

Sunday 15 August 2021

The Eleventh Sunday after Trinity



Sermon and prayers of intercession © Pete Haslam.

Liturgy © 2000 The Archbishops' Council.

Bible readings © the publishers of the NRSV translation.

The liturgy assumes the service is Eucharistic. The prayers of consecration appear at the end.

The hymns are YouTube links. To hear the hymns please hover the mouse over each link, press Ctrl and then return.

To see service transcripts from previous weeks, please visit the page,

<http://www.medlockhead.co.uk/resources/index.htm>

Introduction and welcome

HYMN 1 Be thou my vision

(please click on this link to hear the hymn)

The Welcome

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit

All Amen.

The Lord be with you

All And also with you.

The Preparation

**All Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Our Lord Jesus Christ said:

The first commandment is this:

‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is the only Lord.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,
with all your soul, with all your mind,
and with all your strength.’

And the second is this: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’

There is no other commandment greater than these.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

All Amen. Lord, have mercy.

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son Jesus Christ to save us from our sins, to be our advocate in heaven, and to bring us to eternal life.

Therefore, let us confess our sins in penitence and faith,
firmly resolved to keep God’s commandments
and to live in love and peace with all.

All Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
we have sinned against you
and against our neighbour
in thought and word and deed,
through negligence, through weakness,
through our own deliberate fault.
We are truly sorry
and repent of all our sins.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
who died for us,
forgive us all that is past
and grant that we may serve you in newness of life
to the glory of your name.
Amen.

Almighty God,
who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy upon you,
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,
and keep you in life eternal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

The Gloria

This Gloria is sung to the tune of 'Cwm Rhondda'. Click [here](#) for the tune.

All Glory be to God in Heaven,
Songs of joy and peace we bring,
Thankful hearts and voices raising,
To creation's Lord we sing.
Lord we thank you, Lord we praise you,
Glory be to God our King:
Glory be to God our King.

Lamb of God, who on our shoulders,
Bore the load of this world's sin;
Only Son of God the Father,
You have brought us peace within.
Lord, have mercy, Christ have mercy,

**Now your glorious reign begin:
Now your glorious reign begin.**

**You O Son of God are Holy,
You we praise with one accord.
None in heav'n or earth is like you,
Only you are Christ the Lord.
With the Father and the Spirit,
Ever worshipped and adored:
Ever worshipped and adored.**

The Collect for the Eleventh Sunday after Trinity

God of glory,
the end of our searching,
help us to lay aside
all that prevents us from seeking your kingdom,
and to give all that we have
to gain the pearl beyond all price,
through our Saviour Jesus Christ.

All Amen.

First reading

A reading from the Book of Proverbs

Wisdom has built her house,
she has hewn her seven pillars.
She has slaughtered her animals, she has mixed her wine,
she has also set her table.
She has sent out her servant-girls, she calls
from the highest places in the town,
'You that are simple, turn in here!'
To those without sense she says,
'Come, eat of my bread
and drink of the wine I have mixed.
Lay aside immaturity, and live,
and walk in the way of insight.' *Proverbs 9:1-6*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

Second reading

A reading from St Paul's Letter to the Ephesians

Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people but as wise, making the most of the time, because the days are evil. So do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts, giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 5:15–20

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

HYMN 2 Perfect wisdom of our God

[\(click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

Gospel reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John

All Glory to you O Lord.

Jesus said, 'I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.' The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, 'How can this man give us his flesh to eat?' So Jesus said to them, 'Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day; for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever.' *John 6:51–58*

This is the Gospel of the Lord

All Praise to you O Christ.

Sermon

Over the last couple of weeks we have heard in scripture the continuing theme of Christ revealing Himself as the Bread of Heaven. And there's nothing like a good meal, especially when you are really hungry. Food can be delicious, if it is prepared and presented well. But what makes it even better, is that if we are so famished, by

the time we sit down, the food can taste especially wonderful. The other thing about a good meal is that it settles you down. I don't know about you but when I get hungry I get sort of jittery and jumpy. But a good meal seems to settle me down. I am more at peace and relaxed after a good meal. And of course a good meal gives us strength. Hunger can make us feel weak and tired. But a good meal, not one full of empty calories, but a nutritious meal that is good for us can give us strength and vitality. That is why they say that breakfast is so important. It gives us the energy to get the day started right.

