



St Marylebone  
Parish Church

## Wednesday Eucharist with Prayer for Healing

Hosea 10:1-3, 7-8, 12 Matthew 10:1-7

Churches throughout this country have very different characters; some are grand, some are simple, some are busy, some are quiet. Many have a particular vocation, in addition to the worship of almighty God, preaching the gospel and the cure of souls of the parish. Some host foodbanks, debt counselling, parent and toddler groups. Many support church schools. Other have chaplaincies to institutions within their parish, some have homelessness projects, soup kitchens, outreach to young people and the elderly. They have tried faithfully to keep all this going throughout lockdown in various ways.

Part of the DNA of St Marylebone is healing and wholeness; a vision that began over 30 years ago. It is an inclusive vision that incorporates the spiritual, psychological and physical. Counselling and Psychotherapy, mental health support groups, weekly and monthly services with prayer for healing, spiritual direction and prayer ministry work alongside a GP surgery. Healing and wholeness of mind, body and spirit was and is at the heart of Jesus' ministry. As he looked around him, Jesus was filled with compassion for people who were harassed and helpless. That is why he felt the need for labourers for the harvest.

And it is interesting to note that at the beginning of his ministry, as he appointed the 12 apostles, it was for *healing* that he first commissioned them. At that time, unclean spirits were considered to be the cause of many diseases and sickness. Jesus chose a mixed group of ordinary people from Galilee, a small place in a small country. He gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to cure every disease and every sickness. When this happened, people would know that the Kingdom of God had come near.

The Apostles often found it very hard to understand what Jesus was really doing; they were often flaky and not always loyal. Yet Jesus called them by name, specifically. He trusted them. He loved them. And he sent them out. That is what 'apostle' means. One who is sent.

Jesus still looks at the crowds who are harassed and helpless. We are among them. We have areas of all our lives that need his healing touch.

And we are also among those who are trusted, loved and sent; our baptism commissions US to be people who proclaim by our lives and our words that the kingdom of God has come near. We are ambassadors of the servant King. So here, in this place of healing, know that the Kingdom of God has come near, that God longs to heal you of all that harms you, and he calls *you* by name to be sent out to live and work to his praise and glory. Amen.