

St. Christopher's Church, Hinchley Wood

Appendix – Safeguarding Sunday – 19th November 2023

Hymns

Gathering:	153	Eternal Father, Strong to Save
Gradual:	186	For the Healing of the Nations
Offertory:	437	Make Me a Channel of Your Peace
Communion:	937	Nada Te Turbe
Post communion:	449	Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory

Words of Introduction

Welcome to this place on Safeguarding Sunday. A day to give thanks for all those working for the good of all of us, a day to hold in our hearts all those who have been hurt or harmed by our actions or inaction, a day to look to the future and commit to do our part to make and keep this a safer place.

As we come together in worship, let us bring to mind the gifts and opportunities we have been given by God. Let us remind ourselves that God is loving and generous and always wants the best from us and for us.

Collect

Heavenly Lord, you long for the world's salvation:
stir us from apathy, restrain us from excess, and revive in us new hope
that all creation will one day be healed in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Reading: (Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18)

A reading from the book of prophet Zephaniah,

The day is near when the Lord will sit in judgment; so be silent in his presence. The Lord is preparing to sacrifice his people and has invited enemies to plunder Judah.

“At that time I will take a lamp and search Jerusalem. I will punish the people who are self-satisfied and confident, who say to themselves, ‘The Lord never does anything, one way or the other.’ Their wealth will be looted and their houses destroyed. They will never live in the houses they are building or drink wine from the vineyards they are planting.”

The great day of the Lord is near—very near and coming fast! That day will be bitter, for even the bravest soldiers will cry out in despair! It will be a day of fury, a day of trouble and distress, a day of ruin and destruction, a day of darkness and gloom, a black and cloudy day, a day filled with the sound of war trumpets and the battle cry of soldiers attacking fortified cities and high towers.

The Lord says, “I will bring such disasters on the human race that everyone will grope about like someone blind. They have sinned against me, and now their blood will be poured out like water, and their dead bodies will lie rotting on the ground.”

On the day when the Lord shows his fury, not even all their silver and gold will save them. The whole earth will be destroyed by the fire of his anger. He will put an end—a sudden end—to everyone who lives on earth.

Psalm: 90

O Lord, you have always been our home.
Before you created the hills or brought the world into being,
you were eternally God, and will be God forever.

**You tell us to return to what we were; you change us back to dust.
A thousand years to you are like one day;
they are like yesterday, already gone, like a short hour in the night.**

You carry us away like a flood; we last no longer than a dream.
We are like weeds that sprout in the morning, that grow and burst into bloom,
then dry up and die in the evening.

**We are destroyed by your anger; we are terrified by your fury.
You place our sins before you, our secret sins where you can see them.**

Teach us how short our life is, so that we may become wise.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia

Make you home in me, as I make mine in you, say the Lord
Whoever remains in me bears fruit in plenty.

Alleluia!

Gospel: (Matthew 25:14-30)

“At that time the Kingdom of heaven will be like this. Once there was a man who was about to leave home on a trip; he called his servants and put them in charge of his property. He gave to each one according to his ability: to one he gave five thousand gold coins, to another he gave two thousand, and to another he gave one thousand. Then he left on his trip. The servant who had received five thousand coins went at once and invested his money and earned another five thousand. In the same way the servant who had received two thousand coins earned another two thousand. But the servant who had received one thousand coins went off, dug a hole in the ground, and hid his master's money.

“After a long time the master of those servants came back and settled accounts with them. The servant who had received five thousand coins came in and handed over the other five thousand. ‘You gave me five thousand coins, sir,’ he said. ‘Look! Here are another five thousand that I have earned.’ ‘Well done, you good and faithful servant!’ said his master. ‘You have been faithful in managing small amounts, so I will put you in charge of large amounts. Come on in and share my happiness!’ Then the servant who had been given two thousand coins came in and said, ‘You gave me two thousand coins, sir. Look! Here are another two thousand that I have earned.’ ‘Well done, you good and faithful servant!’ said his master. ‘You have been faithful in managing small amounts, so I will put you in charge of large amounts. Come on in and share my happiness!’ Then the servant who had received one thousand coins came in and said, ‘Sir, I know you are a hard man; you reap harvests where you did not plant, and you gather crops where you did not scatter seed. I was afraid, so I went off and hid your money in the ground. Look! Here is what belongs to you.’ ‘You bad and lazy servant!’ his master said. ‘You knew, did you, that I reap harvests where I did not plant, and gather crops where I did not scatter seed? Well, then, you should have deposited my money in the bank, and I would have received it all back with interest when I returned. Now, take the money away from him and give it to the one who has ten thousand coins. For to every person who has something, even more will be given, and he will have more than enough; but the person who has nothing, even the little that he has will be taken away from him. As for this useless servant—throw him outside in the darkness; there he will cry and gnash his teeth.’

Closing Prayer

Gracious Lord, in this holy sacrament you give substance to our hope:
bring us at the last to that fullness of life for which we long;
through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

The Blessing

May God keep us safe in danger	<i>All:</i> Give us courage and keep us loving
May God help us to speak the truth	<i>All:</i> To stand by those who need our help
May God give us friends who love us	<i>All:</i> Places and people that help us grow
May God send us on our way rejoicing	<i>All:</i> And welcome us safely home

And may the blessing of almighty God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, come down upon you and remain with you always. **Amen.**