

**Sunday 22 August 2021**

# The Twelfth Sunday after Trinity



Sermon © Revd Dr Paul Monk.

Prayers of intercession © Lay Anglicana.

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** [Father, hear the prayer we offer](#) (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 Twelfth Sunday after Trinity**

God of constant mercy,  
who sent your Son to save us:  
remind us of your goodness,  
increase your grace within us,  
that our thankfulness may grow,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**All Amen.**

### **First reading**

A reading from the First Book of Kings

Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord in the presence of all the assembly of Israel and spread out his hands to heaven. He said, 'O Lord, God of Israel, there is no God like you in heaven above or on earth beneath, keeping covenant and steadfast love for your servants who walk before you with all their heart, the covenant that you kept for your servant my father David as you declared to him; you promised with your mouth and have this day fulfilled with your hand. Therefore, O Lord, God of Israel, keep for your servant my father David that which you promised him, saying, "There shall never fail you a successor before me to sit on the throne of Israel, if only your children look to their way, to walk before me as you have walked before me." Therefore, O God of Israel, let your word be confirmed, which you promised to your servant my father David. 'But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Even heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you, much less this house that I have built! Regard your servant's prayer and his plea, O Lord my God, heeding the cry and the prayer that your servant prays to you today; that your eyes may be open night and day toward this house, the place of which you said, "My name shall be there," that you may heed the prayer that your servant prays toward this place.

Hear the plea of your servant and of your people Israel when they pray toward this place; O hear in heaven your dwelling place; heed and forgive.

‘Likewise when a foreigner, who is not of your people Israel, comes from a distant land because of your name—for they shall hear of your great name, your mighty hand, and your outstretched arm—when a foreigner comes and prays toward this house, then hear in heaven your dwelling place, and do according to all that the foreigner calls to you, so that all the peoples of the earth may know your name and fear you, as do your people Israel, and so that they may know that your name has been invoked on this house that I have built. *1 Kings 8:22-30, 41-43*

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 strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. Put on the whole armour of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints.

Pray also for me, so that when I speak, a message may be given to me to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak. *Ephesians 6:10-20*

This is the Word of the Lord

**All Thanks be to God.**

**HYMN 2 Kyrie eleison**

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

## Gospel reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John

**All**    **Glory to you O Lord.**

Jesus said, '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.' He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum.

When many of his disciples heard it, they said, 'This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?' But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, 'Does this offend you? Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. But among you there are some who do not believe.' For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe, and who was the one that would betray him. And he said, 'For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father.' Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. So Jesus asked the twelve, 'Do you also wish to go away?' Simon Peter answered him, 'Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.' *John 6:56-69*

This is the Gospel of the Lord

**All**    **Praise to you O Christ.**

## Sermon

A theme runs through these three readings like a fault-line through an otherwise perfect gemstone. Today's Gospel expresses it most clearly: Jesus has expressed further truths about himself. He expresses them in a typically Eucharistic manner, telling the Jews to eat his flesh and drink his blood but, to them, the idea is utter madness. They are offended and 'vote with their feet.'

In the passage from 1 Kings, we overhear King Solomon the Wise. He's hoping that foreigners will find God through prayer: the subtext implies that he thinks they will again vote with their feet when things don't seem right. Rather, Solomon wants God to help them; he wants them to stay around long enough that they turn from soft truths and false religion to hear (and then appreciate) the truth that brings life.

It's the middle passage from St Paul which goes behind the text of these two worked examples to show the meaning. He discusses an aspect of 'spiritual warfare' to help us stop the powers of darkness when they to inspire us to go away from God.

St Paul's argument goes something like this: the powers of darkness do not want us to know God because we will inevitably follow Him if we do. They will therefore work hard to deceive us. They will twist the facts (which is why we need the belt of truth). They want us to twist our behaviour (which is why we need the breastplate of righteousness). They will twist our emotions to stir us up (which is why we need the gospel—and not just any Gospel but the Gospel of peace). They will make us doubt God himself (which is why we need faith). And they will prevent us believing the reality of forgiveness (which is why we need the fact of salvation). To cap it all, and to achieve these gains over the powers of evil, we will need to pray and therefore we need the Holy Spirit. The only element missing from the list is love but love is a fruit and gift of the Spirit, so do not fear. In all these ways we stay with God.

Having said this, it's therefore telling that our modern age is characterised by atheism ... and war, and fake news. It suggests the powers of darkness are working hard. It might also explain why many Churches are weakened: perhaps the powers of darkness have succeeded in deceiving their members—which could include us.

