

Our Sunday Service Together

September 5th 2021

Trinity 15



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

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 125

Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but stands fast for ever.

As the hills stand about Jerusalem, so the Lord stands round about his people, from this time forth for evermore.

The sceptre of wickedness shall not hold sway over the land allotted to the righteous, lest the righteous turn their hands to evil.

Do good, O Lord, to those who are good, and to those who are true of heart.

Those who turn aside to crooked ways the Lord shall take away with the evildoers; but let there be peace upon Israel.

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 James 2.1-10 and 14-17

My brothers and sisters, do you with your acts of favouritism really believe in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ? ²For if a person with gold rings and in fine clothes comes into your assembly, and if a poor person in dirty clothes also comes in, ³and if you take notice of the one wearing the fine clothes and say, 'Have a seat here, please', while to the one who is poor you say, 'Stand there', or, 'Sit at my feet', ⁴have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts? ⁵Listen, my beloved brothers and sisters. Has not God chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom that he has promised to those who love him? ⁶But you have dishonoured the poor. Is it not the rich who oppress you? Is it not they who drag you into court? ⁷Is it not they who blaspheme the excellent name that was invoked over you?

⁸You do well if you really fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' ⁹But if you show partiality, you commit sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. ¹⁰For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it.

¹⁴What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? ¹⁵If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, ¹⁶and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill', and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? ¹⁷So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.

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 7.24-37

⁴ From there he set out and went away to the region of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know he was there. Yet he could not escape notice, ²⁵ but a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him, and she came and bowed down at his feet. ²⁶ Now the woman was a Gentile, of Syrophenician origin. She begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. ²⁷ He said to her, 'Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs.' ²⁸ But she answered him, 'Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs.' ²⁹ Then he said to her, 'For saying that, you may go—the demon has left your daughter.' ³⁰ So she went home, found the child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.

³¹ Then he returned from the region of Tyre, and went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. ³² They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they begged him to lay his hand on him. ³³ He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue. ³⁴ Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, 'Ephphatha', that is, 'Be opened.' ³⁵ And immediately his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. ³⁶ Then Jesus ordered them to tell no one; but the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. ³⁷ They were astounded beyond measure, saying, 'He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.'

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 *John Webb writes*

We can see and hear traffic on the A303 from our house. During the lockdown it was ghostly quiet, but recently there has been a stream of cars, caravans, and campervans taking families on holiday. What surprises me is that we all know that they are heading into a covid hotspot! Many of them will catch covid with all the all the problems and disruption that will cause. Why? The simple answer is that we all need to relax, take a break from routine and have a holiday. It seems to many that this is so important they are prepared to risk catching covid.

St Mark tells us at the beginning of our gospel reading that Jesus needed a break. We have been hearing how he had been very busy teaching and healing so that crowds had been chasing after him wherever he went. To find a bit of peace, he went where he wasn't well known and he could relax with his friends. But he was better known than he realised and a woman recognised him and saw her opportunity. She had a problem which all of us who are parents know - the agony of having a sick child so that we are prepared to do anything we can to get help. This was her opportunity and she grabbed it.

So we have two deeply felt needs conflicting with each other – Jesus in need of a holiday and the woman's desperation for her little girl. She took her chance and asked Jesus for help. I think that most of us are rather shocked and surprised at Jesus' response – not the gentle Jesus we are used to, but he seems grumpy to the extent that we perhaps need to commend St Mark's honesty in recording it. In addition to refusing to help he insults her by calling her a dog, which was regarded as a pest and not a pet. Her response is amazing. She didn't get angry, she didn't bite back, but she accepted the analogy and subtly moved on. She agreed that she didn't have any priority, she accepted an inferior position. She agreed that she was asking for a privilege and not demanding a right. 'Even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs.' As a result, we can feel an immediate defusing of a difficult situation. Jesus grants her request. Everybody is happy. What could so easily have developed into an ugly confrontation is defused and resolved.

That is a lovely example for us to follow. Often when people have competing needs they are so keen to get

their own way that they fail to see the needs of others. We live in a world of competing needs. Not all of these can be satisfied, but with care they can be accommodated and a solution can be found. Even Jesus felt this conflict.

It is appropriate that this story is the inspiration behind what I regard as one of the loveliest prayers in the Prayer Book – the Prayer of Humble Access said as we come to communion.

'We do not presume to come to this your table, merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness but in your manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table. But you are the same Lord whose nature is always to have mercy.'

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

O God of peace, who has taught us that in quietness and confidence shall be our strength; help us, as we come into your presence, to be still and know that you are God.

In the power of the Spirit and in union with Christ let us pray to the Father.

We pray for the church that it may continue to work faithfully and patiently for the coming of the Kingdom of God. We pray for Bishop Ruth and the diocesan staff as they take on extra responsibilities and prepare for a new Bishop. *Lord in your mercy. Hear our prayer.*

We Pray for Our Queen, Prime Minister, and all World leaders, that they may have the Spirit of wisdom. *Lord in your mercy. Hear our prayer.*

We pray for all those working for peaceful resolution of conflict wherever it is found.
Lord in your mercy. Hear our prayer.

We pray for all those on holiday and having a break from their work that they may be refreshed and renewed.
Lord in your mercy. Hear our prayer.

We pray for all our young people as they return to school, college or university.
Lord in your mercy. Hear our prayer.

We pray for our families, friends, and neighbours that we may serve Christ in one another and seek the common good.
Lord in your mercy. Hear our prayer.

We pray for the sick, suffering and dying known to us and to you.
Lord in your mercy. Hear our prayer.

We pray for those who mourn the death of loved ones..... may they find peace.
Lord in your mercy. Hear our prayer.

Hear us as we remember those who have died; Tom Bond and Dougie Graham. According to your promises grant them a share in your eternal kingdom. *Lord in your mercy. Hear our prayer.*

Rejoicing in the fellowship of all your saints, we commend ourselves and the whole creation to your unfailing love.

Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen

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

A Prayer during the continuing 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: God, who in generous mercy sent the Holy Spirit upon your church in the burning fire of your love: grant that your people may be fervent in the fellowship of the gospel that, always abiding in you, they may found steadfast in faith and active in service; through Jesus Christ your son our lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. 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