

Our Sunday Service Together

11th October 2023

19th 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 Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd; therefore, can I lack nothing.

He makes me lie down in green pastures and leads me beside still waters.

He shall refresh my soul and guide me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

You spread a table before me in the presence of those who trouble me; you have anointed my head with oil and my cup shall be full.

Surely goodness and loving mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

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 Philippians 4.1-9

¹ Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved. ² I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. ³ Yes, and I ask you also, my loyal companion, help these women, for they have struggled beside me in the work of the gospel, together with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life.

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵ Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. ⁶ Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

⁸ Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. ⁹ Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard.

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 22.1-14

Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying: ² 'The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. ³ He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come. ⁴ Again he sent other slaves, saying, "Tell those who have been invited: Look, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding banquet." ⁵ But they made light of it and went away, one to his farm, another to his business, ⁶ while the rest seized his slaves, maltreated them, and killed them. ⁷ The king was enraged. He sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. ⁸ Then he said to his slaves, "The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. ⁹ Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet." ¹⁰ Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both good and bad; so the wedding hall was filled with guests.

¹¹ 'But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding robe, ¹² and he said to him, "Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding robe?" And he was speechless. ¹³ Then the king said to the attendants, "Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." ¹⁴ For many are called, but few are chosen

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

Paul talks of the work required by all as we journey through life in faith; as we deepen our faith in our lives. Rejoice in the Lord always. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near, do not worry about anything. None of these things just occur in life, they take work.

Anxiety fills our society as much today as it did in the ancient world. Then, folks spent hours mitigating their anxieties about the this and the that of life by making offerings to multiple deities. Today, folks spend hours scouring the internet for solutions and directions from today's little 'god-lets'; the 'social influencers'. Many argue that what is found simply compounds folks' anxieties. In Paul's days the need was to be rid of the false idols and concentrate on a life with Christ. Today, it would be to stop searching the web and instead spend time with Jesus.

We all know that to create a lovely garden you have to plant the correct seeds, nurture the right soil and feed regularly. So Paul continues; 'whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard.' We have to work positively in the garden of our lives and our society, planting and nurturing what is honourable and good.

Things take time, and preparation is essential to see the desired results! Jesus' parable may on the one hand seem to be about an awful trickster who, having been enraged by some folks, invites others to a banquet only to fly into a rage again with one and have him thrown out. But Jesus talks of preparation, of the preparation required by all invited to follow him in faith. The crux of his teaching is that being invited and 'turning up' is not enough. The man in the parable would have known how you needed to be dressed for the banquet he was attending.

Jesus and Paul tell it plainly to us, we can't simply 'turn up', our faith needs to be deepened, we need to work at character and attitudinal changes; we need to be redeemed by the Spirit! Yes, all are invited to the banquet, but the invitation is not to complacency or stagnation, it is an invitation that calls us to be fit for the party, dressed for the occasion, changed from one degree of glory to another.

The question comes to each of us, how is our preparation coming on?

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*

Lord of Lords, King of Kings, so move the hearts and minds of the leaders of nations that we would see mercy, grace, provision for all in need and peace. We pray for your peace in Ukraine, Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Sudan, in Gaza and Israel. *Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his name.*

Gracious God, we pray for your church throughout the world, that your way may be known upon earth, and your saving power among all nations. We pray for all church leaders and all those who are seeking new ways to live and tell the story of Jesus in changing times.
Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his name.

God of compassion, the Canaanite woman's persistence led to Jesus's blessing. Challenge the boundaries we set to our charity and concern. Grant that we may all rejoice in your love and share it.
Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his name.

God of hospitality, you set a place for everyone at your table. Open our hearts to embrace those who are easily excluded and despised. We pray for peace and unity among all people and across nations.
Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his name.

God of healing, at your word, the girl was released from her distress. Grant your healing love to all who are weighed down with sickness or anxiety. We pray especially for ... *Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his name.*

God of hope, you bring life to all who call upon your name. Draw into your family all who have died and be with those who are bereaved....
Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his name.

The Collect

All: O God, forasmuch as without you we are not able to please you; mercifully grant that your Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts; 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.

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