Now, having listened to St Paul, we'll next look at today's other Bible texts to see where we're most likely to be deceived and vote with our feet away from God.

In today's Gospel reading, we watch people take offence when Jesus speaks of his flesh and blood. Jesus is clearly talking about the Eucharist, Holy Communion. And, now as then, the Church gets into extraordinary trouble. Is it a sacrament or is it a re-enactment and work for the memory? Is it real spiritual food or useful when meditating and an aid to prayer? You've heard it all. It's been a contentious debate from earliest times. Interestingly, it's when Jesus talks of strong spiritual food that his hearers walk away. He offers a form of discipleship full-strength, offence is taken, people vote with their feet, and the powers of darkness have won.

Next, we look at Solomon praying in his newly consecrated Temple. The Temple, remember, was again a place for a different power encounter with God that involved sacrifice. And 'sacrifice' as a topic of discipleship, also causes folk to vote with their feet. Here's an experiment, start a sentence with the words, 'The Church says you should give ...' and watch folk run away. Sacrifice was central to Judaism and it's also central to Christianity. We live sacrificial lives, which usually means doing without the good in order to achieve or gain the better. For example, we fast in Lent, we give a tithe—properly understood as giving 10% of everything to Holy Church—and we set aside time to pray and study Scripture. God wants us to *give* away but too often folk *walk* away. Again, we're offered discipleship full-strength, offence is taken, again people vote with their feet, and again the powers of darkness have won.

This discussion so far can sound a little depressing—over the top even. Actually, there's a kernel of deep comfort and profound hope. Because of the Cross, the

powers of evil have been confronted and dealt with. An honest appeal to Jesus and we're saved. That's surely why Jesus taught us to pray each day, 'deliver us from evil.' If the powers of evil are enticing us away from a full-strength Christianity, then they are in fact telling us that a full-strength Christianity is what God wants of us. They're admitting that full-strength Christianity is powerful and effective. They're saying that a full-strength Christianity really does work. It's saying that when a Christian offers to be a disciple full-strength, they will find eternal life, they will be pleasing to God.

So keep at it. Live the faith. Love the Lord. Say 'no' to the powers of evil that would have us live a diluted faith. Be Christlike. Be holy. Jesus said as much: in the beatitudes, 'blessed are the pure in heart for they will see God.'

## 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

*The Church of Christ* Lord, as we kneel before you, we do so as a people who understand and emphasise different aspects of what it means to follow you. Some of these ways of understanding you may seem strange, even mistaken, to the rest of

us. But we are all your people, and we know you love us all. Help us therefore, day by day, to accept and love each other for your sake and to try with all our might to worship you in unity.

Lord, through you all good things are possible

**All In your mercy, hear our prayer**

*Creation, human society, the Sovereign and those in authority* Lord, as we undergo a great migration of peoples, who find it impossible to live in the land of their birth, help us to be mindful that none of us is an island, complete in itself: we are all a piece of the continent, a part of the main. If a clod of earth is washed away by the sea, Europe is the less—any person's death diminishes us, because we are involved in mankind. We therefore need never send to know for whom the bell tolls; you have taught us it tolls for each and every one of us.

Lord, through you all good things are possible

**All In your mercy, hear our prayer**

*The local community* Lord, as we draw strength and inspiration from the daily bread you offer us, help us to build the kingdom of heaven here on earth, with the people who surround us in the here and now, the testing ground for our faith. As we build a human chain to encircle the earth, may we know you more clearly, love you more dearly, and follow you more nearly, day by day.

Lord, through you all good things are possible

**All In your mercy, hear our prayer**

*Those who suffer* Lord, we bring before you all those suffering pain, whether of the mind, body or spirit. Help us to bear one another's burdens, and be a human comfort to each other. Be with them, and be with us all when the wheels of being slow. Teach us patience, and forbearance, and give us hope for the morrow.

Lord, through you all good things are possible

**All In your mercy, hear our prayer**

*The communion of saints* Lord, we give thanks for the lives of the departed ... Comfort those who mourn. And, in the midst of the journey, we glimpse our own end, whose fulfilment is beyond our imagining.

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 St Patrick's breastplate** (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 All Heaven declares** (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 of all mercy,  
in this Eucharist you have set aside our sins  
and given us your healing:  
grant that we who are made whole in Christ  
may bring that healing to this broken world,  
in the name of 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.