

Our Sunday Service Together

July 28th 2024

9th 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 14

The fool has said in his heart, 'There is no God.'

Corrupt are they, and abominable in their wickedness; there is no one that does good.

The Lord has looked down from heaven upon the children of earth, to see if there is anyone who is wise and seeks after God.

But every one has turned back; all alike have become corrupt: there is none that does good; no, not one.

Have they no knowledge, those evildoers, who eat up my people as if they ate bread and do not call upon the Lord?

There shall they be in great fear; for God is in the company of the righteous.

Though they would confound the counsel of the poor, yet the Lord shall be their refuge.

O that Israel's salvation would come out of Zion!

When the Lord restores the fortunes of his people, then will Jacob rejoice and Israel be glad.

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 2 Samuel 11.1-15

In the spring of the year, the time when kings go out to battle, David sent Joab with his officers and all Israel with him; they ravaged the Ammonites, and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem.

²It happened, late one afternoon, when David rose from his couch and was walking about on the roof of the king's house, that he saw from the roof a woman bathing; the woman was very beautiful. ³David sent someone to inquire about the woman. It was reported, 'This is Bathsheba daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite.' ⁴So David sent messengers to fetch her, and she came to him, and he lay with her. (Now she was purifying herself after her period.) Then she returned to her house. ⁵The woman conceived; and she sent and told David, 'I am pregnant.'

⁶So David sent word to Joab, 'Send me Uriah the Hittite.' And Joab sent Uriah to David. ⁷When Uriah came to him, David asked how Joab and the people fared, and how the war was going. ⁸Then David said to Uriah, 'Go down to your house, and wash your feet.' Uriah went out of the king's house, and there followed him a present from the king. ⁹But Uriah slept at the entrance of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and did not go down to his house. ¹⁰When they told David, 'Uriah did not go down to his house', David said to Uriah, 'You have just come from a journey. Why did you not go down to your house?' ¹¹Uriah said to David, 'The ark and Israel and Judah remain in booths; and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are camping in the open field; shall I then go to my house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? As you live, and as your soul lives, I will not do such a thing.' ¹²Then David said to Uriah, 'Remain here today also, and tomorrow I will send you back.' So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day. On the next day, ¹³David invited him to eat and drink in his presence and made him drunk; and in the evening he went out to lie on his couch with the servants of his lord, but he did not go down to his house.

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 John 6.1-21

After this Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, also called the Sea of Tiberias. ² A large crowd kept following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing for the sick. ³ Jesus went up the mountain and sat down there with his disciples. ⁴ Now the Passover, the festival of the Jews, was near. ⁵ When he looked up and saw a large crowd coming towards him, Jesus said to Philip, 'Where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?' ⁶ He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he was going to do. ⁷ Philip answered him, 'Six months' wages would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little.' ⁸ One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, ⁹ 'There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they among so many people?' ¹⁰ Jesus said, 'Make the people sit down.' Now there was a great deal of grass in the place; so they sat down, about five thousand in all. ¹¹ Then Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted. ¹² When they were satisfied, he told his disciples, 'Gather up the fragments left over, so that nothing may be lost.' ¹³ So they gathered them up, and from the fragments of the five barley loaves, left by those who had eaten, they filled twelve baskets. ¹⁴ When the people saw the sign that he had done, they began to say, 'This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world.'

¹⁵ When Jesus realized that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, he withdrew again to the mountain by himself.

¹⁶ When evening came, his disciples went down to the lake, ¹⁷ got into a boat, and started across the lake to Capernaum. It was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. ¹⁸ The lake became rough because a strong wind was blowing. ¹⁹ When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the lake and coming near the boat, and they were terrified. ²⁰ But he said to them, 'It is I; do not be afraid.' ²¹ Then they wanted to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached the land towards which they were going.

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

One family, two kings - one is not where he should have been, the other knows where he should go.

King David should have been with his troops in battle but he is back at home mooching about with time on his hands. What happens next turns the exemplary king, a man 'after God's own heart', into a murderer!

There is much to think on in the story. For instance, most purification baths were covered, so why was Bathsheba bathing naked in the open air? David surely knew who she was; her husband Uriah is part of David's personal guard, as is her father. David's actions are a betrayal of their loyal service! A loyalty shown by Uriah who, though David says to him to take time away from the fighting and go home to sleep with his wife, is exemplary – the army under 'my Lord Joab' is in the field he says – you can hear the dig at David, 'stop

sitting around at home and come and do what a king is supposed to do'. And more, the knife of David's betrayal is driven deep long before the sword in battle strikes Uriah down; Uriah will carry the note commanding his death in the battle in complete trust, never opening the message.

David digs himself deeper and deeper into a hole. The entire incident is unpleasant, the bible does not shy from telling all generations that will follow what being 'after God's own heart' looks like for anyone exercising authority and power over people. It is all so easy to take plaudits, to be self-serving, and the end of the wedge of temptation begins with a thin sliver but widens out all too quickly.

Jesus is all too aware of this!

John's gospel shows once again how misunderstood Jesus is by the crowds. Today the large crowd follow Jesus having seen the 'signs' of who he might be. Now, Jesus satisfies their physical hunger through feeding the thousands gathered. These are a people starved of life, trodden under foot by a puppet king, Herod Antipas and by Rome. Before them is someone acting as a king of Israel should do, acting 'after God's heart'. Jesus can see that the people are ready to 'force' him to be made king – out with Herod and then down with Roman occupation. However, being a king after 'God's own heart' is not to be defined by human categories of power and authority, nor twisted to serve human self-interest – and he withdraws to the wilderness.

This is the right place to be, not because it is away from the crowds but, as the wilderness temptation accounts in Matthew's gospel show, it is the place where Jesus is best able to connect again with his total dependence of the Father. It is here he is able to see clearly the contrast between the shape and form of king God would have him be, and the one temptingly offered by the world and its self-serving rulers.

We, of course are not kings, however we do face the same choice each day to be one 'after God's own heart' or to be defined by the fallen world about us. This is why we pray 'lead us this day, not into temptation and deliver us from evil!' Whether individually, or as a church our calling is to be people shaped and motivated 'after the heart of God' – to be defined by love for neighbour, to be champions for justice, calling for grace and peace, all wrapped in humility and service.

It is always worth taking stock, looking in the mirror and asking 'what shape' am I in? Are we God's heart shaped; do we seek to live, breathe, walk and talk the love, grace, peace and justice of God? As a church, locally and nationally, what shape are we in? Are we shaped by God's heart or might we be shaped by practices and expectations of the world?

'Lead us this day, not into temptation and deliver us from evil!'

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

We pray for the church that it may continue to work faithfully and patiently for the coming of the Kingdom of God. We pray that we may be open to your presence and gifts to us in all times and seasons. Help your church to be always seeking to grow in personal discipleship and good works for the sake of the gospel.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We give thanks and pray for farmers and those who prepare our food that they may be justly rewarded for their labour. We pray for the fair distribution of food and for the hungry and starving. We pray for those near and far coping with drought and flood at this time. *Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer*

We pray for all those on holiday and having a break from their work that they may be refreshed and renewed.

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*

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

The Collect

Almighty God, who sent your Holy Spirit to be the life and light of your Church:
open our hearts to the riches of your grace, that we may bring forth the fruit of the Spirit
in love and joy and peace; 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