

Touch the earth lightly,
use the earth gently,
nourish the life of the world in our care:
gift of great wonder,
ours to surrender,
trust for the children tomorrow will bear.

We who endanger,
who create hunger,
agents of death for all creatures that live,
we who would foster
clouds of disaster,
God of our planet, forestall and forgive!

Let there be greening,
birth from the burning,
water that blesses and air that is sweet,
health in God's garden,
hope in God's children,
regeneration that peace will complete.

God of all living,
God of all loving,
God of the seedling, the snow, and the sun,
teach us, deflect us,
Christ re-connect us,
using us gently and making us one.

Shirley Erena Murray (b.1931)
Played by Kate Pearson
Sung by Susan White

BENEDICTION

New Video [Click to view](#)

Deep peace of the running wave to you
Deep peace of the flowing air to you
Deep peace of the quiet earth to you
Deep peace of the shining stars to you
Deep peace of the Son of peace to you

And the blessing of God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with you all.

AMEN - The Chamber Group

[Click to view](#)

Touch the earth lightly

The writer of today's second hymn, Shirley Erena Murray, was a New Zealander and fellow of the RSCM and in 2001 was awarded the New Zealand Order of Merit for services to the community through hymn writing which encompasses a wide range of subjects including the seasons of the Christian Year, peace-making, human rights and ecology. Her sensitive use of language and its topicality have caused her work to be widely acknowledged throughout the world.

The composer of the tune *Tenderness*, organist and choir master Colin Gibson also comes from New Zealand and is a fellow holder of the NZOM with Murray with whom he shared enthusiasm for similar themes and frequently collaborated. Of *Touch the earth lightly* he said:

'As often in Shirley Murray's hymns, the energy of the writing arises from the perceived conflict of values: in this case a Christian theology of creation set against contemporary exploitation and destruction of the environment. In the second verse human beings are characterised as agents of destruction, specifically in the context of contemporary French nuclear testing in the Pacific ('clouds of disaster'). The final two verses set out a vision of regeneration and 'greening' and pray for a reconnection between the human community and the natural world.' (Source: *Hymnquest*)

INTIMATIONS

1. **NEXT SUNDAY'S READINGS:** Psalm 139: 1 – 12, 23-24
Genesis 28: 10 - 19a, Romans 8: 12 – 25 & St Matthew 13: 24 – 30.

2. **YOUTH UPDATE**

Jackbox Game Night: S1-S6 youth are invited to join in a Jackbox game night over Zoom on Sunday 12 July at 7pm. All you need is a mobile phone to take part!

Virtual Youth Programming: The *virtual* youth schedule for the month of July can be accessed on the church website under the 'Young People' tab. All youth programming will be held over Zoom. New virtual youth consent forms must be sent to Hillary before attending a session. For log-in access to the Zoom sessions, or to get a copy of the consent forms, please contact Hillary!

3. **MEMORIES OF MAYFIELD** by Sheriff Nigel Thomson C.B.E. (1926-2011)
Nigel Thomson's fascinating booklet of recollections and photographs of earlier times at (*the then*)Mayfield Church can be downloaded and read in its entirety here: [Memories of Mayfield](#).

4. **ONLINE OFFERING / DONATION** The Church is very grateful to all those who give by standing order enabling us to maintain a large portion of our income through these difficult times. We now offer the ability to contribute to our work electronically through the 'give.net' facility which appears on the home page of the Church's website. This provides the possibility of adding Gift Aid to donations. There is also a direct link to the new system which is: <https://www.give.net/20311853>

With best wishes, Hugh Somerville, Free Will Offerings Treasurer.

5. **PASTORAL CARE** Many thanks to all of you who have been in the various phone trees over the past few months. They have been so important and reassuring for so many people.

For those of you making the masks, scrubs and bags. The nursing home have asked me to thank you all for your generosity of time and talents. They now have enough, but are so grateful for your help and response when they were so desperately needing it. *Kay*

Forthcoming Deadlines

Order of service for next week: Thursday at 6.00pm.

Next Grapevine: **Friday 31 July at 6.00pm.**

Please send submissions to the Church Manager, William Mearns.

Phone: 0780 801 1234 or email: churchmanager@googlemail.com

Books for the Journey

My Sour-Sweet Days: George Herbert and the Journey of the Soul by Mark Oakley.

Luminaries: Twenty lives that illuminate the Christian Way by Rowan Williams.

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