

Our Sunday Service Together

Sunday November 17th 2024



An Acclamation for the Season

All: Alleluia, alleluia! To you we come, Father of lights, with angels and saints, where heaven and earth unite. May Jesus meet us in the breaking of the bread. 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

God the Father forgives us in Christ and heals us by the Holy Spirit. Let us therefore put away all anger and bitterness, all slander and malice, and confess our sins to God our redeemer.

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 16 *We say the psalm aloud*

Preserve me, O God, for in you have I taken refuge; I have said to the Lord, 'You are my lord, all my good depends on you.'

All my delight is upon the godly that are in the land, upon those who are noble in heart.

Though the idols are legion that many run after, their drink offerings of blood I will not offer, neither make mention of their names upon my lips.

The Lord himself is my portion and my cup; in your hands alone is my fortune.

My share has fallen in a fair land; indeed, I have a goodly heritage.

I will bless the Lord who has given me counsel, and in the night watches he instructs my heart.

I have set the Lord always before me; he is at my right hand; I shall not fall.

Wherefore my heart is glad and my spirit rejoices; my flesh also shall rest secure.

For you will not abandon my soul to Death, nor suffer your faithful one to see the Pit.

You will show me the path of life; in your presence is the fullness of joy and in your right hand are pleasures for evermore.

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 Hebrews 10.11-14 and 19-25

And every priest stands day after day at his service, offering again and again the same sacrifices that can never take away sins. ¹² But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, 'he sat down at the right hand of God', ¹³ and since then has been waiting 'until his enemies would be made a footstool for his feet.' ¹⁴ For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.

Therefore, my friends, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰ by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain (that is, through his flesh), ²¹ and since we have a great priest over the house of God, ²² let us approach with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. ²³ Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful. ²⁴ And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, ²⁵ not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

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 13.1-8

As he came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, 'Look, Teacher, what large stones and what large buildings!' ² Then Jesus asked him, 'Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down.'

³ When he was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked him privately, ⁴ 'Tell us, when will this be, and what will be the sign that all these things are about to be accomplished?' ⁵ Then Jesus began to say to them, 'Beware that no one leads you astray. ⁶ Many will come in my name and say, "I am he!" and they will lead many astray. ⁷ When you hear of wars and rumours of wars, do not be alarmed; this must take place, but the end is still to come. ⁸ For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. This is but the beginning of the birth pangs.

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

'For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.'

These words from the writer of Hebrews are brought to mind every time we here, in the Eucharist, "*All glory be to you, our heavenly Father, who, in your tender mercy, gave your only Son our Saviour Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption; who made there by his one oblation of himself once offered a full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world.*" There is no need for a second or third or any number of repeated offerings and sacrifices for, as Christ himself said on the cross 'it is finished'. In fact, we can do nothing personally, offer nothing ourselves, to earn God's grace and forgiveness – all we are to do is receive it and live into that new way of life.

The power of sin and death are defeated! But, we ask, why do we still see them at work about us, and within us? Well, this is what St Paul seeks to address through most all of his writings in the New testament. Folks understandably ask 'when, how, why not?'. In good contextual terms Paul seeks to respond and guide; to, as the writer of the Hebrews continues *'hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful. And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.'*

As time rolls on, however, it is easy to think that 'the Day' is not any nearer (the linear movement of time means it will always be nearer as the days of yesteryear pile up like grains running through an old style egg timer). It is all too easy to give up the hope, to love less, to give up on good deeds, and neglect meeting together. It may be that we also doubt our salvation and slip back from the freedom given in Christ to trying to earn again and again the good favour of God.

The writer to Hebrews reminds us we cannot earn what is already given and assured in Christ. We can, however ensure we take hold of the gift we have and live into the freedom given us from sin and death. To not be anxious and instead know we are now without the shame of Adam; we do not need to hide away from God or the world.

One of my all-time favourite hymns is Wesley's 'And can it be?' It tells of the writer's discovery that in Christ he no longer had to live to earn the grace and love of God, and more did not have to hide from the world and more so from God. Instead he, and each and all who have come to Christ having received the forever acceptance of the Father, through the Son, are free to live in grace and love. Verses 4 and 5 are my favourites!

4. Long my imprisoned spirit lay, fast bound in sin and nature's night;
Thine eye diffused a quick'ning ray, I woke, the dungeon flamed with light;
My chains fell off, my heart was free; I rose, went forth and followed Thee.

5. No condemnation now I dread; Jesus, and all in Him is mine!
Alive in Him, my living Head, And clothed in righteousness divine,
Bold I approach th'eternal throne, And claim the crown, through Christ my own.

Wesley saw the gift had been given and took it up, and followed Christ into the new life he gives and guarantees. We are to be people who live in the hope of the arrival of 'the Day', assured and confident because of the '*one oblation of himself once offered a full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world*'; and we follow! Follow in grace, in love, in peace with the Cosmos, unashamed of our humanity and, rather than being held back by the immense work of earning the favour of God (which we simply are not able to do) we live lives empowered by the Spirit who guides into all truth and freedom – to boldly approach the eternal throne.

The stones of the temple would be torn down, could be torn down because Jesus was to bring about there being no need for a temple; no need for a priest to offer sacrifice each day for the people. There is, however a need for each of us to become the temple in which the Spirit of God makes His dwelling. There is the need for us to welcome His daily leading us – not into temptation and deliverance from evil; so we might not be led astray!

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*

Mindful of God's kingdom, set in process through the cross of Christ and yet to be fulfilled, we commend ourselves to God and pray for the needs of the world in the words: 'thy kingdom come, thy will be done'.

We pray for our Church throughout the world and across all denominations. Pour out your Spirit of truth on all ordained and lay leaders and grant them wisdom and courage to proclaim your kingdom to the margins of society. *Thy kingdom come, thy will be done.*

We pray for our world. Guide and direct all world leaders and those in positions of authority with responsibility for decision making. Grant them great wisdom, deep commitment and right judgment. We pray especially for the people of America that divisions may be healed and unity restored in the aftermath of their elections. *Thy kingdom come, thy will be done.*

We pray for all God's people. Grant us the grace to put aside all differences of culture, race, gender or ability, to recognise that we are all created in your image. Guide all those involved in serving children and young people in education that they may see the gifts in everyone. We pray for all doctors, nurses and carers. Grant

them strength, encouragement and the resources for all lives to flourish without exclusion.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done.

We hold before God the elderly, the vulnerable and those who are most at risk from coronavirus. We pray for the sick, those experiencing sorrow and those who are isolated. In the silence of our hearts we make our own intentions...

We pray for ourselves, for one another and for those whose needs are known only to you. Grant us the grace to listen to your voice and the courage to follow it wherever it may lead us.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done. Amen

The Collect

All: Heavenly Father, whose blessed Son was revealed to destroy the works of the devil and to make us the children of God and heirs of eternal life: grant that we, having this hope, may purify ourselves even as he is pure; that when he shall appear in power and great glory we may be made like him in his eternal and glorious kingdom; where he 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.