

Mears Ashby and Hardwick and Sywell with Overstone



**Prayers and Reflections
for use at home**

**Sunday 19 July 2026
Trinity 7**

Welcome to this week's prayers and reflections. In our Gospel Reading Jesus offers a follow on parable to last week's Parable of the Sower. Again, it is a farming story. What to do with the weeds in God's fields? It's a challenging parable. Who are the weeds? Do you feel comfortable with what it is going to happen to them when Christ comes as judge?

May our Lord's story speak to your heart.

Every blessing,

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*As you prepare to reflect on our Lord's harvesting of his crop,
give thanks for his invitation into his kingdom.*



Come, ye thankful people come,
raise the song of harvest-home!
All is safely gathered in,
ere the winter storm begin;
God, our maker, doth provide
for our wants to be supplied;
come to God's own temple, come;
raise the song of harvest-home!

Henry Alford (1810-1871)

Prayers and Reflections
for use at home on Trinity 7
Wheat and Weeds

PREPARING OURSELVES

Take a moment to be still in God's presence and feel his love. If you are indoors, you may wish to light a candle as a sign of God's love - here, in your room. You may also wish to have a bowl of water ready for the time of letting go. When you are ready, say this opening prayer.

Lord, as I sit and wait in silence,
I place my hopes and dreams,
my fears and concerns,
into your safe and loving hands.
Enfold me with your love,
make my heart beat in time with yours;
in Jesus' name,
I pray. **Amen.**

LETTING GO

If you come to this time of prayer and reflection with any regrets, with things that you wish you had not said, done or been, offer them to God in the silence of your heart. And then, reflect on the words of this next verse.

We ourselves are God's own field,
fruit unto his praise to yield;
wheat and tares together sown,
unto joy or sorrow grown;
first the blade and then the ear,
then the full corn shall appear:
grant, O harvest Lord, that we
wholesome grain and pure may be.

Henry Alford (1810-1871)



*If you wish, dip your finger into a bowl of water and make the sign of the cross on your palm.
Feel God's forgiveness.*

Our harvest hymn weaves together two images: firstly, thankfulness to God for this year's crops gathered safely in and secondly, a prayer for the fruitfulness of our daily lives. As we will see in our Lord's parable, we are born to be as wholesome and as fruitful as wheat grain. It is an image which reminds us of the ending of the Parable of the Sower, where Jesus describes the fruitfulness of the grain that lands in the good earth.

'But the seed falling on the good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it.

*This is the one who produces a crop,
yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times
what is sown.'*

Matthew 13:23

Take a moment to contemplate how your relationship with the one who gave you life (the Father), the one who teaches you how to live (the Son), and the one who is your still small voice (the Spirit) has shaped your life. How have you displayed the Spirit's fruit in your daily life? Blessing – inspiring – encouraging – challenging others to be fruitful too.

Give thanks for this God-breathed fruitfulness.

If you see any blight or weeds in your life, be open about your struggles. God is the one who can help you to feel at one with yourself and him. May he be your source of inner peace.

*You have searched me, Lord,
and you know me.
Before a word is on my tongue
you, Lord, know it completely.
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,
too lofty for me to attain.*

Psalms 139:1-1,4 &6

PRAYING TODAY'S PRAYER

(The Collect)

Across our villages and the worldwide Church, this prayer is being said today. Add your voice to this earthly circle of prayer to our God whose love is unbreakable.

Generous God,
you give us gifts and make them grow:
though our faith is small as mustard seed,
make it grow to your glory
and the flourishing of your kingdom;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Our prayer speaks of God's desire for us to flourish. If we flourish as followers of Jesus, God's kingdom flourishes too. The world around us is blessed by our love, our acts of kindness, our listening and our caring, our patience and our words of peace, our joy and our happiness, our hope even when life feels unbearable. Our grains of goodness offer signs of how our world will be when Christ our King returns.

Ponder how God might be inviting you to make a lasting difference to those who touch your heart or your life. Pray for those whose lives God is asking you to bless or transform. With his Spirit's help, you might change weeds into wheat.



For the Lord our God shall come,
and shall take his harvest home,
from his field shall purge away
all that doth offend, that day;
give his angels charge at last
in the fire the tares to cast,
but the fruitful ears to store
in his garner evermore.

Henry Alford (1810-1871)

The Parable of the Weeds

Jesus told them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. When the wheat sprouted and formed ears, then the weeds also appeared.

'The owner's servants came to him and said, "Sir, didn't you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?"

"An enemy did this," he replied.

'The servants asked him, "Do you want us to go and pull them up?"

"No," he answered, "because while you are pulling up the weeds, you may uproot the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: first collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn."

Then he left the crowd and went into the house. His disciples came to him and said, 'Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field.'

He answered, 'The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the people of the kingdom. The weeds are the people of the evil one, and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels.

'As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. They will throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Whoever has ears, let them hear.

Wheat or weeds...

This parable is not one of our Lord's comfortable ones. It is challenging, very challenging. The people that day would have felt uncomfortable, shocked or scared, as they listened to this parable of the weeds. For this is a tale which is designed to unsettle its hearers. At the end of times, Christ the King (The Son of Man) will come to judge everyone.

Jesus is saying to the people, 'When I come to judge, which will you be? Wheat or weeds?' Obviously, his desire is that everyone will answer, 'Wheat!' because they have chosen to follow him and live by his teaching and thereby filled their homes and communities with early signs of his coming kingdom. But there is a real challenge in this passage.

Jesus is asking his hearers, 'Who is in charge of your heart? Who is directing your life?' If the answer to both is God, all will be well. If not, there is still time. Still time for them to turn away from the darker side of their nature – say 'No!' to sin – and turn towards the light of his love, grace and forgiveness – say 'Yes!' to the life they should be leading.

For – despite the black or white nature of this parable – there is always time to change. Problematic people can become pure and wholesome, inspiring and amazing people. All it takes is a 'Yes!' to God and a 'No!' to the selfish and sinful side of their nature. It is never too late to change.

Satan does not have to win!

Pray for those who are on your heart. Believe they can be wheat.



Then, thou Church triumphant, come,
raise the song of harvest-home;
all be safely gathered in,
free from sorrow, free from sin,
there for ever purified
in God's garner to abide:
come, ten thousand angels, come,
raise the glorious harvest-home!

Henry Alford (1810-1871)

OUR PRAYERS

Feel free to use one or more of these prayers and to add your own.

Lord Jesus, thank you for your call on my life. You have invited me into your kingdom on earth. I am one of your wheat stalks, who seeks to live a pure and wholesome life. May I bless...

Lord, hear my prayer.

Lord Jesus, thank you for your open invitation to everyone, young and old, to enter your kingdom on earth. All can be wheat stalks, who seek to fill your world with love and peace and hope. Bless, I pray...

Lord, hear my prayer.

Lord Jesus, I think of those who feel unworthy to be in your kingdom, unloved and unlovable. Lord, open their eyes to the wideness of your love. All are worthy to come in *if* they turn to you. Call, I pray...

Lord, hear my prayer.

Offer your own heartfelt prayers and yearnings, praise and thanksgivings.

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.**

PRAYER OF BLESSING

A closing prayer of blessing for this week.

O God, you search me and you know me,
all my thoughts and feelings are open to your gaze,
you see the paths I will take before I take them. Guide my daily living.
Bless me and keep my loved ones safe, I pray. **Amen.**