

Our Sunday Service Together

July 4th 2021

Trinity 6



An Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, one God, who was, and who is, and who is to come, the Almighty. Alleluia

Hymn O God, our help in ages past

Preparation

All: This is the day that the Lord has made.
Let us rejoice and be glad in it.
Through the brokenness of Christ, we become one body
as one body we now gather in the name of Christ to offer our praise and thanksgiving, to receive God's holy word, to pray for the needs of the world,
and to seek the forgiveness of our sins, that by the power of the Holy Spirit
we may give ourselves to the service of God.

Our Confession

Let us come to the light of Christ, confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

All: Jesus Christ, risen Master and triumphant Lord, we come to you in sorrow for our sins, and confess to you our weakness and unbelief.

We have lived by our own strength, and not by the power of your resurrection.
In your mercy, forgive us, hear us and help us.

We have lived by the light of our own eyes, as faithless and not believing.
In your mercy, forgive us, hear us and help us.

We have lived for this world alone, and doubted our home in heaven.
In your mercy, forgive us, hear us and help us.

Be still for a moment in confession and in receiving God's Grace in Christ

All: May Almighty God, who in Jesus Christ has given us a kingdom that cannot be destroyed, forgive us our sins, open our eyes to God's truth, strengthen us to do God's will and give us the joy of his kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Risen Lord. **Amen.**

The opening prayer

All: The night has passed, and the day lies open before us; let us pray with one heart and mind.

Silence is kept.

All: As we rejoice in the gift of this new day, so may the light of your presence, O God, set our hearts on fire with love for you; now and for ever. Amen.

The Psalmody Psalm 48

Great is the Lord and highly to be praised, in the city of our God.
His holy mountain is fair and lifted high, the joy of all the earth.
On Mount Zion, the divine dwelling place, stands the city of the great king.
In her palaces God has shown himself to be a sure refuge.
For behold, the kings of the earth assembled and swept forward together.
They saw, and were dumbfounded; dismayed, they fled in terror.
Trembling seized them there; they writhed like a woman in labour,
as when the east wind shatters the ships of Tarshish.
As we had heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord of hosts, the city of our God:
God has established her for ever.
We have waited on your loving-kindness, O God, in the midst of your temple.
As with your name, O God, so your praise reaches to the ends of the earth; your right hand is full of justice.
Let Mount Zion rejoice and the daughters of Judah be glad, because of your judgements, O Lord.
Walk about Zion and go round about her; count all her towers; consider well her bulwarks;
pass through her citadels, that you may tell those who come after that such is our God for ever and ever.
It is he that shall be our guide for evermore.
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen

Scripture Reading 2 Corinthians 12.2-10

I know a person in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know; God knows. ³ And I know that such a person—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know; God knows— ⁴ was caught up into Paradise and heard things that are not to be told, that no mortal is permitted to repeat. ⁵ On behalf of such a one I will boast, but on my own behalf I will not boast, except of my weaknesses. ⁶ But if I wish to boast, I will not be a fool, for I will be speaking the truth. But I refrain from it, so that no one may think better of me than what is seen in me or heard from me, ⁷ even considering the exceptional character of the revelations. Therefore, to keep me from being too elated, a thorn was given to me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me, to keep me from being too elated. ⁸ Three times I appealed to the Lord about this, that it would leave me, ⁹ but he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness.' So, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. ¹⁰ Therefore I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities for the sake of Christ; for whenever I am weak, then I am strong.

This is the word of the Lord

At the end of the reading we say:

All: This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Gloria

All: Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer.
For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

The Gospel Mark 6.1-13

He left that place and came to his home town, and his disciples followed him. ²On the sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astounded. They said, 'Where did this man get all this? What is this wisdom that has been given to him? What deeds of power are being done by his hands! ³Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?' And they took offence at him. ⁴Then Jesus said to them, 'Prophets are not without honour, except in their home town, and among their own kin, and in their own house.' ⁵And he could do no deed of power there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and cured them. ⁶And he was amazed at their unbelief.

Then he went about among the villages teaching. ⁷He called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. ⁸He ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts; ⁹but to wear sandals and not to put on two tunics. ¹⁰He said to them, 'Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave the place. ¹¹If any place will not welcome you and they refuse to hear you, as you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them.' ¹²So they went out and proclaimed that all should repent. ¹³They cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them.

at the end of the reading we say:

All: This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

A Reflection for the day

The kingdom of the world and the kingdom of God have distinct callings on humanity, distinct goals for humanity!

The folks in Nazareth know Jesus, they know him from his childhood, they know his parents and his brothers; you might wonder reading the gospel today if the family had a reputation in the town. It seems the townsfolk just can't square the circle and believe; believe that God's works, his wisdom for life, his grace and healing could come through Jesus. You might wonder if, in fact, they had swallowed hook, line and sinker, and believed the saying the rest of Israel had about anyone who came from the town – "nothing good ever came from Nazareth".

