

**Tuesday 15 June 2021**

# Evelyn Underhill



Evelyn Underhill was born in 1875. She was in her thirties before she began to explore religion. At first, she wrote on the mystics, most notably in her book *Mysticism*, published in 1911. Her spiritual journey brought her in 1921 back to the Church of England, in which she had been baptised and confirmed. From the mid-1920s, she was highly regarded as a retreat conductor and an influential spiritual director. Of her many books, *Worship*, published in 1936, embodied her approach to what she saw as the mystery of faith. She died on this day in 1941.

**Sermon** © Revd Dr Paul Monk.

**Liturgy and prayers of intercession** © 2000 The Archbishops' Council.

**Bible readings** © the publishers of the NRSV translation.

The liturgy assumes the service is Eucharistic. The prayers of consecration have been included 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 [Amazing love](#)

(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.**

Christ calls us to share the heavenly banquet of his love with all the saints in earth and heaven. Therefore, knowing our unworthiness and sin, 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 Evelyn Underhill**

Almighty God,  
who enlightened your Church  
by the teaching of your servant Evelyn Underhill:  
enrich it evermore with your heavenly grace  
and raise up faithful witnesses  
who, by their life and teaching,  
may proclaim the truth of your salvation;  
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.**

### **First reading**

A reading from the book of Psalms

- 1 Alleluia.  
Praise the Lord, O my soul:  
while I live will I praise the Lord; ♦  
as long as I have any being,  
I will sing praises to my God.
- 2 Put not your trust in princes,  
nor in any human power, ♦  
for there is no help in them.
- 3 When their breath goes forth, they return to the earth; ♦  
on that day all their thoughts perish.

- 4 Happy are those who have the God of Jacob for their help, ♦  
whose hope is in the Lord their God;
- 5 Who made heaven and earth,  
the sea and all that is in them; ♦  
who keeps his promise for ever;
- 6 Who gives justice to those that suffer wrong ♦  
and bread to those who hunger.
- 7 The Lord looses those that are bound; ♦  
the Lord opens the eyes of the blind;
- 8 The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down; ♦  
the Lord loves the righteous;
- 9 The Lord watches over the stranger in the land;  
he upholds the orphan and widow; ♦  
but the way of the wicked he turns upside down.
- 10 The Lord shall reign for ever, ♦  
your God, O Zion, throughout all generations.

Alleluia. *Psalm 146*

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

Now, brothers and sisters, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the Lord's people. And they exceeded our expectations: They gave themselves first of all to the Lord, and then by the will of God also to us. So we urged Titus, just as he had earlier made a beginning, to bring also to completion this act of grace on your part. But since you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you—see that you also excel in this grace of giving.

I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich. *2 Corinthians 8:1-9*

This is the Word of the Lord

**All Thanks be to God.**

**HYMN 2** [Amazing grace](#)

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

## **Gospel reading**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

**All Glory to you O Lord.**

Jesus said, 'You have heard that it was said, "Love your neighbour and hate your enemy." But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.' *Matthew 5:43-end*

This is the Gospel of the Lord

**All Praise to you O Christ.**

## **Sermon**

Jesus' teaching that we must be perfect is scary. He is asking us to go beyond everyday demands of faith and move into the impossible. If we must be perfect in order to be saved then how is salvation ever possible? The monk Thomas Merton had this to say on the matter:

'Salvation' is, when seen intuitively, a very simple thing. But when we analyse it, it turns into a complex tangle of paradoxes. We become ourselves by dying to ourselves. We gain only what we give up, and if we give up everything we gain everything. We cannot find ourselves within ourselves, but only in others; yet at the same time, before we can go out to others we must first find ourselves. We must forget ourselves in order to become truly conscious of who we are. The best way to love ourselves is to love others; yet we cannot love others unless we love ourselves, since it is written, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' But if we love ourselves in the wrong way, we become incapable of loving anybody else. And indeed when we love ourselves wrongly, we hate ourselves; if we hate ourselves we cannot help hating others. Yet there is a sense in which we must hate others and leave them in order to find God. Jesus said, 'If anyone come to

me and hate not his father and his mother ... yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.' As for this 'finding' of God, we cannot even look for Him unless we have already found Him, and we cannot find Him unless He has first found us. We cannot begin to seek Him without a special gift of His grace; yet if we wait for grace to move us before beginning to seek Him, we will probably never begin.

