

Wednesday 8 June 2022

Thomas Ken



Thomas Ken was born at Berkhamstead in 1637 and educated at New College Oxford. He was ordained priest in 1662 and worked first in a poor parish in the diocese of Winchester then Winchester College. He served as chaplain to King Charles II before his consecration as Bishop of Bath and Wells.

James II ascended the throne on his brother Charles' death in 1685. The new king was a Roman Catholic and, while he proposed rescinding the Restoration penal laws, Thomas and six of his fellow bishops refused to comply and were imprisoned on this day in 1688.

James' Protestant daughter Mary took the throne (together with her husband William of Orange) when James abandoned the throne and fled in 1689. But Thomas felt unable in good conscience to foreswear his still-living, anointed monarch. He was deprived of his See, along with many other 'non-jurors', as they became known, and for a time there was schism in the Anglican fold.

He wrote many hymns, still much used. The most famous is 'the so-called doxology', praise God from whom all blessings flow. He died on 19 March 1711.

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Bible readings © the publishers of the NRSV translation.

Prayers of intercession © Thomas Ken.

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 Praise God from whom all blessings flow (traditional version)
Praise God from whom all blessings flow (modern version)
Praise God from whom all blessings flow (rock version)

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.

In sorrow for our sins and with faith in his mercy,

let us turn to the Lord,

for with him there is mercy and plenteous redemption.

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 Thomas Ken

O God, from whom all blessings flow,
by whose providence we are kept
and by whose grace we are directed:
help us, through the example of your servant Thomas Ken,
faithfully to keep your word,
humbly to accept adversity
and steadfastly to worship you;
through 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.

All Amen.

Psalm

Response, R The Lord acts with steadfast love; and in justice does he delight.

Lord, who may dwell in your tabernacle?
who may abide upon your holy hill?
Whoever leads a blameless life and does what is right,
who speaks the truth from his heart. **R**

There is no guile upon his tongue;
he does no evil to his friend;
he does not heap contempt upon his neighbour. **R**

In his sight the wicked are rejected,
but he honours those who fear the Lord.
He has sworn to do no wrong
and does not take back his word. **R**

He does not give his money in hope of gain,
nor does he take a bribe against the innocent.
Whoever does these things
shall never be overthrown. *R Psalm 15*

First reading

A reading from the book of the Prophet Jeremiah

Thus says the Lord: 'Do not let the wise boast in their wisdom, do not let the mighty boast in their might, do not let the wealthy boast in their wealth; but let those who boast in this, that they understand and know me, that I am the Lord; I act with steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth, for in these things I delight, says the Lord.' *Jeremiah 9:23-24*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

Second reading

A reading from the Second Letter of St Paul to the Corinthians

Since it is by God's mercy that we are engaged in this ministry, we do not lose heart. We have renounced the shameful things that one hides; we refuse to practice cunning or to falsify God's word; but by the open statement of the truth we commend ourselves to the conscience of everyone in the sight of God. And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For it is the God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

But we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our bodies.

2 Corinthians 4:1-10

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

HYMN 2 The Church's one foundation
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(traditional version)
(orchestral instrumentation)
(modern interpretation)

Gospel reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

All Glory to you O Lord.

Jesus said to his disciples, 'Keep awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. Therefore, you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.

'Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his master has put in charge of his household, to give the other servants their allowance of food at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master will find at work when he arrives.'

Matthew 24:42-46

This is the Gospel of the Lord

All Praise to you O Christ.

Sermon

Today's first reading from Jeremiah warns against boasting about anything except service to God and the psalm explores what that service looks like. The next pair of readings illustrate why boasting is unwise: St Paul in the epistle gives a form of 'compare and contrast' between the cost of discipleship and our frailty as humans as we try to live out that calling. The Gospel records one of Jesus' many sayings about staying alert and being ready for meeting with Jesus. Taken together, then, these readings warn against complacency. Using St Paul's metaphor of discipleship being like a race (1 Corinthians 9:24 and 2 Timothy 4:7), we may be doing well in the race today but we must keep our eye on the finishing line if we are not to slip *en route*. We must remain on our guard, ready for when we meet with Jesus.

The problem is, of course, that we do not know when we will meet Jesus, so it's unwise to boast. That meeting may occur at our death when, full of years, our spirit leaves our worn-out physical flesh. Maybe the encounter will occur much earlier when Jesus returns to earth—a happening often called 'the Second Coming.'

But taken in conjunction with Jesus' other sayings, the scope for meeting with Jesus is in fact much wider. For example, Jesus depicts Himself as a judge in the parable of the sheep and goats (Matthew 25:31-46). In that role, he says, 'That

which you did to the least of these you did it for me'. He's saying that all moral encounters can be viewed as events involving Him: we can choose between following Jesus and His way of life or rejecting him and the Kingdom. We should not boast in case we are counted among the immoral rather than among the righteous.

