

Our Sunday Service Together

September 26th 2021

Trinity 18



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 124

If the Lord himself had not been on our side, now may Israel say;
If the Lord had not been on our side, when enemies rose up against us;
Then would they have swallowed us alive when their anger burned against us;
Then would the waters have overwhelmed us and the torrent gone over our soul;
over our soul would have swept the raging waters.
But blessed be the Lord who has not given us over to be a prey for their teeth.
Our soul has escaped as a bird from the snare of the fowler; the snare is broken and we are delivered.
Our help is in the name of the Lord, who has made heaven and earth.
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 5.13-20

Are any among you suffering? They should pray. Are any cheerful? They should sing songs of praise. ¹⁴ Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. ¹⁵ The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up; and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven. ¹⁶ Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective. ¹⁷ Elijah was a human being like us, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. ¹⁸ Then he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain and the earth yielded its harvest. ¹⁹ My brothers and sisters, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and is brought back by another, ²⁰ you should know that whoever brings back a sinner from wandering will save the sinner's soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

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 9.38-50

John said to him, 'Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he was not following us.' ³⁹ But Jesus said, 'Do not stop him; for no one who does a deed of power in

my name will be able soon afterwards to speak evil of me. ⁴⁰ Whoever is not against us is for us. ⁴¹ For truly I tell you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you bear the name of Christ will by no means lose the reward.

⁴² If any of you put a stumbling-block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea. ⁴³ If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life maimed than to have two hands and to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. ⁴⁵ And if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life lame than to have two feet and to be thrown into hell. ⁴⁷ And if your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into hell, ⁴⁸ where their worm never dies, and the fire is never quenched.

⁴⁹ 'For everyone will be salted with fire. ⁵⁰ Salt is good; but if salt has lost its saltiness, how can you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.'

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 Revd John Webb writes:*

We claim to be a tolerant country so it was a real shock to hear that a labour MP felt that it would not be safe for her to go to the Labour Party Conference because of her views on the trans issue. In our reading Jesus was talking about tolerance when the disciples want him to stop other people healing the sick in his name and he famously said, 'Whoever is not against us is for us.' The church has been slow to learn this and it is to our shame that much of the blood of the martyrs has been shed in the name of Jesus!

This reminded me of a conference of army padres when we were concerned about the resurgence of more extreme charismatic churches. We agreed that we didn't know much about them and that it would be interesting to ask one of them to come and share their worship with us. They agreed to come but made one request which was that we would wear our uniforms because they had problems with authority and they wanted to know how they would feel. So we had the bizarre situation of a chapel full of smart uniformed chaplains in all their finery being lead in and sharing worship with a group of charismatic evangelicals. It couldn't have been less military – they arrived late, it was largely spontaneous, very little was prepared in advance, happy-clappy choruses, we had 'speaking in tongues' and 'laying on of hands', and their PA system only worked intermittently and was interrupted by messages from the local taxi service! This was followed by a meal together when we enjoyed their company. For most of us it was a strange and unique experience, but there was no doubt of their sincerity and faith. It was not for us, but neither did our tradition suit them. We use different ways of expressing the same truth. It was a demonstration that God does indeed move in a mysterious way and that the journey of faith may take many routes – perhaps as many routes as there are people.

This presents a particular challenge to parish churches particularly in rural areas. The parish church tries to meet the spiritual needs of all those living in the area which is very difficult when the expectations of the people may vary so much. People are constantly on the move and some may be used to formal traditional worship and others may be from the charismatic churches and everything in between! That presents a major challenge to the clergy and congregations.

This has resulted in developing tensions within the Church of England including the resignation of a bishop. On the one hand there are those who point out that we are a very mobile society and we get in our cars and go considerable distances for work, shopping, and recreation so why not do so to go to the church of our choice? This of course is the model for the other denominations, but the Church of England has always had at its centre the conviction that it is there to serve not just the needs of the 'members' but of everybody living in the parish whatever their faith or none. That is a very precious vocation which we are in very real danger of losing. We need to take notice of Jesus warning to his disciples to avoid being exclusive and be tolerant towards those who are different. Perhaps we can all learn to rejoice in the rich variety of the church.

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*

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 of England that it may continue to faithfully serve the whole community. 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 tolerance and freedom of speech. *Lord in your mercy. Hear our prayer.*

We pray for those who are unemployed that they may find fulfilling work. *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 *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..... 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.*

The Collect

All: Almighty and everlasting God, increase in us the gift of faith that, forsaking what lies behind and reaching out to that which is before, we may run the way of your commandments and win the crown of everlasting joy; 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