

# Sunday Worship at Home, 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2021, Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity.



## Opening Prayers:

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

## A Prayer of Confession:

In a dark and hurting world, we have not held out the light of life.

**Lord, have mercy.**

In a hungry and despairing world, we have not shared the bread of life.

**Christ, have mercy.**

In a cold and loveless world, we have kept the love of God to ourselves

**Lord, have mercy.**

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins,  
and bring us to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

## The Collect for the 18<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Trinity

God, our judge and saviour, teach us to be open to your truth and to trust in your love, that we may live each day with confidence in the salvation which is given through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

## Mark 10:2-12

<sup>2</sup>Some Pharisees came, and to test Jesus they asked, 'Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?' <sup>3</sup>He answered them, 'What did Moses command you?' <sup>4</sup>They said, 'Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of dismissal and to divorce her.' <sup>5</sup>But Jesus said to them, 'Because of your hardness of heart he wrote this commandment for you. <sup>6</sup>But from the beginning of creation, "God made them male and female." <sup>7</sup>"For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, <sup>8</sup>and the two shall become one flesh." So they are no longer two, but one flesh. <sup>9</sup>Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.'

<sup>10</sup>Then in the house the disciples asked him again about this matter. <sup>11</sup>He said to them, 'Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her; <sup>12</sup>and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery.'

## **Reflection on the reading:**

As Christians following Jesus and striving to live God's way we live in a permanent state of tension between God's ideal, given to us in the laws and laid down in the bible, and the reality of the world around us, which is also described in the bible. A good example of this is given through our reading this morning. In the preface to the modern marriage service the priest proclaims marriage to be a gift of God in creation. In response to the Pharisee's question Jesus places the human invention through Moses of divorce against God's ideal that man should not divide what God has joined together. The numbers around marriage and divorce in the UK today are complex and differ between church weddings and civil ceremonies, same sex and opposite sex couples, first time marriages and re-marriages after divorce. Whilst the overall average is that about half of all marriages end in divorce, what I can say with absolute confidence is that every couple whose wedding I have conducted believe absolutely their marriage will last for life. Life on earth is messy and complex. Mark records Jesus expanding his teaching on divorce to the disciples by talking about adultery, but the whole story around divorce is about much more than just adultery. It includes issues of abuse and violence, and abandonment and neglect. The reason why I sometimes conduct weddings for people are marrying after divorce is that I am a priest of a faith which is based on recognising and dealing the sinful human condition with forgiveness and a clean fresh start. Praise be to God who hates our sin but loves us so much that he came among us, and in the form of his son died for us on the cross to give each and every one of us salvation from our sin and a new beginning as children in his kingdom. Amen

## **The Creed**

**We believe in God the Father, from whom every family in heaven and earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son, who lives in our hearts through faith, and fills us with his love.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit, who strengthens us with power from on high.**

**We believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen**

**Be still and pray:** In your prayers, include prayers for the church, the needs of the world and our local community. Particularly pray for: Areas of the world affected by War, natural disasters and man-made disasters, especially Afghanistan, La Palma, and the West and East Seaboards of America; for our own nation and other nations still dealing with rising COVID infection rates and new variants; for healing and peace for those who are ill; and for the souls of those who have recently died and comfort for those who are mourning their loss.

***Finish with The Lord's Prayer:***

## **Conclusion**

May God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the source of all life and love, pour his blessing upon all things created, and upon you his children; **Amen**

*Reverend Eddie*