

Our Sunday Service Together

September 14th 2025

13th 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 Psalmody 51.1-10

Have mercy on me, O God, in your great goodness; according to the abundance of your compassion blot out my offences.

Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness and cleanse me from my sin.

For I acknowledge my faults and my sin is ever before me.

Against you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight,

So that you are justified in your sentence and righteous in your judgement.

I have been wicked even from my birth, a sinner when my mother conceived me.

Behold, you desire truth deep within me and shall make me understand wisdom in the depths of my heart.

Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean; wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.

Make me hear of joy and gladness, that the bones you have broken may rejoice.

Turn your face from my sins and blot out all my misdeeds.

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 1 Timothy 1.12-17

I am grateful to Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because he judged me faithful and appointed me to his service, ¹³ even though I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and a man of violence. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, ¹⁴ and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵ The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the foremost. ¹⁶ But for that very reason I received mercy, so that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display the utmost patience, making me an example to those who would come to believe in him for eternal life. ¹⁷ To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

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 Luke 15.1-10

Now all the tax-collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. ² And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, 'This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.'

³ So he told them this parable: ⁴ 'Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? ⁵ When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. ⁶ And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbours, saying to them, "Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost." ⁷ Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who need

no repentance.

⁸ 'Or what woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one of them, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? ⁹ When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbours, saying, "Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost." ¹⁰ Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.'

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

Shepherds, lost sheep, brides losing part of their wedding dowry, sinners, tax collectors, wolves devouring all before them – how has any of this anything to do with God's messianic redemption of the world?

I wonder if you have thought about the sheep the shepherd searches for, and maybe asked the simple question why? Why go and look in the first place, after all this is just one and there are 99 others in the flock? Did the shepherd go look because it was one of the woolliest sheep of the flock or maybe one that sounded so sweet when it bleated? Maybe it was one that nuzzled up to the shepherd each evening before going to sit with others as night fell and the shepherd settled in the gap of the sheepfold wall. Well no, it was simply that the sheep was lost; no qualification except a disqualification – it was lost!

This is the sheep that got to ride on the shepherd's shoulders, this is the sheep that made the angels of heaven rejoice. It isn't the ride home that matters but the journey taken by the shepherd to redeem the lost sheep; a journey into a wilderness, into the place of wolves and brigands, into the places where sinners and tax collectors gathered, the lost! And all undertaken with joy and love; John 3.16 springs to mind at this moment!

There is no definition then of who is ripe for God's redeeming love, save that they are lost from the sheep fold, they are in the wilderness, they need to be 'found' and brought home. I wonder how often you have heard 'I am not good enough to come and be part of the church', or maybe you have felt that yourself; not worthy of God's grace and love. Well, you would be in good company for no one is good enough, nobody is able to affect their own rescue. Being lost is the only qualification for a search to begin. Being prepared to take the ride home, to be redeemed is all we have to do after being found.

Jesus was found amongst the sinners and tax collectors because that is exactly where he needed to be; and some of the Pharisees scribes seem to have missed that God's messiah was about redeeming all the people who were prepared to be redeemed. One such Pharisee did come to this realisation; St Paul!

Paul wasn't so much a lost sheep as a wolf, harrying and devouring the flock of Christ. But the grace of God extends to wolves as well as sheep. The bride in Jesus second quick illustration is Israel, and Jesus suggests she has lost a part of her dignity – a coin from her wedding dowry headdress is lost. What does the women do, but spend energy and time searching, even in the dead of the night!

Instead of harrying the Messiah's flock, Pharisees like Paul needed to see their lost-ness and need to be found and redeemed. As the prophets had warned so many times 'my people Israel are foolish, they do not know me; they are skilled in doing evil, they have no idea how to do good. What could be less shameful, what is more devastating than when a bride loses her dignity, when the symbols of her betrothal are lost! How shameful it is when the people of God forget how to 'do good', turn from the light into the void of darkness, when violence erupts and words divide.

Paul knows his shame. But, much more he knows the fullness of the grace of God revealed in Jesus Christ, for both Jew and Gentile, for the beloved bride and for those who dwell in darkness. And he acts on this, he follows his master and journeys into the wilderness of the Roman world. He follows his master in eating with sinners and tax collectors, and he goes to the synagogues to call the beloved bride back to her dignity, for he knows the reality is 'all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God' and that the grace of God is able to save all who will be saved.

As Paul followed Jesus' way, I wonder if we each and all will do the same.

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, as you love us, help us to love one another. Give to your church a burning zeal through your Spirit and keep us ardent in our spirits. *Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayer.*

Lord, we pray for peace and unity in your church. Increase our fellowship with one another and our openness to others of your church not yet gathered with us. Give us courage to share your love for this world, to tell of our lives with you, that the faintest whiff of faith in others may be fanned into flame for your glory. *Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayer.*

We pray for peace in our hearts, our community, in this nation, and across your world, that as much as it may be possible for us we may live in peace with all people. We pray for peace keeping organisations, for NGOs, for the United Nations. We pray for police and probation services. We give thanks for all who offer and work for peace in this world. *Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayer.*

May our homes be places of peace and love. We pray for those caught in domestic violence, homelessness, unemployment and spiralling debt. Be with our local foodbank and increase people's generosity to their work. But as we pray this we ask that the systems of injustice, poor decisions by government and the greed of many would be turned by your love to the ways of your kingdom. *Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayer.*

We pray for all not at peace, for broken relationships, the broken hearted and broken in spirit. For those who suffer from a breakdown in wellbeing, for all being affected by hatred or revenge. *Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayer.*

We hold before you those sick in body, mind or spirit. Those facing operations or end of life care. Be close in peace and through doctors and nurses bring healing. *Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayer.*

Be with those who mourn the loss of a loved one at this time. Lord, when you come in your glory, make us to be one with you and the saints who are now at peace. *Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of Jesus Christ, the prince of peace. Amen.*

The Collect

All: Almighty God, who called your Church to bear witness that you were in Christ reconciling the world to yourself: help us to proclaim the good news of your love, that all who hear it may be drawn to you; through him who was lifted up on the cross, 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