

Our Sunday Service Together

July 3rd 2022

Trinity 4



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 66.1-9

Be joyful in God, all the earth; sing the glory of his name; sing the glory of his praise.
Say to God, 'How awesome are your deeds!
Because of your great strength your enemies shall bow before you.
'All the earth shall worship you, sing to you, sing praise to your name.'
Come now and behold the works of God, how wonderful he is in his dealings with humankind.
He turned the sea into dry land; the river they passed through on foot; there we rejoiced in him.
In his might he rules for ever; his eyes keep watch over the nations; let no rebel rise up against him.
Bless our God, O you peoples; make the voice of his praise to be heard,
Who holds our souls in life and suffers not our feet to slip.
For you, O God, have proved us; you have tried us as silver is tried.
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 Galatians 6.7-16

Do not be deceived; God is not mocked, for you reap whatever you sow. ⁸ If you sow to your own flesh, you will reap corruption from the flesh; but if you sow to the Spirit, you will reap eternal life from the Spirit. ⁹ So let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up. ¹⁰ So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all, and especially for those of the family of faith. ¹¹ See what large letters I make when I am writing in my own hand! ¹² It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh that try to compel you to be circumcised—only that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. ¹³ Even the circumcised do not themselves obey the law, but they want you to be circumcised so that they may boast about your flesh. ¹⁴ May I never boast of anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. ¹⁵ For neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is anything; but a new creation is everything! ¹⁶ As for those who will follow this rule—peace be upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

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 Luke 10.1-11 and 16-20

After this the Lord appointed seventy others and sent them on ahead of him in pairs to every town and place where he himself intended to go. ²He said to them, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore, ask the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest. ³Go on your way. See, I am sending you out like lambs into the midst of wolves. ⁴Carry no purse, no bag, no sandals; and greet no one on the road. ⁵Whatever house you enter, first say, "Peace to this house!" ⁶And if anyone is there who shares in peace, your peace will rest on that person; but if not, it will return to you. ⁷Remain in the same house, eating and drinking whatever they provide, for the labourer deserves to be paid. Do not move about from house to house. ⁸Whenever you enter a town and its people welcome you, eat what is set before you; ⁹cure the sick who are there, and say to them, "The kingdom of God has come near to you." ¹⁰But whenever you enter a town and they do not welcome you, go out into its streets and say, ¹¹"Even the dust of your town that clings to our feet, we wipe off in protest against you. Yet know this: the kingdom of God has come near."

'Whoever listens to you listens to me, and whoever rejects you rejects me, and whoever rejects me rejects the one who sent me.'

¹⁷The seventy returned with joy, saying, 'Lord, in your name even the demons submit to us!' ¹⁸He said to them, 'I watched Satan fall from heaven like a flash of lightning. ¹⁹See, I have given you authority to tread on snakes and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing will hurt you. ²⁰Nevertheless, do not rejoice at this, that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.'

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

I am left wondering as I read the Gospel today; do we organise church in the way Jesus envisaged?

Of course, when anyone says 'let's get back to things the way Jesus did them' we have to stop for a moment and note that today is a different world to then and also accept that over the centuries Jesus has been guiding and forging his church through the Spirit, through the written word and through the application of common sense. But it is good always to stop and check our compass as we journey through the years and to ask if we might be holding to core principles, or if they have slipped by.

It is interesting, as we read this passage, that Jesus does not select a few for his work of bringing His peace to the people. Luke tells us that 72 were sent in pairs with very simple directions – no need for lots of training! They were to go and bid 'peace', 'shalom', wholeness and wellbeing on those they met. This doesn't sound difficult at all – to go and be a blessing to folks, seeking their wellbeing and enabling wholeness to come their way. I suspect most folks in church communities like the sound of this; no in depth training, just go and be His love and grace to folks. In the passage it seems to work, and work really well as the 72 return with stories of the things they have seen.

So why, so often, when church folks are encouraged to go and do likewise, with the urgency Jesus asks for there is pushback, reticence, apathy, fear even?

Might it be Jesus' words about lions and lambs that worries us? Jesus is honest when he uses the words simply to tell us that not everyone will respond positively to us; but should that make us fearful? Jesus himself knows how some reject, plot even against his messages of love and grace, his healing and life giving actions.

I wonder also if there may be other factors at work in folks' reluctance to go. Over the years the church has become focused on the 'few' selected and chosen for 'ministry'. The name 'Vicar' comes from 'vicarious' - an action undertaken on behalf of another. In our passage we see Jesus inspire his disciples and then enable and support them in undertaking their work for the kingdom's harvest. Vicars exist to act in Jesus' stead and do the same with his disciples today. However, it is all too easy for church communities, and for Vicars themselves, to think the role is to be a stand in for the church's work rather than Jesus role of leadership.

This creates a big problem. Firstly, one person cannot do the work of 72. Second, both the professionals and the wider church become dependent on a false premise that you have to be trained especially for the work of the 72; the passage shows us otherwise. Third, it means little or no harvest occurs and the grain stores are empty.

Some folks argue that decline in church attendance can be matched with reductions in clergy. There are some correlations, but I wonder if the biggest factor arises when Clergy and congregations fail to live out their calling; the Vicar to enable and support in their leadership and the congregation in not being at their calling to go and be love, peace and grace with expectancy that God will do amazing things.

This is not a numbers game, it doesn't matter if you are 720, 72, 7 or 2 in your church Jesus still calls on all to go and bid peace to neighbour and friend alike. All are called!

What is there to stop us? Ok, some folks will reject us, but what have we to fear? Whilst we might feel like lambs facing wolves I wonder if we can, like the 72, step out in faith and be ready to come back and share in our rejoicing at the grace of God we see at work when we go.

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. *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 those 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

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