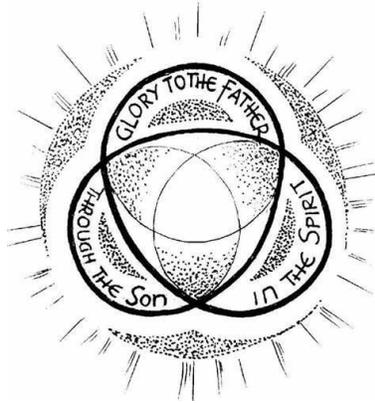


# Our Sunday Service Together

## Sunday July 5<sup>th</sup> 2020



*Almighty and eternal God, revealed for all time and to all the world as one God, yet three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, living in the unity of love. We now join the Saints of the ages, together yet apart and 'make a Spiritual Communion, rejoicing in the grace of God come to us in fullness through Christ our Lord and Saviour, by the will of the Father and through the presence of The Spirit with us, now and for ever.*

### An Acclamation for the Season

All: Alleluia, alleluia! It is our duty and our joy, always and everywhere to give you thanks, holy Father, almighty and eternal God. For you have revealed the glory of your eternal fellowship of love with your Son and with the Holy Spirit, three persons equal in majesty, undivided in splendour, yet one God, ever to be worshipped and adored. Alleluia!

### Hymn Lord of the Dance

### 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

*God the Father forgives us in Christ and heals us by the Holy Spirit. Let us therefore put away all anger and bitterness, all slander and malice, and confess our sins to God our redeemer.*

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 145.8 -15 *We say the psalm aloud*

8 Fire and hail, snow and mist, tempestuous wind, fulfilling his word;

9 Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars;

10 Wild beasts and all cattle, creeping things and birds on the wing;

11 Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the world;

12 Young men and women, old and young together; let them praise the name of the Lord.

13 For his name only is exalted, his splendour above earth and heaven.

14 He has raised up the horn of his people and praise for all his faithful servants, the children of Israel, a people who are near him. Alleluia.

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 Romans 7.15 - 25a

<sup>15</sup> I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. <sup>16</sup> Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. <sup>17</sup> But in fact it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me. <sup>18</sup> For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. <sup>19</sup> For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. <sup>20</sup> Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me.

<sup>21</sup> So I find it to be a law that when I want to do what is good, evil lies close at hand. <sup>22</sup> For I delight in the law of God in my inmost self, <sup>23</sup> but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind, making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. <sup>24</sup> Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? <sup>25</sup> Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our 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 Matthew 11.16 -19 and 25 to end

*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.*

<sup>16</sup> 'But to what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the market-places and calling to one another,

<sup>17</sup> "We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not mourn."

<sup>18</sup> For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, "He has a demon"; <sup>19</sup> the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, "Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax-collectors and sinners!" Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds.

<sup>25</sup> At that time Jesus said, 'I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; <sup>26</sup> yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. <sup>27</sup> All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

<sup>28</sup> 'Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup> Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup> For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.'

*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.*

## A Reflection for the day

Talking with a local landlord this week about opening again to the public as lock down is eased they said 'the government is rightly asking people to be responsible to themselves and their neighbours and to exercise common sense. The problem is common sense and beer do not go together!' For them many of their punters will wish to do one thing but beer will end up leading to actions that they wish they had not undertaken – of course it isn't the beers fault, but the person who consumes it. There is a tussle between one way and another!

Paul knows about such tussles in life. For him there is the tussle to be both fully a part of the people Israel and also fully alive in Christ. The Law, the Torah is good and right and proper for all Israel to follow, but in knowing Christ Paul now sees that the Torah can only show the full truth to him – that being a Jew doesn't stop him being human too and in this the Law does nothing to save him from the deeper condition and need of all humanity for salvation. The light of Christ has shone and revealed this to him, it is like a new tune come to be played in the playground.

So how does Paul respond to both the revelation before him and the tussle which seems to follow him each day? Well, simply put he gets up and dances to the tune of the Lord, unlike sadly the folks Jesus talks of who have heard the tune of the Kingdom and rather than dance have remained grumbling on the side lines. But it can be difficult to be the only one on the dance floor, to be exposed, different, and we would rather run back to the edge and join in the grumbling. As one group from my youth sang 'should I stay or should I go now' and followed it with 'If I stay there will be trouble, but if I go it will be double'. This maybe sums up Paul's tussling in the book of Romans, if he stays on the dance floor there will be trouble but if he goes from the floor he knows how much more it would be.

