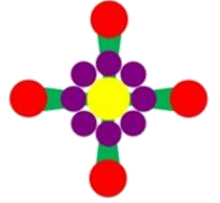


# The Benefice of Harden, Wilsden, Cullingworth, Denholme



28<sup>th</sup> June 2026

Fourth Sunday Of Trinity

Prepared by Liz

Call to worship

In the name of the Father,  
and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

Lord, we come from scattered lives to meet with you.  
We rejoice that you know each of us by name  
and love us, inside and out.  
Show us how to recognise you  
in the friends we are gathered with,  
and how to see you reflected in everyone we meet.

**Amen.**

Confession

God our Father,  
we come to you in sorrow for our sins.

For turning away from you,  
and ignoring your will for our lives;  
Father, forgive us:  
**save us and help us.**

For behaving just as we wish,  
without thinking of you;  
Father, forgive us:  
**save us and help us.**

For failing you by what we do,  
and think and say;  
Father, forgive us:  
**save us and help us.**

For letting ourselves be drawn away from you  
by temptations in the world about us;  
Father, forgive us:  
**save us and help us.**

For living as if we were ashamed  
to belong to your Son;  
Father, forgive us:  
**save us and help us.**

May the God of love and power  
Forgive us and free us from our sins  
Heal and strengthen us by his Spirit  
And raise us to new life in Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

‘But I trust in your unfailing love;  
my heart rejoices in your salvation.  
I will sing the Lord’s praise, for he has been good to me.’  
*(short silence)*

Mighty God, we bow down before you.  
We worship you.  
We trust you, deep in our very beings.  
Far beyond words. We love you, Lord.  
**Amen.**

*Psalm 13:5,6 NIV*

Gracious Father,  
by the obedience of Jesus  
you brought salvation to our wayward world:  
draw us into harmony with your will,  
that we may find all things restored in him,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ.

**Amen.**

**First reading: Romans 6: 12 - end**

Therefore, do not let sin exercise dominion in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions. No longer present your members to sin as instruments of wickedness but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and present your members to God as instruments of righteousness. For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

What then? Should we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God that you, having once been slaves of sin, have become obedient from the heart to the form of teaching to which you were entrusted, and that you, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. I am speaking in human terms because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to greater and greater iniquity, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness for sanctification.

When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. So what advantage did you then get from the things of which you now are ashamed? The end of those things is death. But now that you have been freed from sin and enslaved to God, the advantage you get is sanctification. The end is eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

## Second reading: Matthew 10: 40 – end

‘Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward; and whoever welcomes a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive the reward of the righteous; and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple—truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward.’

### Reflection with Jill

As a child, I had a pen pal in Germany. I enjoyed receiving her letters and learning about her life. Before instant messaging, these handwritten letters built a friendship bond across a continent. In ancient times, letters served a similar purpose - connecting people across distances; delivered by a trusted courier and often read aloud to a gathered audience. It is in this context that the Roman church would have gathered, in the sanctuary of someone’s home, to receive Paul’s letter.

This young church had grown into a flourishing community of believers - Roman citizens, Jewish immigrants, rich and poor, slaves and free, worshipping as equals, in a society dominated by huge divides in wealth and status.

Paul reminds them they are a new creation with a new identity, encouraging them to celebrate their new freedom and urging them, and by extension us, to make wise choices and become dedicated to righteousness. We should heed these words about consciously living out our freedom in the choices we make.

Paul teaches that we should use our “members”, that is their physical bodies as instruments or weapons of righteousness. Choosing to offer our entire being – deeds, words, sight and thoughts to glorify God. This requires a fundamental shift from self to service.

Paul uses the analogy of slavery, although abhorrent to us today, it was an accepted reality in the first century. This parallel shows that everyone serves something. Our ultimate allegiance is shaped by the choices we make and the desires we choose to feed.

The believers in Rome faced an overwhelming barrage of social, cultural and moral pressures, that threatened to compromise their new faith.

Today, the landscape has changed, but the spiritual battle remains. Distractions and temptations have moved from the temples and public arenas, into the privacy of our homes. Delivered straight to our screens. We are assaulted by digital algorithms, interruptions and enticements, designed to capture our attention, which, if we allow, can bind and enslave us.

In the pursuit of righteousness, we will make mistakes and sin, but belonging to God, through the sacrifice on the cross, we are no longer slaves to sin. We are work in progress, pursuing right and good choices.

Apprentices to a living God; with Jesus as our mentor and role model; the Holy Spirit as ever present guide; the Bible as our practical training manual and prayer - the lifeline that connects and nourishes us.

As we step out into a world of distractions, misinformation and deep division. Let us take up Paul's challenge to make wise, deliberate choices that exhibit faithful living within the freedom of grace, serving the Master and refusing the distractions that seek to enslave us.

### Affirmation of Faith

Do you believe and trust in God the Father,  
source of all being and life,  
the one for whom we exist?  
**We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Son,  
who took our human nature,  
died for us and rose again?  
**We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,  
who gives life to the people of God  
and makes Christ known in the world?  
**We believe and trust in him.**

This is the faith of the Church.

**This is our faith.**

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

**Amen.**

### Prayers of Intercessions with Jasmin

Blessed are you, Lord our God, for you have called us to be your people, to represent you and to show your love. By the power of your Spirit, enable us to live and work to your praise and glory. Blessed are you, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

We give thanks for all who have gone out in mission and proclaimed the Good News in word and deed. We remember especially those who brought the gospel to our land. We ask your blessing upon preachers of the word and on all who witness to you by their lifestyle and example. We pray for all who have never heard the Gospel and those who are afraid to commit themselves. We ask you to protect all missionaries who face hostility and all who suffer for practising their faith.

Loving God,

**Hear us and help us.**

We remember all who live in a hostile environment, those who are suffering from war or oppression, and we pray especially for Sudan, Ukraine and all areas of the world where conflict affects the innocent civilians and children. We ask your blessing upon all who seek to bring peace and healing to the divisions of our world and all who strive to bring freedom and Justice to nations and individuals. We remember the work of the United Nations and Amnesty International.

Loving God,

**Hear us and help us.**

Father, we thank you for the love of our homes and ask your blessing upon our families and friends. We remember all who suffer from rejection or violence in their homes. We pray for all who have been taken into care or those living on the streets of our cities and towns.

Loving God,

**Hear us and help us.**

Father, we give thanks for your healing love. We remember before you all suffering people, the ill and the hungry, the world's poor and the unemployed. We ask your blessing upon all who are terminally ill and those who are caring for them. We pray for helpers who feel exhausted or who feel they are not appreciated. We remember quietly before God those on our hearts.

Loving God,

**Hear us and help us.**

We give thanks that, through Christ, the way to the fullness of your kingdom is open to us. We pray for all our loved ones departed. We commend them to you as we do the world and ourselves.

Merciful Father.

**accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.**

**Lead us not into temptation  
but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours  
now and for ever.  
Amen.**

## The Peace

God is love  
and those who live in love live in God  
and God lives in them.

## Closing prayer

As we go out into the world  
help us to recognise  
where there is need.  
Show us how we can serve  
and spread your love everywhere.  
**Amen.**

May God keep us in all our days.  
May Christ shield us in all our ways.  
May the Spirit bring us healing and peace.  
May God the Holy Trinity drive all darkness from us  
and pour upon us blessing and light.  
Amen.

We go into the world  
to walk in God's light,  
to rejoice in God's love  
and to reflect God's glory.