



Sunday 16th July 2023

Sixth Sunday after Trinity

Today - Sunday 16th July

9.30 am	Holy Communion	- St John the Baptist, Woodland
11.00 am	Holy Communion	- St Andrew's, Ipplepen
4.30 pm	Come Holy Spirit: An Informal Service of Reflection	- St Andrew's Church Hall, Ipplepen

Morning Prayer

This week morning prayer will be said at the following times:

Tuesday	9.15 am (Book of Common Prayer)	- St Andrew's, Ipplepen
Wednesday	9.15 am (Celtic Morning Prayer)	- Ss Peter and Paul, Broadhempston
Thursday	9.15 am (Celtic Morning Prayer)	- St Mary the Virgin, Denbury
Friday	9.15 am (Silent prayer and meditation)	- Ss Peter and Paul, Broadhempston

Reflection

All our churches are open for private prayer and reflection from approximately 9am to 5pm each day.

Mid-Week

Rev Andrew Down – Day off on Mondays.

Monday	3pm-5pm	'T-Pot'	- Church Cottage, Denbury
	7.30 pm	Bellringing Practice	- Ss Peter and Paul, Broadhempston
Tuesday	10.15 am	Holy Communion	- St Andrew's, Ipplepen
	6.30pm-8pm	'The Unity Course'	- St Andrew's, Ipplepen
Wednesday	7.30 pm	Bellringing Practice	- St Mary the Virgin, Denbury
	7.30 pm	Bellringing Practice	- St Andrew's, Ipplepen
Thursday	10.15 am	Holy Communion	- St Mary the Virgin, Denbury

Next Sunday 23rd July – Seventh Sunday After Trinity

9.30 am	Holy Communion	- St Mary the Virgin, Denbury
11.00 am	Holy Communion	- Ss Peter and Paul, Broadhempston
11.00 am	Churches Together Family Service	- Ipplepen Methodist Church

Points of Prayer: We pray for the various projects that are run in our local area to support those in need; and for those who generously give their time in volunteering.

'Monday T-Pot' takes place at Church Cottage, East Street, Denbury, this Monday 17th July from 3pm to 5pm. This is a regular weekly coffee afternoon in Denbury. All Welcome!

'The Unity Course' continues this Tuesday 18th July at St Andrew's Church Ipplepen 6.30pm – 8pm. This week's theme is **'Writing and Speaking: Taming the Tongue'** All welcome! The theme for the 5th and final session next Tuesday (25th) will be **'Unifying and Peace-Making: Learning to disagree Christianly'** Please see the poster on our notice boards, in the 'Beacon Magazine and on the welcome page of our website for more details: www.missioncommunity.org.uk Further details about the individual sessions can be found on the Unity Course Website: <https://theunitycourse.co.uk/sessions>

Please note that 'Food For Thought – Lunch Club' At St Andrew's Church Hall, Ipplepen, will not take place in August. It will next take place on Wednesday 6th September at 12 noon. All welcome – To book a place please contact Maria Alsop on 01803 813110

Denbury's Festival of Flowers. Just a few words of thanks to everyone who contributed in ANY way to the extraordinary three days we've just lived. You came, you worked SO hard, you stayed on and carried on working. The rota had 50 – FIFTY!! - volunteers on it, not including the 7 musicians who played for us during the Festival. Bless you. The combination of Irene Davey's inspiration and leadership, and your willingness to help her realise it, has resulted in an extraordinarily successful fundraising event. What a great achievement! Denbury Did It again!

'Coffee Morning in Woodland' next takes place on Saturday 5th August from 10am to 12 noon at The Parish Rooms, Woodland. This is a regular monthly coffee morning in Morning in Woodland which takes place on the first Saturday of each month. All Welcome!

St Andrew's Outside...Going forward. Thank you to all who were involved in any way in last week's lovely 'St Andrew's Outside' event. We plan to continue using the Church Field bi-monthly into the autumn for 'St Andrew's Outside' on Sunday 10th September at 5pm and Sunday 12th November at 4pm. We would love to welcome you to experience St Andrew's Outside for yourself. You are also most welcome to join the team for a one-off event. No ongoing commitment is required. We are open to new ideas on how to take this forward. Please think and pray around this. I can be contacted with feedback or queries via email at: lesleymawson0@gmail.com

To view all posters of our regular weekly and monthly events and also posters of special events, please remember to view the welcome page of our website: www.missioncommunity.org.uk

Finding our Next Bishop of Exeter - We Want to Hear Your Views!! With Bishop Robert's retirement planned for the end of September, a discernment process is already underway to find the next Bishop of Exeter. You are encouraged to fill in our short online survey so your views and ideas can be considered. Please click the link below to give your views: <https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=nVvSXRLHDkaupBHadea14DjkalHfv8VJserO8GBV6vVUNjk50FREVIpTWTvKtkVFQ1c4NEtMWetUTC4u>

16 New Deacons Ordained to Serve the People of Devon with Joy. After being ordained at Exeter Cathedral on Saturday 1 July, 16 new members of the clergy are beginning their roles at parishes across Devon.