Dancing may never have been your thing so let's look another way. I wonder if you have ever travelled and experienced jet lag. It is really quite a strange experience, the place you are in is on one-time zone (possibly darkness) and your body clock on another (daytime). You are looking to be up and active whilst everyone else is sleeping. The tussle comes with the draw to get your body clock in time with the zone you are living in. But what if you were not supposed to get into sync? What if you are called to live your life within a certain time zone as if you were in another? What if, Paul has realised, Israel was called to live by the Torah rather than becoming like every other nation? What if now that the Kingdom has come, the people of that Kingdom are called to live by its 'time zone' rather sync their lives with a different zone; in other words, to be in the world yet not of the world.?

Paul, though he tussles with this, has come to know in Christ the promised Messiah of Israel has come in Jesus of Nazareth. Now, there is a new tune to be danced to, the Lord's tune. As much as he would rather not find himself exposed on the dance floor, he is and so he finds a tussle to go back to the edges and to join with all the others.

As much as Paul tussles with wishing to do one thing and a constant draw to another, he has come to know that grace has made a way, that the light he stands in will never be extinguished (which is great news, it means we do not have to try to keep the light on, we simply have to stand in its glow).

The temptation to get in sync with the time zone of the world is as old as are the people of God, Israel and the call to be distinct and to live by God's guidelines, by the Torah. But this living is as a witness, it isn't a route to salvation from the fall of humanity from living as it was called to in the image of God. This work is God's alone for it is a work of grace. This is not something we are called to tussle with but to rest in. The tussle, as Paul knows, is about becoming just like the world in which we live, it is about running from the dance floor, it is to turn our backs on the gift of God to fulfil our humanity through Jesus way of life.

This isn't a new tussle and it isn't a tussle with people but with the unseen temptations and whispers of the wind, spiritual forces which is why elsewhere Pauls says put in the spiritual armour God in his grace gives us to wear. To put on the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the helmet of salvation, the boots of readiness to proclaim the news of salvation in Christ, take up the shield of faith and the sword of the word from God and stand firm in Christ Jesus.

Dance then wherever you may be, however exposed you may feel, however daft you look, rather than stand on the edge with the grumblers. Live then by the time zone of the kingdom rather than be in sync with the world. Oh, and maybe instead of beer to dull our common sense and get us into trouble have a soft drink – after all its possible to be in the pub, yet not of the drunkenness of the pub!

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

Come, Lord, come to us, that we may love you and live to your glory and proclaim you Kingdom In Jesus Christ and by the power of your Spirit.

*Lord, we come to you – give us rest and refreshment.*

We pray for leaders, visionaries, researchers, for those who may have become dispirited by the task they face, wearied by the work they do; especially we hold before you medical staff, carers, the police and all seeking to combat Covid-19 and the implications of its pandemic on businesses, schools and communities world-wide.

*Lord, we come to you – give us rest and refreshment.*

We pray for the refugees of the world, for nations struggling with flood and drought, for the UN and the W.H.O as they seek to bring relief.

*Lord, we come to you – give us rest and refreshment.*

We pray for all who have lost the joy and pleasure of living, for the bored, the cynical, the lonely. The overworked and the stressed.

*Lord, we come to you – give us rest and refreshment.*

Lord, make our homes places of peace and calm. We pray for families in strife, for relationships strained, for those suffering from domestic violence and abuse.

*Lord, we come to you – give us rest and refreshment.*

We pray for the over anxious, the depressed and despairing, all those suffering from a breakdown. For all not coping alone and for the many facing redundancy at this time.

*Lord, we come to you – give us rest and refreshment.*

We pray for all who are fully in your Kingdom, for whom the tussle of this life is over and the rest of your presence is complete ..... and we give you thanks for your grace for them and for us in Christ Jesus our lord. 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: Gracious Father, by the obedience of Jesus you brought salvation to our wayward world:  
draw us into harmony with your will, that we may find all things restored in him, our Saviour, Jesus Christ.. 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.