



The Central Norfolk Methodist Circuit

Sunday 19th July 2026:

Today's theme is "Wheat and weeds together sown"

Prepared by Avril Temple Local Preacher



Opening Words

God is good, God is truth, God is beauty praise him.

Hymn 25 **God is here as we his people** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0iCzdeZJHHk>

God is here! As we his people
Meet to offer praise and prayer,
May we find in fuller measure
What it is in Christ we share.
Here, as in the world around us,
All our varied skills and arts
Wait the coming of the Spirit
Into open minds and hearts.

Here are symbols to remind us
Of our lifelong need of grace;
Here are table, font and pulpit;
Here the cross has central place.
Here in honesty of preaching,
Here in silence, as in speech,
here, in newness and renewal,
God the Spirit comes to each.

Here our children find a welcome
In the Shepherd's flock and fold;
Here as bread and wine are taken,
Christ sustains us as of old.
Here the servants of the Servant
Seek in worship to explore
What it means in daily living
To believe and to adore.

Lord of all, of church and kingdom,
In an age of change and doubt,
Keep us faithful to the Gospel;
help us work your purpose out.
Here, in this day's dedication,
All we have to give, receive;
We, who cannot live without you,
We adore you! We believe!

Prayer

Almighty God you have done more for us than our words can ever express. So, we come once again in grateful worship. We rejoice in the hope, strength and inspiration you grant to us each day. We praise and thank you for the constancy of your love and the unending extent of your mercy. Hear our prayer and receive our praise in the name of Christ. Amen.

Hymn 518 – Father hear the prayer we offer <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r1-9wam-2Rk>

Father, hear the prayer we offer:
not for ease that prayer shall be,
but for strength that we may ever
live our lives courageously.

Not for ever in green pastures
do we ask our way to be;
but the steep and rugged pathway
may we tread rejoicingly.

Not for ever by still waters
would we idly rest and stay;
but would smite the living fountains
from the rocks along our way.

Be our strength in hours of weakness,
in our wanderings be our guide;
through endeavour, failure, danger,
Father, be thou at our side.

Reading **Matthew 13 vs 24 – 30, 36 – 43**

My mother loved her flower garden. She had deep borders containing all sorts of flowers. Everything came out in its season. All types of bulbs, wallflowers, hollyhocks, canterbury bells, phlox, her many coloured carnations and so much more. Not a weed was allowed to grow. For flower and weed to be together was not an option. As with many of the parables in Matthew's gospel this one is about the Kingdom of God and His reign being revealed in the world. Jesus explains that the field is the world. The parables teach that just as the wheat and the weeds were allowed to grow alongside each other, so the followers of Jesus are to live alongside others in the world. Of course, that picture of the wheat and weeds flourishing together would have shocked many of his listeners. The religious law was very strictly interpreted. The people had to keep well away from anything considered unclean and would never dream of associating with anyone in that category. Yet the teaching of Jesus turned that upside down.

The people were taught love your neighbours but hate your enemies. Jesus said, 'love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.' Jesus is saying keep near to everyone because the world is the field where God's love must be made known. He also said not to stand in judgement over others. (Matt ch 7)

The parable of the weeds makes it clear that everyone is accountable before God. Unfortunately, there have been and still are, those who feel the 'weeds' so to speak, should be rooted out because of different beliefs, race colour or gender. We are all too aware of the consequences that this has on our broken and fragile world.

We give thanks to God that there are many people trying so hard by their words and actions, to change and eliminate those sorts of thoughts and feelings, to make the field the world, the place where God's love abounds and is at work. Seeking - to make all things new, it is there that we to are called to serve.

Hymn 652 Lord, we come to you <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v9DDNtUlQDM>

Lord, we come to ask your healing,
teach us of love;
all unspoken shame revealing,
teach us of love.
Take our selfish thoughts and actions,
petty feuds, divisive factions,
hear us now to you appealing,
teach us of love.

Soothe away our pain and sorrow,
hold us in love;
grace we cannot buy or borrow,
hold us in love.
Though we see both dark and danger,
though we spurn both friend and stranger,
though we often dread tomorrow,
hold us in love.

When the bread is raised and broken,
fill us with love;
words of consecration spoken,
fill us with love.
As our grateful prayers continue,
make the faith that we have in you
more than just an empty token,
fill us with love.

Help us live for one another,
bind us in love;
stranger, neighbour, father, mother
bind us in love.
All are equal at your table,
through your Spirit make us able
to embrace as sister, brother,
bind us in love.

Prayer

Heavenly Father we pray for all who have suffered, or are still suffering because of war, conflict, injustice and oppression.

We pray for all those who act as mediators, seeking to bring peace in our world. We pray for those who are responsible for making decisions that will affect so many lives in many ways.

Hear our prayers for those who are sick, anxious, worn down by their situation, those who have no voice to be heard and those who are dealing with grief. We pray for all who are finding the hot weather difficult to cope with.

We remember and pray for all the victims of the earthquakes in Venezuela and their rescuers.

We pray for the Central Norfolk Circuit, its ministers, officers, preachers and congregations.

And now we come to ourselves, and ask forgiveness for all our mistakes, errors and for the times when we do not listen to you. Lord in your mercy hear our prayers. Amen.

Hymn 682 God of grace, God of glory <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kSOvpH6FgUE>

God of grace and God of glory,
on your people pour your power;
crown your ancient Church's story;
bring her bud to glorious flower.
Grant us wisdom,
grant us courage,
for the facing of this hour.

Heal your children's warring madness;
bend our pride to you control;
shame our wanton, selfish gladness,
rich in things and poor in soul.

Grant us wisdom,
grant us courage,
lest we miss your kingdom's goal.

Lo! the hosts of evil round us
scorn your Christ, assail his ways!
Fears and doubts too long have bound us,
free our hearts to work and praise.

Grant us wisdom,
grant us courage,
for the living of these days.

Prayer

Living God equip us through your word. Inspire us through your spirit, renew us by your grace that we may share in the work of Christ and the growth of your Kingdom. Amen.