



## The Central Norfolk Methodist Circuit

Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2026:

Today's theme is "What are we trading away?"

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### Opening Words

This is the time to worship,  
This is the time to bring our hearts to you,  
This is the moment to encounter you again,  
Come into our lives, and show us the way forward, we pray. Amen.

**Hymn 421**      **Kyrie Eleison**      [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pdI3F5N\\_Wdc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pdI3F5N_Wdc)

Empty broken here I stand	Love that sets the captive free
Kyrie eleison	Kyrie eleison
Touch me with Your healing hand	O pour compassion down on me
Kyrie eleison	Kyrie eleison
Take my arrogance and pride	Kyrie eleison Christe eleison Kyrie eleison
Kyrie eleison	You're the voice that calms my fears
Wash me in Your mercy's tide	Kyrie eleison
Kyrie eleison	You're the laughter dries my tears
Kyrie eleison Christe eleison Kyrie eleison	Kyrie eleison
When my faith has all but gone	You're my music my refrain
Kyrie eleison	Kyrie eleison
Give me strength to carry on	Help me sing Your song again
Kyrie eleison	Kyrie eleison
When my dreams have turned to dust	Kyrie eleison Christe eleison Kyrie eleison
Kyrie eleison	Humble heart of holiness
In You O Lord I put my trust	Kyrie eleison
Kyrie eleison	Kiss me with Your tenderness
Kyrie eleison Christe eleison Kyrie eleison	Kyrie eleison
When my heart is cold as ice	Jesus faithful friend and true
Kyrie eleison	Kyrie eleison
Your love speaks of sacrifice	All I am I give to You
Kyrie eleison	Kyrie eleison
	Kyrie eleison Christe eleison Kyrie eleison

### Opening Prayers

Creator God, we are here to offer worship to you this day. Still our hearts and minds as we come to you in prayer...

*pause*

As we pause to pay attention to your creation all around us, we lift our voices in worship, our minds in wonder, our hearts in love. In this summer season, we offer praise for the many ways in which we know your presence amongst us:

- we feel the warmth of the sun and recall you appearing to Moses in a burning bush and your coming at Pentecost as tongues of fire and we open our hearts to be strangely warmed once again
- we feel the refreshing of the rain and recall the river of life flowing from the temple in ancient times and your offer of living water to those who are thirsty, and we open our spirits to be refreshed one again
- we hear the breeze playing amidst the trees and recall you walking with Adam and Eve in the cool of the evening, and the wind of your Spirit which blows where it will and we open our minds for your renewing breath.

We remember that you are not a stranger to this world in which we live, for you lived here too and we offer praise and worship for the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus – at one with us and at one with you. Creator God.

As we notice the beauty and wonder of the world, so too we are aware that there is brokenness all around – pollution, waste, disease, famine, drought... and we lament all that is wrong in this world... (pause)

Turning our gaze upon ourselves, again we see contrasts – our hope, our love, our joy and our peace are too often marred by our despair, our hatred, our pain and our anxiety... (pause)

### The Lord's Prayer

**Hymn 432 O the bitter shame and sorrow** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LX6XwNxlotU>

Oh, the bitter shame and sorrow,  
That a time could ever be,  
When I let the Saviour's pity  
Plead in vain, and proudly answered,  
None of you and all of me!

Yet you found me; there you saw me  
dying and in agony  
Heard you pray, forgive them, Father,  
And my wistful heart said faintly,  
Some of you, and some of me!

Day by day your tender mercy,  
Healing, helping, full and free,  
firm and strong, with endless patience,  
Brought me lower while I whispered,  
more of you and less of me!

Higher than the highest heavens,  
Deeper than the deepest sea,  
Lord, your love at last has conquered;  
Grant me now my spirit's longing,  
all of you and none of me!

**Readings for today:** Genesis 25:19-34; Psalm 119:105-112; Romans 8:1-11; Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

### Reflection on the Genesis reading – What are we trading away?

A few months ago we had red lentil and vegetable casserole as part of our after-service meal at Walsingham which brought to mind today's reading. It was tasty but not enough that I would pay the price that Esau did. He comes home exhausted from hunting and finds Jacob cooking a lentil stew. Feeling famished, perhaps as he says, "starving to death", Esau agrees to exchange his birthright—the inheritance and privilege that belonged to the firstborn son—for a single meal.

Esau's decision seems crazy. How could anyone trade something so valuable for a bowl of stew? Perhaps he didn't take Jacob seriously. Yet perhaps the story remains relevant because we sometimes do something similar. Today everyone prizes immediate satisfaction. Advertisements encourage us to buy now and pay later. Social media rewards instant reactions rather than thoughtful reflection. We can be tempted to sacrifice our long-term wellbeing, relationships, integrity, or care for creation for something that feels urgent at that moment.

