

Trinity Methodist Church

Rev. J. Howard-Norman ☎ 07809686867



SUNDAY 20th July 2025

“As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet listening to what he said. But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, “Lord, don’t you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!” “Martha, Martha.” The Lord answered, “you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.”

Luke Ch. 10 v 38-42

10.00 am

Mr. J. Hinton

Readings:-

Amos Ch. 8 v 1-12

Colossians Ch. 1 v 15-28

Luke Ch. 10 v 38-42

Prayer Diary:- Sunday Club, Cambridge Road Baptist Church and Group B.

SERVICE NEXT SUNDAY 27th July 2025

10am – Rev. J. Howard-Norman - Sacrament

Daily Prayer at 9:00am every day (except Sunday): This is now on Microsoft Teams. Just download Teams and you can go straight on to it or use this link
<https://teams.live.com/join/9414857191536>

EcoShop

The EcoShop is **open on Tuesdays from 10am to 1pm** and we would love you to come along to try us out. You will be able to buy 10 items for £4. Please bring your own bag if you can. There are 2 bins in the cafe area for donations (nothing perishable please) to be sold in the shop.
We are getting short of egg boxes, again, please can you save yours.
Thank you so much for your support.
We look forward to seeing you at the Eco Shop – please support us.

Worship at Home for Sunday, 20th July 2025 **Getting our priorities right!** by John Hinton

Opening prayer: Listen to the words of Jesus Christ! Seize the moment with both hands! Let us come together to listen and to learn, as we seek to be followers of his way.

StF 109: In the darkness of the still night

(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1sjdJ3x0K9Y&list=RD1sjdJ3x0K9Y&start_radio=1)

Prayer of confession when we recognise our own faults and mistakes: Holy God, your Word has been spoken,
your voice heard, your desire known. You speak to our every moment, our every breath, our every deed, and yet...

so often even if we hear, we do not listen...and, even when we do listen, we do not always follow your way. Forgive us for being inattentive, deaf to your word and to your ways. But we know that our failings and our falterings are forgiven. We know that if we listen, we will hear God's promise: *'My child, your sins are forgiven, go in peace, go in love.'*

Lord's Prayer, the prayer the bible tells us Jesus himself taught us.

Message: There are times when Jesus says something, either directly or in the form of a story, that just seems unfair! Not in a grand unjust way but in the smaller things, the way that people relate to and work with (or don't work with!) each other.

One example is in the parable of the "workers in the vineyard". He tells a story about a worker arriving late and only working for the last hour of a long shift in the hot sun, yet he receives as much pay as those who laboured all day. When the others complain the owner rebukes them and says *"it's up to me how I reward my workers!"* Another example is the story of the prodigal son. The younger son demands his share of his inheritance and then blows it away in a wild and self-indulgent lifestyle but then, in the end, returns to his loving father (again it is really about our relationship with God rather than the sons' relationship to his father). But am I the only one who sympathises with the older son who complains that he has (yet again no doubt) got the poor deal? He hadn't walked out on his duties; he hadn't blown his father's money away on self-indulgent pleasures and yet he had never had a banquet in his honour! Am I the only one who wants to join with the brother and say *"it's just not fair!"* The gospel reading appointed for today takes us into similar territory: **Luke 10:38-42.**

So, am I the only one who feels sorry for Martha? Am I the only one who feels that Martha, like the brother of the prodigal son in his story and the men who laboured in the vineyard all day, is getting a raw deal from Jesus? Here she is working herself into a frazzle trying to be a good hostess to Jesus and his followers. Here she is (and don't hang me out to dry on a branch of political correctness here as I am historically and culturally correct) here she is doing what a woman should do and there is Mary sitting do nothing ...nothing that is but listen to Jesus! So, Martha gets angry ... and what does Jesus do? Does he support her? No, not a bit of it.... he tells her, in effect, to leave Mary alone – no, it's even worse than that he tells her that Mary is right and she should be more like her! Interestingly (and perhaps sensibly) the gospel writers have decided to omit Martha's response!!

But on reflection I don't think Jesus is rebuking her as much as suggesting that she "Gets her priorities right" The important things are not the "domestic rituals" (the tidiness, the food, the made-up bed, the flowers in the vase) the important thing was to listen to his words on the Kingdom of God. And, if we are honest, I guess that Jesus could have been talking to us rather than Martha. How many times do we get our priorities wrong? How many times do we hide behind a cloak of "busy-ness" to avoid addressing the really important issues? It often strikes me that someone looking in at our churches from the outside would be surprised at what occupies us the most and perhaps more importantly what occupies us the least. If we were to list what is discussed most frequently in our "Church" meetings then I suspect that a significantly greater amount of time is spent discussing:

- Problems with the fabric of our building rather than how we can better build our faith
- Worrying about the health of our budget rather than reflecting on the health of our "spirituality"

And don't misunderstand me I am not saying that all those things that fill our agenda's are worthless nor am I questioning the commitment of all those people who work so hard in our churches. But I am suggesting that we pause and reflect on whether we have got our priorities right. Three thoughts: Are we, individually and as a church, behaving like Martha? Are we too busy with the "practical" and "peripheral" issues that we leave no time to address the issues which should lay at the heart of our faith and discipleship? And, leading on from this, is there a possibility that we choose to behave like this because we prefer it this way? Do we use our "busy-ness" as an excuse to avoid facing up to the more challenging issues in our churches? And moving from the collective to the personal, is our busyness because, unlike Mary, we seek to avoid a more intimate relationship with Jesus? Three thoughts I'll leave with you as we sing a hymn in which our priorities are right!

StF 566: Take my life & let it be

(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a6hqNWh45q8&list=RDa6hqNWh45q8&start_radio=1)

Prayer of Intercession when we bring before God the needs of other people and the planet we share with them: In this moment Lord, we bring our prayers and our concerns for others. The world seems so full of problems, often beyond our imagining and comprehension. Emergencies seem to occur almost daily and we move from one crisis to another so quickly. But in each emergency individual people are impacted and in need.

For those in crisis this day, we pray that someone will listen to them-For those in poverty and destitution, we pray that someone will give them a gift-For those in pain and anguish, we pray that someone will offer relief-For those who are hungry, we pray that someone will feed them-For those who are thirsty, we pray they may be given clean water-For those in grief, we pray that someone will simply be with them-For those who are near the end of life, we pray that someone will hold their hand-For those who are lonely, we pray they may be befriended-For those who are frightened, we pray their fears may be soothed and calmed-For those seeking purpose and point in life, may someone listen to them and bring them to you-For those in dark places, may they see light and hear words of comfort and welcome and hospitality- For our planet suffering from the

impact of climate change and human abuse we pray that a change in minds and hearts can bring healing

Lord, these are our prayers this day, we offer them and ourselves to you. Amen

StF 611: Brother, sister, let me serve you

(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ohy-vGSbkx8&list=RDohy-vGSbkx8&start_radio=1)

Closing Blessing: May the peace of God enfold us, the love of God uphold us and the wisdom of God direct us. Amen