Speaking of good meals, in today's Gospel Jesus says, 'I am the living bread that came down from Heaven.' Now some of the people who heard Jesus say this must have thought he was crazy! And can you blame them? If someone came in here talking like that we would think them of unsound mind. 'Whoever eats of this bread will live forever'. It sounds like the ranting of someone suffering a psychotic episode. Of course, when we hear Jesus talking like this we know the whole story, and think of the Last Supper. We think of Holy Communion and the bread and wine that represent Jesus giving his life for us. But at this point, the Last Supper has not taken place so we can't simply write this off as merely as an allusion to what was to become Holy Communion. Jesus is saying something here that has meaning apart from that.

Jesus is saying, 'I am the main course.' the part of a meal that fills us up and nourishes us the most. The main course is the steak and chips or the chicken curry and rice. Soup of the day to start and sticky toffee pudding for desert are wonderful but the main course makes or breaks the meal. Jesus is saying he is the meat and a glass of good red wine for our souls. This tells us that Jesus is Soul Food or in other words ... the main food for the nourishment of our souls. What came before his ministry was good. The law and the prophets provided plenty of nourishment. The bread that Moses called down from heaven served as a starter and was fine. It was prepared by God after all. But what Jesus offers is what really feeds us ... fills us up and gives us new life in him. But we sometimes lose sight of that fact. There is so much to feed on in church life. There are opportunities for Bible Study, fellowship, social activities, and meetings. All these things are worthy. But they are just the soup and the pudding. They are the starters and the deserts. The Jesus we meet in bread and wine, Sunday by Sunday, is the main course. In him we will find eternal life. We feed on him at the Eucharistic table when we consume his body and blood taking him into *our* bodies, hearts and lives so that (in the final words of the prayer we say before receiving Communion) 'we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us'.

Jesus says 'I am the living bread which came down from heaven.' And bread has been the main staple of people's diets since ancient times until relatively recently.

People received most of their nourishment from bread. Even now we pray for our 'daily bread' in the prayer Jesus taught us. But to be nourished by bread you have to eat it. You have to take it into yourself. That is the way it is with Jesus. We have to take him in. We have to accept him and ask him into our hearts. We have to let him become a living part of us, Jesus is the main course and with any meal especially one that involves meat of some kind this involves taking life ... a sacrifice. Jesus says, 'Very truly I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the son of man and drink his blood you have no life in you' He is clearly also talking about sacrifice, his own death on the cross. Only through his death ... his act of ultimate sacrifice is Jesus truly able to feed us. His death defeated the bonds of sin. And because sin was defeated, we have forgiveness and eternal life. For that to happen, a sacrifice had to be made, Jesus had to die so that we could be fed. Eternal life is a free gift for us, but it cost Jesus his life!

We therefore need to ask ourselves, 'Are we hungry?' Do we find that we sometimes grow spiritually weak? Do we feel jittery and nervous because our souls' blood sugar is low? Maybe we need a good meal? Jesus is the only soul food that promises eternal life. If we want to be truly filled and never hunger again, we have to feed on Jesus. We have to dine on him. Allowing his presence to fill our emptiness. Keeping him at the centre of our lives. Jesus is the bread of life. He died to feed us and give us eternal life.

So let's continue to feed on him in worship, in prayer, in Bible study, in service and (as we come to his table) in bread and wine. Remember his words in this morning's Gospel reading: 'Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood, have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day.' Amen.

The Creed

Do you believe and trust in God the Father,
the source of all being and life,
the one for whom we exist?

All We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Son,
who took our human nature,
died for us and rose again?

All We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,
who gives life to the people of God

and makes Christ known in the world?

All We believe and trust in him.

This is the faith of the Church.

All This is our faith.

**We believe and trust in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Amen.**

Prayers of intercession

Everlasting God as we approach your throne in the House of Wisdom in humility and simplicity we ask that you will hear our prayers of thanksgiving and intercession.

Almighty God we pray for our churches in East Oldham and ask that our church here in Clarksfield and Waterhead. be given a clear vision of what is needed to be both focused and relevant in all that is good and serves your purpose of spreading the Good News to both residents and visitors.

