

ST DENYS CHURCH EVINGTON, BULLETIN for Sunday 13th September 2026, 15th Sunday after Trinity



The parable of the unmerciful servant in Matthew 18:21-35, which is our Gospel reading on Sunday, serves as a foundational text for Christian ethics, illustrating the radical, limitless nature of divine and human forgiveness. Initiated by Peter's query regarding whether forgiving an offender seven times is sufficient, Jesus dismantles conventional boundaries of grace by demanding forgiveness "seventy-seven times"—a symbolic representation of infinity. Through the subsequent narrative of a king settling accounts, Jesus exposes a theological contradiction of receiving absolute mercy while withholding it from others.

The narrative centre of the text relies on a stark economic contrast to emphasize the gravity of grace. The first servant owes the king an astronomical debt of ten thousand talents—a sum impossible to repay in several lifetimes, symbolizing humanity's irredeemable debt of sin before a holy God. Moved by compassion, the king completely cancels the debt. However, this same servant subsequently chokes a fellow labourer over a hundred denarii—a fraction of his own forgiven debt.

In the early Greek versions of the New Testament, the term *splagchnizomai* is used. It means 'moved with compassion' and is offered to describe the king's response, mirroring the historic events of forgiveness which, time and time again in the Old Testament have demonstrated the character of God. The unmerciful servant's failure shows his inability to mirror this Godly intervention. In his wickedness, the servant treats grace as something he can keep to himself rather than share as a witness to and outpouring of his personal salvation. Consequently, the king delivers him to the tormentors until his original debt is paid.

Jesus concludes with a sobering warning: God will treat believers similarly if they do not forgive from the heart. True forgiveness, therefore, is not merely a shallow choice or a superficial gesture; it must be an authentic internal reality. In the context of St Matthew's view of the newly formed church, this parable highlights that the Christian community must be defined by reciprocal grace. Because believers have been radically forgiven by God, extending unlimited mercy to others becomes a moral imperative, while refusing to forgive negates one's own experience of divine absolution. (**Exposition internet sourced—Ai**)

[Canon Matthew adds: the question of forgiveness, and the occasions when we find ourselves quite simply unable to offer it, is often a difficult and vexing one for Christians. I will be offering some thoughts on this in my sermon on Sunday 13th September.]

COMING UP:

Saturday 12th all day Ride and Stride church open

Sunday 13th 10am Holy Communion in church and on Zoom, ID 820 0369 6332
(password from Qyan)

Monday 14th 10am Private Booking in the parish centre

Monday 14th 2.15pm Short informal service in Arbor House

Tuesday 15th 9am Private Booking in the parish centre

Thursday 17th 10.30am Gentle Exercise Group meet in the parish centre

Thursday 17th 12pm Private Booking in the parish centre

diary

Thursday 17th 10am—12pm Open Church

Thursday 17th 10am Book of Common Prayer Holy Communion in church

Don't forget Ride and Stride tomorrow, Saturday 12th September. The church will be open until about 6pm to welcome visitors. Thank you to those who have volunteered to man the church.

Revd Canon Matthew Bradbury will preside and preach at our Holy Communion service this Sunday 13th September at 10am. All welcome. Please do stay for tea, coffee and chat afterwards, in the parish centre if you can.



In Memory of Bill Mann, a Quarter Peal of Bells! A group of ex pupils of Bill Mann will ring a quarter peal of bells in memory of Bill, this coming Sunday 13th September at 3pm in St. Denys. Bill was formerly a Tower captain with us. This will take 45 minutes approximately. The ringers will be Christopher Rudge, Sarah Sims (nee

Smeaton), Peter Brown and Chris Glenton, plus two non pupils. The photo shows those who rang the bells following Bill's funeral service last Tuesday.

Arbor House The monthly service takes place on Monday 14th September at 2.15pm. Why not join Ann Bennett and others in this short, informal time of praise and prayer which the residents always seem to enjoy.

Book of Common Prayer Holy Communion (BCP, said) will be held in the South Aisle of the church by Canon Matthew Bradbury this coming Thursday 17th September at 10am. Refreshments will be served at the back of the church afterwards.

Harvest Festival and Lunch The Harvest Festival Service this year, will be held on Sunday 20th September at 10am. This will also be Kimberley and Phil Tyler's last Sunday with us. A harvest lunch in the parish centre will follow the service. **This will also be a fundraiser for St. Denys**, therefore we are asking for monetary donations, please give as generously as you are able. Please see the menu at the back of the church for choices of food to eat with a list to register your name if you wish to come. Many thanks.

Harvest Flowers If you would like to contribute towards the cost of harvest flowers this year, so that our church can be beautifully decorated for harvest festival on Sunday 20th September, please pick up an envelope from church to put your donation in, and give to Michael White (Treasurer) or our Churchwarden Ann Bennett. Thank you.

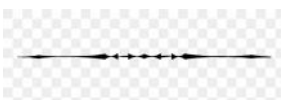
Harvest Goods For our harvest service we request items of non perishable goods—tinned or packet food, toiletries, bottled or canned long lasting drinks etc. Please bring any donations to church this coming Sunday and Thursday, and on the morning of Sunday 20th too. Your generosity will be much appreciated. Thank you very much.

Back to Church Sunday will also be marked on Sunday 20th September. As part of your Christian faith and witness, why not ask a friend or relative who does not normally come to church or perhaps has never done so, to come along. It would be lovely to see new people in church and to welcome them.

Amazing grace! how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me. I once was lost, but now am found, was blind, but now I see. (John Newton 1725-1807)

Evington Village Fete and Show AGM The Annual General Meeting will take place on Wednesday 18th November in the St Denys Parish Centre, Church Road at 7.30pm. Chris Hossack is standing down after 8 years as Chairman, and we welcome Mohammed Panchbhaya and Fazila Bhana as joint chairs. We always need more volunteers either to join the committee or to help on the day, so do come along to the meeting to hear of our future plans, and how you could be involved. With thanks, **Chris Hossack**.

Health and Safety Officer The PCC is looking to find a volunteer who would be willing to act as a Health and Safety Officer for St. Denys. This is a requirement which we are not fulfilling at the moment and need to. Though ideal, such a person does not have to attend St. Denys occasionally or regularly, it could be an outside person. No experience is required but all the better if interested parties do have some knowledge. If you or anyone you know is interested, please speak to **Ann Bennett** our Churchwarden. Thanks.



Collect for 15th Sunday after Trinity Lord God, defend your church from all false teaching and give to your people knowledge of thy truth, that we may enjoy eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Continue to pray for the victims of natural disasters suffering immensely in Venezuela, Nepal, Japan etc and for the many war torn areas of the world where peace seems a distant hope; Ukraine, Myanmar, Iran, and many more.

Pray for the sick: Geoff Bunce, Ann Dixon, Revd Richard Howells, Sue Mitchell

Pray for those who mourn—family and friends of Ken Ginns, Bill Mann and the 3,000 people killed in the World Trade Centre terrorist atrocity in New York, 25 years ago, on Friday (11th)



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Jan Vaughan (Safeguarding Coordinator) 0116 2592 524 or 07763 674727



St. Denys website, including the Giving Links for Church and Youth Work:

www.stdenys.org.uk