

**Local worship – Toilet Twinning (Eco Church category: Community & Global Engagement)
What does it mean to be blessed – and to be a blessing?**

Putnoe Heights Church 11:00 am 15th May 2022

Opening sentence of scripture

‘And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.’ 2 Corinthians 9:8

Opening prayer

Eternal God, source of all blessing,
help us to worship you
with all our heart and mind and strength:
for you alone are God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
for ever and ever. **Amen**

HYMN: As the deer (StF 544)

Short introduction to the service

Video 1 (3:59) Toilet Twinning in Nepal

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cM12WPr1XzA&t=10s>

A prayer of thanksgiving (*congregational response*)

Blessèd are you, Holy God,
Creator, redeemer and life-giver;
you have spoken the world into being
and filled it with wonder and beauty.

For every blessing we have received
we give you thanks and praise.

Blessèd are you, Holy God,
for people of every language and culture
and for the rich variety you give to life.

For every blessing we have received
we give you thanks and praise.

Blessèd are you, Holy God,
for Jesus Christ our Saviour,
truly divine and truly human,
living and dying for us,
and going before us into heaven.

For every blessing we have received
we give you thanks and praise.

Blessèd are you, Holy God,
for your Spirit,
the fire of love burning in our hearts,
bringing us to faith,
and calling us to holiness
in the Church and in the world.

For every blessing we have received
we give you thanks and praise.

A prayer of confession (*congregational response*)

Let us confess our sins to God.

Silence

For our foolishness
and our thoughtless use of the gifts of your creation,
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

For our neglect of you,
and our failure to care for others,
Christ have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.

For our selfishness in prayer
and our carelessness in worship,
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

Silence

Here is good news for all who put their trust in Christ.
Jesus says: 'Your sins are forgiven.'
Amen.

Toilet Twinning

Video 2 – School girls from different worlds (2:29) https://vimeo.com/318781144?embedded=true&source=vimeo_logo&owner=68224344

HYMN: 10,000 reasons (Bless the Lord)

What does it mean to be blessed?

Reading: Matt 5:1-12 (The Beatitudes – from the Sermon on the Mount)

We have perhaps become over-familiar with the phrase ‘God bless’. We say we’re ‘blessed’ to have good neighbours, a new car, a nice house. But how often do we count more basic blessings like having a toilet and clean water on tap – everyday essentials that millions of people still don’t have? When Toilet Twinning speak with the residents of villages they work with, people repeatedly say how grateful they were for the work of their partner. People know they are blessed and cared for. Knowing that their village has not been forgotten, and that God is faithful, has restored their hope. *(Taken from Toilet Twinning material)*

Is there one blessing that you would like to thank God for today? (Answers from the congregation might include the natural world, friends, family, health...)

HYMN: Give thanks with a grateful heart (StF 78)

2 Corinthians 9:8, which we heard at the beginning of the service, talks of an inexhaustible supply of grace which God wants to pour out through us so we may ‘abound in every good work’. *(Taken from Toilet Twinning material)*

Reading: Matt 5:13-16 (Salt and Light – follows on immediately from the Beatitudes which we heard earlier)

How can we as individuals each be a blessing to others? (Answers from the congregation might include generosity, welcome, sharing, listening, giving to charity, volunteering...)

How can we as a church community be a blessing to others? (Answers from the congregation might include generosity, welcome, fundraising, campaigning, prayer, Toilet Twinning!...)

HYMN: Let us build a house where love can dwell (StF 409)

Prayers of intercession

The Lord’s Prayer

Offertory

Generous God,
out of your providing
we bring these gifts from our daily living.
May the use of our gifts
and the offering of our lives
be for your glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

HYMN: Hear the call of the Kingdom (StF 407)

Final prayer

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

The Grace

We bless each other with the words of The Grace:

**May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with us all, now and evermore. Amen.**