

Our Sunday Service Together

September 7th 2025

12th 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 1

Blessed are they who have not walked in the counsel of the wicked,
nor lingered in the way of sinners, nor sat in the assembly of the scornful.
Their delight is in the law of the Lord and they meditate on his law day and night.
Like a tree planted by streams of water bearing fruit in due season, with leaves that do not wither,
whatever they do, it shall prosper.
As for the wicked, it is not so with them; they are like chaff which the wind blows away.
Therefore the wicked shall not be able to stand in the judgement,
nor the sinner in the congregation of the righteous.
For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked shall perish.
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 Philemon 1.1-21

¹ Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother,
To Philemon our dear friend and co-worker, ² to Apphia our sister, to Archippus our fellow-soldier, and to the church in your house:

³ Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴ When I remember you in my prayers, I always thank my God ⁵ because I hear of your love for all the saints and your faith towards the Lord Jesus. ⁶ I pray that the sharing of your faith may become effective when you perceive all the good that we may do for Christ. ⁷ I have indeed received much joy and encouragement from your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, my brother.

⁸ For this reason, though I am bold enough in Christ to command you to do your duty, ⁹ yet I would rather appeal to you on the basis of love—and I, Paul, do this as an old man, and now also as a prisoner of Christ Jesus. ¹⁰ I am appealing to you for my child, Onesimus, whose father I have become during my imprisonment. ¹¹ Formerly he was useless to you, but now he is indeed useful both to you and to me. ¹² I am sending him, that is, my own heart, back to you. ¹³ I wanted to keep him with me, so that he might be of service to me in your place during my imprisonment for the gospel; ¹⁴ but I preferred to do nothing without your consent, in order that your good deed might be voluntary and not something forced. ¹⁵ Perhaps this is the reason he was separated from you for a while, so that you might have him back for ever, ¹⁶ no longer as a slave but as more than a slave, a beloved brother—especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

¹⁷ So if you consider me your partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. ¹⁸ If he has wronged you in any way, or owes you anything, charge that to my account. ¹⁹ I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand: I will repay it. I say nothing about your owing me even your own self. ²⁰ Yes, brother, let me have this benefit from you in the Lord! Refresh my heart in Christ. ²¹ Confident of your obedience, I am writing to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say.

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 14.25-33

²⁵ Now large crowds were travelling with him; and he turned and said to them, ²⁶ 'Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple. ²⁷ Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. ²⁸ For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it? ²⁹ Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it will begin to ridicule him, ³⁰ saying, "This fellow began to build and was not able to finish." ³¹ Or what king, going out to wage war against another king, will not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to oppose the one who comes against him with twenty thousand? ³² If he cannot, then, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for the terms of peace. ³³ So therefore, none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions.

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

We wince when we hear Jesus saying 'hate your father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sister, yes even life itself' – and maybe we are supposed to, it brings us up short, it makes us think and take stock. And we want to water things down, and many a preacher will have done so. There is no mistaking the word 'hate' this is exactly the Greek word used in the text, so how are we to listen to these words and move on in our faith?

It is always vital never to take the 'chip paper' daily sensationalist approach to reading a section of the gospels that our society would advocate in all and any hearing of the news; we are expected to have a knew jerk reaction, we are expected as each day brings new 'revelations' to become more anxious and fearful of the world about us. When we read passages from the gospels we do have to all what we have read to raise a feeling, thought, reaction, BUT we must always place that in the context of the entire gospel narrative.

When we read or hear a passage, or a single line we ask 'how does this fit within the overall gospel narrative'; this is why it is important we read the entire thing! When Jesus says 'hate you parents, family and even your life' how does that sit within the rest of Jesus' words and teaching, does it fit with the overall kingdom project Jesus has come to bring to bear'?

So, when we read 'hate your mother' and look to the entire gospel, how might Jesus saying from the cross in John's gospel 'woman this is your son' this your son, or in Matthew 'who is my mother and my brother?' give a fuller understanding of what Jesus says here in Luke.

I wonder, might it be that Jesus is acutely concerned for good family relationships that ensure each is cared for – I would suggest, yes!

I wonder, might it be that Jesus, in saying 'hate your mother...' is looking to shake a small vision of family, of nationhood and of being God's people from that of just Israel (where family is rightly important) and open eyes to the bigger family he is forging, the global people and nation he is looking to gather – both Jew and Gentile, slave and free, male and female. The answer must be yes, for he says those who follow him, rather than becoming isolated individuals, orphans of their own making will find they have a greater family.

Jesus is about something much bigger than our social norms would look to. Paul had come to see this.

Whilst anyone would be seen as within their rights as a slave owner to deal harshly, possible even to kill, the slave who had run away and was now to return Paul would remind Philemon that as a Christian his calling was to be a citizen of the kingdom Jesus has established before he was a Roman citizen. And more, the slave Onesimus, who has clearly come to faith himself is part of the same family Philemon is; and so should be seen in effect as part of the family rather than the 'household inventory'.

Whilst this is not the overturning of slavery per se it is a huge overturning of a working relationship! For Onesimus is to be seen as a fellow human being, like Philemon a member of the same community of grace, another child of God, who should therefore be treated with dignity in the workplace and respected for their abilities.

Jesus has always offered a challenge, and at times uses words that jar and jolt our sensibilities and accepted norms. Jesus, thank God, has always been about more than delivering Israel from their enemies, in his death and resurrection he brings peace between God and humanity and redemption to all peoples.

I wonder, as we lament the secular society we find about us today, if it might present to us the chance for the Spirit to say things that jolt our thinking and raise us again to the higher calling of the Kingdom of God in Christ. Might we be open to looking again at the calling of Jesus to love all, not just the family we have been born into. If we might, as Paul did, allow Jesus to make us the agents of his challenge to society about how they view their fellow man and women, as well as how we treat those who serve us each day - in shops, restaurants and the like and offer dignity to their day and thanksgiving for their ministering to us.

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 Bishop Michael and all those who seek to serve you in this diocese. We pray for the work to appoint a new Bishop of Taunton and Archbishop of Canterbury; may both be made in your wisdom and will, and may you build your church. *Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.*

We pray for world leaders, may they seek your kingdom and will on earth. Especially we pray for the leaders of Ukraine and Russia, of Israel and The Palestinian Authority that a just solution may be found for their disputes, and that they may become good neighbours to each other. *Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.*

We pray for our King, Prime Minister, and local councillors that they may have the Spirit of wisdom, justice, truth and peace to lead our nation. *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 those who suffer as a result of war and for those who work to relieve their suffering. *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.*

We pray for our schools as they return after the summer break, for new staff and pupils. *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. Amen.

The Collect

All: Almighty and everlasting God, you are always more ready to hear than we to pray and to give more than either we desire or deserve: pour down upon us the abundance of your mercy, forgiving us those things of which our conscience is afraid and giving us those good things which we are not worthy to ask but through the merits and mediation of 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