The only effective answer to the problem must therefore reach out to embrace both extremes of a contradiction at the same time. Hence that answer must be supernatural.

Merton is seeking here to alert us to the way Christianity is more than a religion.

The word 'religion' implies a set of rules—'do this but do not do that'. Most of the religions in the world boil down into this kind of mindset. Societies and groups move and adapt, so the spiritual giants within each religion codified these original rules, compiling lists and whole books that explain the rules and how to use them. We then acquire books that explain the guidelines that set out to help us keep the rules. That's why no one can keep all the rules all the time let alone remember them all! We need a different approach ... we need an answer that involves God.

The secret of Christianity is the way it follows Christ. (The clue is in the name.) 'Christ' comes from the Greek word *Christos* meaning anointed, filled. Jesus was uniquely filled with God. Indeed, he *was* God. And a Christian is a person who is anointed with of God and seeks to be filled with the same Holy Spirit who made the Jesus was the Christ. This Spirit informs our spirituality and also empowers it.

The Holy Spirit always directs a Christian to God. That's why the Spirit adapts and changes us—like tuning a radio or focussing a camera. That adaptation requires a change in the heart of the person wanting to serve God. It requires us to repent.

The Spirit does not change us aimlessly but with a purpose. The Spirit works to an in-built plan, much like an engineer's blueprint. It seeks to make us like Jesus. But how can we tell if we *are* becoming like him? We tell the quality of a cup of tea by looking at its colour: we see a more intense colour when the cup contains more tea. The hot water acquires the colour of the tea. In the same way, a soul immersed in the Holy Spirit acquires the characteristics of the Spirit. God Himself *is* love so when Jesus tells us what to expect, he automatically chose to talk in terms of love. We will love differently and better. But think also about the lists of fruits and gifts of the Spirit in St Paul. And that's why Paul could say, 'We have the mind of Christ' (1 Corinthians 2:16).

As we read and re-read today's passages from Scripture, we understand them better when interpreted through the lens of Spirit-inspired love. And we will seek to love in this Christlike way if we're serious about seeking God and His perfection.

## 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 to Jesus who is present with us to eternity.  
Jesus, Lord of life,

**All in your mercy, hear us.**

Jesus, light of the world,  
bring the light and peace of your gospel to the nations ...

Jesus, Lord of life,

**All in your mercy, hear us.**

Jesus, bread of life,  
give food to the hungry ...  
and nourish us all with your word.

Jesus, Lord of life,

**All in your mercy, hear us.**

Jesus, our way, our truth, our life,  
be with us and all who follow you in the way ...

Deepen our appreciation of your truth  
and fill us with your life.

Jesus, Lord of life,

**All in your mercy, hear us.**

Jesus, Good Shepherd who gave your life for the sheep,  
recover the straggler,  
bind up the injured,  
strengthen the sick  
and lead the healthy and strong to new pastures.

Jesus, Lord of life,

**All in your mercy, hear us.**

Jesus, the resurrection and the life,  
we give you thanks for all who have lived and believed in you ...  
Raise us with them to eternal life.

Jesus, Lord of life,

**All in your mercy, hear us.**

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 And can it be**

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

The liturgy of the Communion Service appears below

## The Dismissal

God grant you grace to be good servants of Christ Jesus,  
nourished on the words of the faith  
and on the sound teaching that you have followed;  
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 At the name of Jesus** [\(please click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

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.**

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 Evelyn Underhill became a learned teacher  
through the gifts of the Holy Spirit of Christ,  
that all might welcome their teaching as your gift,  
a beacon on the path of holiness  
that leads to eternal life.

As now we celebrate their 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 Evelyn Underhill 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 of truth,  
whose Wisdom set her table  
and invited us to eat the bread and drink the wine of the kingdom:  
help us to lay aside all foolishness  
and to live and walk in the way of insight,  
that we may come with Evelyn Underhill to the eternal feast of heaven;  
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.**