Esau's hunger was real. The problem was not that he wanted food; it was that he allowed a temporary craving to determine a permanent decision. In that moment, he could see only what was directly in front of him and not the consequences of his actions.

The passage invites us to ask what "birthrights" we might be neglecting today.

Are we exchanging time with loved ones for endless busyness?

Are we sacrificing relationships that matter?

Are we neglecting the future health of our planet for short-term convenience?

Are we trading our spiritual life for material things around us?

The Christian faith calls us to keep sight of what truly matters. Jesus often encouraged people to look beyond immediate concerns and to seek God's kingdom first. Following Jesus involves learning to distinguish between our superficial urges and cravings and the things that really matter.

Genesis 25 challenges us to pause before making our choices. The things that seem most important and tempting today may not be the things that matter most tomorrow, have long term value or are best for our wellbeing. The question remains: what are we trading away, and is the bowl of stew really worth it?

**Hymn 563 O Jesus I have promised** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QrooaJ56dvc>

O Jesus, I have promised  
to serve you to the end;  
Lord, be forever near me,  
my Master and my Friend;  
I shall not fear the battle  
if you are by my side,  
nor wander from the pathway  
if you will be my Guide.

O let me feel you near me,  
the world is ever near;  
I see the sights that dazzle,  
the tempting sounds I hear;  
my foes are ever near me,  
around me and within;  
but, Jesus, now draw nearer,  
and shield my soul from sin.

O let me hear you speaking  
in accents clear and still,  
above the storms of passion,  
the murmurs of self-will;  
O speak to reassure me,  
to hasten or control!  
Lord, speak, and make me listen,  
O Guardian of my soul!

O Jesus, you have promised  
to all who follow you,  
that where you are in glory  
Your servant shall be too;  
and, Jesus, I have promised  
to serve you to the end;  
O give me grace to follow,  
my Master and my Friend!

### Prayers of intercession

“As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.” — Psalm 103:12

God of grace,

We lift before you those of us who are weighed down by the memory of the past. For every heart replaying old failures, for every mind trapped in regret, we ask for the liberating power of your grace. Remind us that in Christ, the record of wrongs has been nailed to the cross and cancelled forever. Replace the voice of accusation with the voice of your Spirit, declaring us forgiven, cleansed, and free. May we walk in the light of your mercy, unashamed and unafraid. Amen.

“There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” — Romans 8:1

God of grace,

We intercede for all who cannot forgive themselves, who live under the shadow of self-condemnation. Silence the lies that tell us we are unworthy of love. Let your truth rise within us—that we are accepted, chosen, and beloved in you. Heal the wounds of shame with the balm of your compassion. Teach us to see ourselves through your eyes, clothed in righteousness, radiant with hope. Amen.

“Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.” — Romans 15:7

God of grace,

We pray for your Church to be a refuge for the broken, not a courtroom of judgment. May our words and actions reflect the grace we have received. Help us to welcome the wounded, to listen without condemnation, and to speak life into those crushed by guilt. Let our fellowship be a living testimony that your mercy triumphs over judgment. Amen.

“Those who look to Him are radiant; their faces are never covered with shame.” — Psalm 34:5

God of grace,

We bring before you those of us who hiding in the shadows of shame. Give us courage to lift our eyes to you, to believe that your love is stronger than our fear. Break the chains that keep us silent and isolated. Let us experience the joy of being fully known and fully loved. May our story become a testimony of your redeeming grace. Amen.

“If anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!” — 2 Corinthians 5:17

God of grace,

We intercede for all of us who have forgotten who we are in you. Wash away the labels of failure, sinner, and unworthy, and replace them with your truth: forgiven, child of God, heir of the kingdom. Let us live from a place of grace, not guilt; from acceptance, not striving. May our lives shine with the freedom of those who know they are loved beyond measure. Amen.

### Hymn 545 Be Thou my vision [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6CMclLT\\_Hjg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6CMclLT_Hjg)

Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;  
Be all else but naught to me save that thou art.  
Be thou my best thought in the day and the night;  
Both waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.

Be thou my wisdom, be thou my true Word;  
Be thou ever with me and I with thee Lord.  
Be thou my great Father, thy child let me be;  
Be thou in me dwelling, and I one with thee.

Be thou my breastplate, my sword for the fight;  
Be thou my whole armour be thou my true might.

Be thou my soul's shelter, be thou my high tower;  
O raise thou me Heavenward, great Power of my power.

Riches I heed not, nor earth's empty praise;  
Be thou mine inheritance, now and always.  
Be thou and thou only, first in my heart,  
O Sovereign of Heaven, my treasure thou art.

High King of Heaven, thou heavens bright sun,  
O grant me its joys after victory is won;  
Great heart of my own heart, whatever befall,  
Still be my thou vision, O Ruler of all.

### Closing Blessing

Now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us now and evermore.