

# Our Sunday Service Together

July 23<sup>rd</sup> 2023

7<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Trinity



## 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 86.11-17

Teach me your way, O Lord, and I will walk in your truth; knit my heart to you, that I may fear your name.

I will thank you, O Lord my God, with all my heart, and glorify your name for evermore;

For great is your steadfast love towards me, for you have delivered my soul from the depths of the grave.

O God, the proud rise up against me and a ruthless horde seek after my life;

they have not set you before their eyes.

But you, Lord, are gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and full of kindness and truth.

Turn to me and have mercy upon me; give your strength to your servant

and save the child of your handmaid.

Show me a token of your favour, that those who hate me may see it and be ashamed;

because you, O Lord, have helped and comforted me.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

## Scripture Reading Romans 8.12-25

<sup>12</sup> So then, brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh— <sup>13</sup> for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. <sup>14</sup> For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. <sup>15</sup> For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, 'Abba! Father!' <sup>16</sup> it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, <sup>17</sup> and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

<sup>18</sup> I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. <sup>19</sup> For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; <sup>20</sup> for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope <sup>21</sup> that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. <sup>22</sup> We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labour pains until now; <sup>23</sup> and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. <sup>24</sup> For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? <sup>25</sup> But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

*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 13.24-30 and 36-43

<sup>24</sup> He put before them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field; <sup>25</sup> but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. <sup>26</sup> So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. <sup>27</sup> And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, "Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?" <sup>28</sup> He answered, "An enemy has done this." The slaves said to him, "Then do you want us to go and gather them?" <sup>29</sup> But he replied, "No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. <sup>30</sup> Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn."

<sup>36</sup> Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, 'Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.' <sup>37</sup> He answered, 'The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; <sup>38</sup> the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, <sup>39</sup> and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. <sup>40</sup> Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. <sup>41</sup> The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, <sup>42</sup> and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. <sup>43</sup> Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!

*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 section of Matthew's gospel we find ourselves in at this time, with all his teaching through parables is punctuated with a phrase from Jesus, 'let those with ears, listen!' Clearly then, it is not just this time and age that is filled with people who hear something but never listen to what is being said.

Interestingly, a new survey has said that most under 30s get all their news and information from social media, whilst older adults look to news bulletins. Even the old broadsheet newspapers are now much reduced in size and publishing most of their content on line. The appetite to hear but not spend time listening pervades our society.

Many will have heard this past week that the Archbishop of York said the Lord's prayer should be changed and 'our Father' be dropped or replaced it with 'mother'. Well, he did not say that at all! For those who listen to his complete address at General Synod they will have heard him say, in an aside, that he understands some people, having faced abuse growing up, find it difficult to talk of God in terms of the Father. This aside was within a talk about how we do call God 'Father' and should be open to, and able to do so. St Paul, concurs! "When we cry, 'Abba! Father!' it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.", he says in Romans.

For Paul, a Jew, the concept of being family in relationship with God is a central tenant of the faith. All Jews look back to a common family heritage in Abraham who enters into a covenanted relationship with God which promises descendants greater than can be numbered. Paul's argument is that in Christ Jesus this promise is fulfilled, and rather than look to father Abraham all now look to God as Father, as Abba.

The crux of praying Abba, of saying 'our Father' is not the gender of God but the relationship we have with God and with each other, confirmed by the Spirit within us all. God is our spiritual 'parent', and we are then children of God, brothers and sisters of Christ Jesus, and of each other – this is why we say 'our, rather than 'my'. In being children of God we are heirs of the promises of God; we are restored into the fullness of relationship with God once known by Adam and Eve.

This is what the Archbishop was talking about, the fullness of life promised to Abraham and offered to all in Christ Jesus. For some folks, entering into this full life in Christ is difficult to do because getting past the word 'Father' brings up feelings and thoughts of the abuse they suffered at the hands of someone called 'father'.

Paul further tells us that 'creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God'. Folks who have, or have not faced parental abuse long for the revealing of the Children of God. Paul points to a future glorious event but also reveals the mission of the church in all times and ages. 'You have to see to believe it' is a popular phrase today. Those of us who say 'our Father', those who are the church, the family of God in Christ are called to live openly the relationship we have both with God 'our Father' and with each other as Children of God, as brothers and sisters of Christ.

"Let those with ears, listen!"

## 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.

Strengthen Bishop Michael and Ruth and all who seek to serve you in this diocese. May they be filled with the Spirit and serve you as the first disciples. We give thanks for all those who have spread the good news throughout the ages. *Lord in your mercy. Hear our prayer.*

We Pray for our Government and all in local authorities may make wise choices for the good of the people rather than personal gain. *Lord in your mercy. Hear our prayer.*

We pray for the work of the United Nations and all organisations dedicated to the relief of the hungry and starving. For all who seek peace between nations and peoples *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 ..... and we give thanks and pray for those who use their skill and risk their lives to care for them. *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. *Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen*

## The Collect

All: Lord of all power and might, the author and giver of all good things: graft in our hearts the love of your name, increase in us true religion, nourish us with all goodness, and of your great mercy keep us in the same; 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 for 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