(short silence)

Lord, in your Mercy

All Hear our Prayer

Creator God we thank you for the beauty of the created world: for its wonderful variety and the bounty that it brings forth. Help us all to be good stewards showing love and friendship to all peoples and the enjoying the warmth and light they bring to our lives. Be close to all who govern ensuring the decisions that they make, day by day, are made for the benefit all of the people entrusted to them in their leadership.

(short silence)

Lord, in your Mercy

All Hear our Prayer

Father God we pray for our own communities and all of our neighbours. We thank you also for our families and friends, raising before you those we know with particular needs. May your peace and love surround them bringing with it comfort and strength.

(short silence)

Lord, in your Mercy

All Hear our Prayer

Gracious God we thank you for those we know who are on the road to recovery and for the miracle of healing. We pray for all who minister to the sick and infirm, both at home and in hospitals and care homes. We name before you now, those we know who are ill or in need of our prayers asking that through these requests they may all experience the light of the Gospel and a real sense of your healing presence ... *add names of those requesting prayer*

(short silence)

Lord, in your Mercy

All Hear our Prayer

Merciful God we pray for those whose lives have been shattered by the death of someone close and dear to them. We pray for members of our natural and church families who have died and whose anniversary we remember now ... *add names of the recently departed or on Anniversary list*

(short silence)

Lord, in your Mercy

All Hear our Prayer

Faithful God receive our intercessions and thanksgiving on behalf of the church and the world. Hear our prayers and reward our stewardship of this earth with the riches of heaven.

Lord, in your Mercy

All Hear our Prayer

Merciful Father,

**All accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.**

The peace

Peace to you from God our heavenly Father.

Peace from his Son Jesus Christ who is our peace.

Peace from the Holy Spirit, the Life-giver

The peace of the Lord be always with you,

All And also with you.

HYMN 3 I am the bread of life

(please click on this link to hear the hymn)

The liturgy of the Communion Service appears below

The Dismissal

The peace of God which passes all understanding,
keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God,
and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord;
and the blessing
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.
and the blessing of God the Almighty:
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
be with you now and remain with you always.

All Amen.

HYMN 4 Peace of Christ

[\(please click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

**All In the name of Christ.
Amen.**

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

Eucharistic Prayer (prayer E)

The Lord be with you

All and also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

All We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All It is right to give thanks and praise.

Father, you made the world and love your creation.
You gave your Son Jesus Christ to be our Saviour.
His dying and rising have set us free from sin and death.
And so we gladly thank you,
with saints and angels praising you, and saying,

**All Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

We praise and bless you, loving Father,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord;
and as we obey his command,
send your Holy Spirit,
that broken bread and wine outpoured
may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his friends
and, taking bread, he praised you.
He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

When supper was ended he took the cup of wine.
Again he praised you, gave it to them and said:
Drink this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did,
in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice made once for all upon the cross.

Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation,
we proclaim his death and resurrection
until he comes in glory.

Great is the mystery of faith:

All Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

Lord of all life,
help us to work together for that day
when your kingdom comes
and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.

Look with favour on your people,
gather us in your loving arms
and bring us with all the saints
to feast at your table in heaven.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father,
for ever and ever.

All Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**All Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.**

Breaking of the Bread

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

**All Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.**

**All Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
grant us peace.**

Draw near with faith.

Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ
which he gave for you,
and his blood which he shed for you.

Eat and drink in remembrance that he died for you,
and feed on him in your hearts
by faith with thanksgiving.

All We do not presume
to come to this your table, merciful Lord,
trusting in our own righteousness,
but in your manifold and great mercies.
We are not worthy
so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table.
But you are the same Lord
whose nature is always to have mercy.
Grant us therefore, gracious Lord,
so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ
and to drink his blood,
that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body
and our souls washed through his most precious blood,
and that we may evermore dwell in him,
and he in us.
Amen.

Communion is distributed.

Prayer after Communion

Lord of all mercy,
we your faithful people have celebrated that one true sacrifice
which takes away our sins and brings pardon and peace:
by our communion
keep us firm on the foundation of the gospel
and preserve us from all sin;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen

All Almighty God,
we thank you for feeding us
with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies
to be a living sacrifice.
Send us out in the power of your Spirit
to live and work
to your praise and glory.
Amen.