Readings	This week	Next week
Readings for this Sunday:		
1st Reading	Isaiah 55:10-13	Wisdom of Solomon 12:13, 16-19
	Psalms 65:1-8, 9-End	86:11-End
2nd Reading	Romans 8:1-11	Romans 8:12-25
Gospel	Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23	Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43
Readings for the week ahead:		
Mon 17 th	Matt 10:34-11.1	Thurs 20 th Matt 11:28-End
Tue 18 th	Matt 11:20-24	Fri 21 st Matt 12:1-8
Wed 19 th	Matt 11:25-27	Sat 22 nd John 20:1-2, 11-18

Readings can be viewed/downloaded from <https://bible.oremus.org/>

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Reflection by Steve Sheldon

Sixth Sunday after Trinity
Matt 13:1-23
16th July 2023

Once again we read Jesus' parable of the sower and the different soils, roots, fruits and yields. Jesus' cousin, John the Baptist, talked about roots and fruits and harvests too, but he seems to suggest that those harvests that don't measure up will be chucked into an everlasting fire.

Often these parables are understood as dividing humanity into different qualities of seeds and soil and fruits, into four different types of people. Another way to look at Jesus' parable is to think about four different aspects of our own individual personalities which at different times and in different circumstances respond differently to the proclamation of the Good News of Jesus.

We are all complicated personalities, and we can best move forward in our journey by acknowledging this complication, seeing both our struggles and our successes.

While John dealt with "sin" and its consequences, Jesus was thinking of our spiritual growth. If we can look at "sin" as being simply defined as the failure to love, we can see our spiritual growth as being increasingly discerning as to what "love" actually is.

It's that simple. And it's that complicated. Because God has left it to us to work out, in any given situation, what is the most loving thing to do. And sometimes we have no *good* choices, only a series of bad ones, and we have to decide which is the least unloving.

Thankfully God does send us the Holy Spirit to constantly be whispering in our ears, to urge and guide and instruct. But we've got to listen. We've got to *learn* how to listen. We've got to be able to learn to distinguish between the urgings of the Holy Spirit and the urgings of the Devil within.

Returning to the parables of weeds and seeds and harvests, rather than judging others and condemning some to be bundled together and burned in

John's unquenchable fire, we again need to look within ourselves and be aware of the unhealthy patterns and mindsets that we harbour, bundling *those* together and disposing of them by doing as Paul suggests elsewhere and thinking lovely thoughts.

On our journey through life and faith we hoard, we store up, we accumulate all sorts of junk that we really don't need to carry with us. As we mature, we need to throw away outdated perceptions of God and of others, simplistic understandings of God and others, romanticised ideals of how things work. As we mature in our lives and in our faith we can throw into that unquenchable fire the chaff which holds us back.

We must not confuse John with his cousin. Jesus has a holy healing fire that burns away things that keep us from growing, that slow our journey to the Kingdom of God.

God is Love, and never let anyone tell you otherwise. Always keep this in mind when you approach the scriptures. Let compassion always be your starting point.

This is the core of all religions and scriptures, but which are often ignored and perverted by sinful men seeking power and wealth and control. This is what God has been trying to communicate to us and is the truth to which Jesus came to bear witness.

The chaff that John spoke of is not other worthless humans in the world who don't measure up to our standards of spirituality or morality or ethnicity or politics or gender; but rather it is the worthless in our own lives, the stuff that needs to be purged and burned. The unquenchable fire is not God's wrath, because that does not fit with the image of the God of Love in whose image we are made; who commands us to love our neighbours *and* our enemies as well; who commands us to a life of compassion.

We must burn not only that which impedes our relationship with God, but which is also a stumbling block to our healthy relationships with others, or creates a stumbling block for others on their journey.

The fire is one we build ourselves to consume whatever holds us back from Love; the fire is lit by our yearning to seek and to know and to understand and touch this God who loves us and tirelessly, eternally reaches out to us. Amen.