

# Our Sunday Service Together

8<sup>th</sup> September 2024

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



## 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 Psalms Psalm 146

Alleluia.

Praise the Lord, O my soul: while I live will I praise the Lord;  
as long as I have any being, I will sing praises to my God.

Put not your trust in princes, nor in any human power, for there is no help in them.

When their breath goes forth, they return to the earth; on that day all their thoughts perish.

Happy are those who have the God of Jacob for their help, whose hope is in the Lord their God;

Who made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them; who keeps his promise for ever;

Who gives justice to those that suffer wrong and bread to those who hunger.

The Lord looses those that are bound; the Lord opens the eyes of the blind;

The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down; the Lord loves the righteous;

The Lord watches over the stranger in the land; he upholds the orphan and widow; but the way of the wicked he turns upside down.

The Lord shall reign for ever, your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. 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 Isaiah 35.4-7a

Say to those who are of a fearful heart, 'Be strong, do not fear!

Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense.

He will come and save you.'

<sup>5</sup> Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped;

<sup>6</sup> then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.

For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; <sup>7</sup> the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water;

*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 Mark 7.24 to end

From there he set out and went away to the region of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know he was there. Yet he could not escape notice, <sup>25</sup> but a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him, and she came and bowed down at his feet. <sup>26</sup> Now the woman was a Gentile, of Syrophenician origin. She begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. <sup>27</sup> He said to her, 'Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs.' <sup>28</sup> But she answered him, 'Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs.' <sup>29</sup> Then he said to her, 'For saying that, you may go—the demon has left your daughter.' <sup>30</sup> So she went home, found the child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.

<sup>31</sup> Then he returned from the region of Tyre, and went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. <sup>32</sup> They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they begged him to lay his hand on him. <sup>33</sup> He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue. <sup>34</sup> Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, 'Ephphatha', that is, 'Be opened.' <sup>35</sup> And immediately his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. <sup>36</sup> Then Jesus ordered them to tell no one; but the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. <sup>37</sup> They were astounded beyond measure, saying, 'He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.'

*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

Isaiah looks forward to a day when God's agent will come and act, God's messiah will restore the brokenness of both people and the world at large – the desert is restored to life, the barren world is come to life.

In Mark's gospel we find Jesus still at large working in Galilee; Galilee of the Gentiles as it was known in his day. Jesus is healing folks, nothing new for we see this already in the gospel, however we now see God's grace and love extending to gentiles. Gentiles are, of course, by nature not people of God; they are not those invited to the feast table. They are not the people of the land of promise, the dwelling place with God, they are 'outside' of that sphere of God's blessing; their land is by nature considered beyond the blessing of God, it is a barren land.

However, the woman in the story contends that whilst not invited to sit at the table there is enough of God's blessings to come the way of the gentiles. In some ways her contention is why is Jesus there if God did not have concern for gentiles, why is God's Messiah there in this 'barren' land, speaking of God's love for all? Jesus does not deny that God's love is indeed 'for all', that his blessing is to be for the entire world; but maybe things are happening a bit sooner than even he anticipated.

Whichever it is, we are presented with God's Messiah for both Jew and Gentile, for the entire world, as Isaiah prophesied and as fellow gospel writer John underlined at the beginning of his gospel – "God so loved the entire cosmos he sent his Son".

All of this is lovely and comforting to read and hear, but I can't help but think we are supposed to wonder if there is not more to this. As we read through the New Testament we find a constant sense of being asked to look forward, to be people who celebrate what we have received in Christ but look ahead to the 'more' to come. We are left with the suggestion we should always be looking for more and wondering 'now what?'

This leads me to think of the Lord's prayer and the words we pray 'your Kingdom come and your will be done, here on earth as in heaven'. In praying this we are reminded our calling is to ever look ahead, to be ever open to God's reign, to God's blessing and presence in our own earth, our lives (we are but dust, we are of the earth, we are Adam) and across the entire earth of the planet. These are prayerful words looking to see God's land of promise, the promise of His presence and blessing come to reality for each of us individually and for the world about us. It is a prayer of longing, for the new reign of God for all, for Jew and Gentile, a work always 'in progress', ever stretching forward until completion.

How will completion occur? How is this 'kingdom', this promised land to 'come'; of course through Christ, but crucially through the lives of all who call him Lord, who call him Messiah. It is through the lives of all who give thanks for the rich blessings they have received through his sacrifice, his death and resurrection, his body and

his blood. All called in thankfulness to 'offer souls and bodies to be living sacrifices, to be sent out in the power of the Spirit, to live and work to the glory of God the Father'.

We who have eaten at the table are called to go take the bread left over, the crumbs that would fall, to feed the impoverished, those who starve in the barren places about us in the world and to see the earth return to fullness of life in Christ, to be an Eden once again through the work of the 'second Adam'. We are called to not only say our prayers but to be God's agents in fulfilling those prayers. In confidence we pray as our saviour taught us:

'Your Kingdom come and will be done, here on earth as in heaven'!

## 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.

We pray for Bishop Michael and all the diocesan staff as they respond to recent changes.  
*Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.*

We pray for world leaders, that they may forgive past wrongs, seek reconciliation and go forward in peace. Especially we pray for the leaders of Ukraine and Russia that a just solution may be found for their dispute, and for the peoples of Ukraine and Russia that they may become good neighbours to each other.  
*Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.*

We pray for our King, Prime Minister, members of parliament and local councillors that they may have the Wisdom of Solomon. *Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.*

We pray for our schools, colleges and universities as they start the new academic year. And we pray particularly for all young people who are uncertain of their future and seek the way forward in their lives.  
*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, dying and those who mourn ..... and we give thanks and pray for those who care for them. *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. And may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all, now and for evermore. Amen.

## The Collect

All: God, who in generous mercy sent the Holy Spirit upon your Church in the burning fire of your love: grant that your people may be fervent in the fellowship of the gospel that, always abiding in you, they may be found steadfast in faith and active in service; 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