

Sunday 17 October 2021

The Twentieth Sunday after Trinity



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Sermon © Revd Dr Paul Monk.

Liturgy © 2000 The Archbishops' Council

Prayers of intercession © Katharine Smith (adapted)

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 Take my life and let it be (please click on this link to hear the hymn)
Blessèd assurance (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 Twentieth Sunday after Trinity

God, our light and our salvation:
illuminate our lives,
that we may see your goodness in the land of the living,
and looking on your beauty
may be changed into the likeness of Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

First reading

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases; yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have all turned to our own way, and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. By a perversion of justice he was taken away. Who could have imagined his future? For he was cut off from the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people. They made his grave with the wicked and his tomb with the rich, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.

Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him with pain. When you make his life an offering for sin, he shall see his offspring, and shall prolong his days; through him the will of the Lord shall prosper. Out of his anguish he shall see light; he shall find satisfaction through his knowledge. The righteous one, my servant, shall make many righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore I will allot him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he

poured out himself to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. *Isaiah 53:4-end*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

Second reading

A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews

Every high priest chosen from among mortals is put in charge of things pertaining to God on their behalf, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He is able to deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is subject to weakness; and because of this he must offer sacrifice for his own sins as well as for those of the people. And one does not presume to take this honour, but takes it only when called by God, just as Aaron was. So also Christ did not glorify himself in becoming a high priest, but was appointed by the one who said to him, 'You are my Son, today I have begotten you'; as he says also in another place, 'You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek.' In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him, having been designated by God a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

Hebrews 5:1-10

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

HYMN 2 [Glorify your name \(instrumental\)](#) ([click on this link to hear the hymn](#))

Gospel reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark

All Glory to you O Lord.

James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came forward to Jesus and said to him, 'Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.' And he said to them, 'What is it you want me to do for you?' And they said to him, 'Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory.' But Jesus said to them, 'You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or be

baptised with the baptism that I am baptised with?' They replied, 'We are able.' Then Jesus said to them, 'The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptised, you will be baptised; but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared.'

When the ten heard this, they began to be angry with James and John. So Jesus called them and said to them, 'You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognise as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.' *Mark 10:35-45*

This is the Gospel of the Lord

All Praise to you O Christ.

Sermon

The Church often describes the long season of Trinity as a catechism and uses it to teach the faith. It starts with Trinity Sunday itself, when we explore the nature of God Himself—the reason for the season. This syllabus of faith traverses all the major themes of faith such as prayer and sacrament; sin, forgiveness and atonement; the Church and the Body, ... , it's a long and comprehensive list. Today, as we near its end, we explore misconceptions about gaining an eternal afterlife with God.

The first reading comes from Isaiah, which gives one of the Bible's most explicit descriptions of atonement: Jesus removes our sins by taking them into himself. He did so as an act of love, and he did so to unite earth with heaven, the physical with the spiritual. Next, in the second reading, from Hebrews, we look at the way a priest again seeks to unite earth and heaven. This reading describes human responses defined in terms of prayer and sacrament. Think of a Venn diagram with intersecting circles: this time human actions control the encounter. Our own spiritual activities can create a small volume in which Heaven and earth superimpose and redemption can occur. These readings are sequential and so are these ideas: we draw near to God in prayer and sacrament Jesus first atoned for us.

Today's third reading, the Gospel, is a little different. The first reading describes God taking the initiative when (through Jesus) Heaven comes down to earth. He transcends a barrier; in the second reading it's a human who leads the work of taking earth up toward heaven; and does so by creating a sacred space. But the Gospel describes an attempt to take Heaven by force, by human effort, by guile. Two disciples want a place in Heaven and they think it's theirs by right. They do not appreciate the effort needed to remove the barrier caused by human sin, nor

are they willing to expend the effort for sanctification, of making a human soul holy. Remember, as it says later in Hebrews, ‘Without holiness no one can see the Lord.’

It’s helpful to note Jesus’ response. He tells them off because they’ve not understood him. In today’s parlance, they don’t ‘get it.’ While he first says ‘no’, he then relents insofar as he tells the errant disciples how to get into Heaven. It starts with baptism, which involves of course the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit then resides in that human soul and directs it and impels it Godward and therefore heavenward. Jesus then talks of a cup that we drink which, incidentally, is not a reference to the sacrament of Holy Communion but an allusion to Old Testament ideas of self-emptying, of putting self to one side so we can accommodate more and more of God.

Taken together then, Jesus is restating the idea that we reach Heaven by letting God increase at our expense. He is rephrasing the parable of the grain of wheat that falls to the ground and dies before it can bear fruit. He is talking the language of taking up our cross. As an anonymous saint is quoted as saying in one of the world’s oldest monasteries, ‘If you die before you die, you won’t die when you die.’

It’s time to go back to the beginning. Jesus says that we can’t simply claim a place in Heaven. There’s no such thing as eternal life by right. How then *can* we be saved? Today’s three readings capture the creative tension of being saved through the Cross while still needing to live the faith. Isaiah reminds us that *we have been saved* because Jesus took our sins once and for all. Hebrews reminds us that *we are being saved* through actions of faith like prayer, taking the sacraments, and a lived Christ-likeness. And the Gospel tells us *we will be saved* at life’s end through the disciplines of denying self to accommodate more and more of God. I am saved; I am being saved, in order that I can one day be saved.

So let’s live the life. Let’s go for it. Let’s aim for Heaven—all of us.

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

We pray for all who are disciples of Jesus today. We pray that God's Holy Spirit will pour into our hearts a love for others that transcends human pride, ambition and selfishness. Help us be true to the example of selfless giving and service shown by Jesus who sought always to heal and restore the broken people of our world.

Lord, hear us.

All Lord, graciously hear us.

We pray for the places in this world torn apart by greed, illness, war and terrorism. We pray that where power is used to oppress and control, God's Holy Spirit will redeem that power to bring freedom to captives and justice for the downtrodden.

Lord, hear us.

All Lord, graciously hear us.

We pray for our families and friends, our colleagues and neighbours. We pray that in loving and serving those around us we may be working with God to make the kingdom of heaven a reality in this community.

Lord, hear us.

All Lord, graciously hear us.

We pray for all who bear the burdens of pain, bereavement, anxiety and need. We pray that they may have an awareness of God bearing those burdens with them and always working towards their healing and wholeness.

Lord, hear us.

All Lord, graciously hear us.

Heavenly Father we thank you that you are always ready to hear our prayers and to respond to them in ways that sometimes we cannot imagine. We offer ourselves to be part of your response through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour who gave himself in love to serve and redeem us.

All Amen.

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 Holiness is your life in me (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 Just as I am (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

God our Father,
whose Son, the light unfailing,
has come from heaven to deliver the world
from the darkness of ignorance:
let these holy mysteries open the eyes of our understanding
that we may know the way of life,
and walk in it without stumbling;
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.**