The reason why our judgement is so often complicated follows because, as St Paul says, 'our Gospel is veiled'. In related vein, he says elsewhere 'We see in part and speak of God in part' (1 Corinthians 13:9). He then summarises by comparing us to earthen vessels containing treasure. He's saying that while the Spirit may indeed live in our soul, we are human implying that we are likely to be fallible when responding to spiritual situations. As Jesus said to the first disciples, 'The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak' (Matthew 26:41). It's unwise to boast of being a follower because we so often cannot follow our intentions with the right action. We cannot even know the objectivity of our daily encounters: did we meet with Jesus and what was *His* take on the encounter?

The quote from 1 Corinthians 13, above, supplies the key. It comes from St Paul's famous 'hymn to love' which explores the way love follows as a response to the indwelling of God the Holy Spirit in a Christian soul.

It's not surprising that everything comes down to love because love *is* God (1 John 4:16). All actions motivated by the love of God fulfil the Law to 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength.' The Christian who invites the Holy Spirit to live inside their soul can therefore use love as the litmus test of how to act: genuinely, prayerfully listening to the movements of love in our soul is in fact listening to God. If we listen to love, we are more likely to get it right.

The idea of listening to God by listening to love is explored in the following poem, *Bats*:

Bats skim and glide past,
true in their aim but silent to my narrow ear.

All bats employ this trick of echoed voice,
listening for the nuance of a textured reply.

They speak no word but any response
is fruit of kinds.

The creature's own speech is retold but embroidered
with new context laden with truth
making brocade out of calico.

Like bats, pilgrims are blind while seeking God;
all need this skill as they seek and choose.

The trick is to emit an act of sponsored love,
devotion to a neighbour as self, say.
Speech deafens the ear
in directionless confusion.
But a spirit can learn this trick of tailored love,
can learn to decipher such an echo,
decoding the palimpsest
to peel off the countless layers of structured adoration.
Seeking God involves following reactions to love
and pondering its peelings.
Holiness, it seems, requires re-calibration
as he walks before us.

Learning to love in order to find God is a more sure-footed way of serving God and less prone to error. Now that's something worth boasting about!

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

Glory be to you O Jesus, my Lord, and my God,
for thus feeding my Soul,
with your most blessed body and blood,
O let your heavenly food transfuse new life,
and new vigour into my soul,
and into the souls of all that commune with me,
that our faith may daily increase,
that we may all grow more humble,
and contrite for our sins,
that we may all love you, and serve you,
and delight in you, and praise you,
more servantly, more unceasingly,
then ever we have done heretofore!
Amen

Glory be to thee O Jesus,
my Lord, and my God,
for thus feeding my soul,
with thy most blessed body and blood;
O let thy heavenly food transfuse new life,
and new vigour into my soul,
and into the souls of all that communicate with me,
that our faith may daily increase,
that we may all grow more humble,
and contrite for our sins,
that we may all love thee, and serve thee,
and delight in thee, and praise thee,
more servantly, more incessantly,
than ever we have done heretofore.
Amen.

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

These prayers are by Thomas Ken

Merciful Father,

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

The peace

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly;
teach and admonish one another in all wisdom,
and may the peace of the Lord be always with you.

The peace of the Lord be always with you,
All **And also with you.**

HYMN 3 I dream of a Church [\(please click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

The liturgy of the Communion Service appears below

The Dismissal

Blessing and honour and thanksgiving and praise,
more than we can utter,
more than we can conceive,
be to you, O holy and glorious Trinity,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
by all angels,
all people,
all creatures,
for ever and ever. *Thomas Ken*

All **Amen.**

HYMN 4 One Church, one faith, one Lord [\(click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

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.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
It is truly right and good,
our duty and our salvation,
always and everywhere to give you thanks,
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

For he has named his Church
the salt of the earth and light of the world;
a city set on a hill which cannot be hidden.
Within this faithful company
your servant Thomas Ken became a learned teacher
through the gifts of the Holy Spirit of Christ,
that all might welcome his teaching as your gift,
a beacon on the path of holiness
that leads to eternal life.

As now we celebrate his memory
we join with angels and archangels
and all who have served you on earth
and worship you now in heaven
to raise our voices and proclaim your glory
for ever 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 Thomas Ken and 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, shepherd of your people,

whose servant Thomas Ken revealed the loving service of Christ

in his ministry as a pastor of your people:

by this Eucharist in which we share

awaken within us the love of Christ

and keep us faithful to our Christian calling;

through him who laid down his life for us,

but is alive and reigns with you, now and for ever.

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.