It is all too easy to believe what others have to say about you! It is all too easy to let society, openly or quietly, in hidden ways, to define who you are and tell you what you might be able to do or achieve. And not just the world! Sadly, the church is not immune to defining a person's potential or their status. Paul is caught up in correspondence with such a church. The Corinthians have found themselves concerned with success and

being better Christians than the churches about them. They are concerned with elitism, with setting people in places of prominence based on how spiritual they appear to be, how generous one is over the other, how eloquent in speech one elder was compared with another. Paul refuses to play that game with them, it is an old game and he knows it all too well!

Paul was once a poster boy in the world of the religious elite in Israel. In Philippians he says *“I was circumcised when I was eight days old. I am a pure-blooded citizen of Israel and a member of the tribe of Benjamin—a real Hebrew if there ever was one! I was a member of the Pharisees, who demand the strictest obedience to the Jewish law. I was so zealous that I harshly persecuted the church. And as for righteousness, I obeyed the law without fault.”* Before he adds, in keeping with his words today to the church in Corinth *“I once thought these things were valuable, but now I consider them worthless because of what Christ has done.”* So, it would seem the spirit of elitism and success was abroad in the churches of the Empire.

You can't help but feel a sadness for the folks in Jesus' home town. In swallowing the mind-set of the wider world, in listening to what they said was possible for people of the town, they could not believe God would act in their lives, in their needs, their hopes and dreams. They shut the door to the possibility God could be 'for them', with them, God could be concerned for them; they simply could not bring themselves to believe, and little and nothing was possible.

I have been doing some electronic circuit board construction recently for a gizmo for a bass guitar I am making. The components are soldered onto copper tracks on the board. Some of these tracks I have had to cut to prevent the power from flowing along, whilst others I have made a link from one to another to enable the flow of power. The hope is one day, when it is all plugged into the guitar there will be sweat music. However, if the links are no good the power will not flow and there will be silence.

The things the people of Nazareth believed, the approach to being church adopted at Corinth and Philippi disrupted the power of the Spirit from being at work, the presence of God from being seen and the Kingdom of God from being at hand.

This is the aim of the kingdom of the world for humanity; to be so believing that God would have nothing to do with us, to be concerned always for success and honour, for prestige and power, that any sign of God with us is laughed out of town.

The Kingdom of God is, in contrast, about God with us, about each knowing they are loved and accepted for who they are, that all are called with their particular skills and gifts to weave themselves in love into a rich and varied, a beautiful patchwork – a glorious thing to behold. It is about being faithful to our humanity, being faithful to God, to ourselves and our neighbour.

I wonder what we believe about ourselves; who we listen to? Is it a world view that has no belief in any of us at all? Or might we believe that God believes in each of us so much he came to be with us, Emmanuel – one with us, for this day and all days?

The Creed

All: I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers *We make our intercessions*

In peace, let us pray to Jesus our Lord, who ever lives to make intercession for us.

Saviour of the world, be present in all places of suffering, violence and pain, and bring hope even in the darkest night. Inspire us to continue your work of reconciliation today. *Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.*

Lord of the Church, empower by your Spirit all Christian people, and the work of your Church in every land. Give us grace to proclaim the gospel joyfully in word and deed. *Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.*

Shepherd and Guardian of our souls, guide and enable all who lead and serve this community and those on whom we depend for our daily needs. Grant that we may seek the peace and welfare of this place. *Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.*

Great Physician, stretch out your hand to bring comfort, wholeness and peace to all who suffer in body, mind, or spirit. Fill us with compassion, that we may be channels of your healing love. *Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.*

Conqueror of death, remember for good those whom we love but see no longer. Help us to live this day in the sure and certain hope of your eternal victory. *Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.*

Let us commend ourselves, and all for whom we pray, to the mercy and protection of God. *Merciful Father, accept these prayers through our saviour Jesus Christ, Amen.*

A Prayer during the Covid-19 Pandemic

All: Keep us, good Lord, under the shadow of your mercy in this time of uncertainty and distress. Sustain and support the anxious and fearful, and lift up all who are brought low; that we may rejoice in your comfort knowing that nothing can separate us from your love in Christ Jesus our Lord. **Amen.**

The Collect

All: Creator God you made us all in your image: may we discern you in all that we see, and serve you in all that we do; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Gathering our prayers and praises into one, let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory
for ever and ever. Amen.

The Conclusion

All: Christ, as a light illumine and guide me this day.
Christ, as a shield overshadow me.
Christ under me, Christ over me; Christ beside me on my left and my right.
This day be within and without me. Amen