

Sunday 29 August 2021

The Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity



Sermon © Rosie Kingham.

Prayers of intercession © **Lutheran Core**.

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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 Come Holy Ghost, our souls inspire [\(click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

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 Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity

Almighty God,
you search us and know us:
may we rely on you in strength
and rest on you in weakness,
now and in all our days;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

First reading

A reading from the Fifth Book of Moses called Deuteronomy

So now, Israel, give heed to the statutes and ordinances that I am teaching you to observe, so that you may live to enter and occupy the land that the Lord, the God of your ancestors, is giving you. You must neither add anything to what I command you nor take away anything from it, but keep the commandments of the Lord your God with which I am charging you.

You must observe them diligently, for this will show your wisdom and discernment to the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and discerning people!' For what other great nation has a god so near to it as the Lord our God is whenever we call to him? And what other great nation has statutes and ordinances as just as this entire law that I am setting before you today? But take care and watch yourselves closely, so as neither to forget the things that your eyes have seen nor to let them slip from your mind all the days of your life; make them known to your children and your children's children. *Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

Second reading

A reading from the Letter of St James

Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. In fulfillment of his own purpose he gave us birth by the word of truth, so that we would become a kind of first fruits of his creatures.

You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger; for your anger does not produce God's righteousness. Therefore rid yourselves of all sordidness and rank growth of wickedness, and welcome with meekness the implanted word that has the power to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like. But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act—they will be blessed in their doing. If any think they are religious, and do not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless. Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world. *James 1:17-27*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

HYMN 2 Brother, sister, let me serve you ([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.

When the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him, they noticed that some of Jesus' disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders; and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it; and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles.) So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, 'Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?' He said to them, 'Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written,

“This people honours me with their lips,
but their hearts are far from me;
in vain do they worship me,
teaching human precepts as doctrines.”

You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition.’

Then he called the crowd again and said to them, ‘Listen to me, all of you, and understand: there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile.

‘For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.’

Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

This is the Gospel of the Lord

All Praise to you O Christ.

Sermon

Today’s readings could be summed up in a very short sentence—clean hands or a clean heart? In the Gospel, Jesus is initially talking to a group of Pharisees and Scribes, but then widens His message to include the disciples, and the crowd that follows Him. The message is that our very selves are defiled and made unholy by the state of the human heart rather than outward things.

The conflict between Jesus and these Scribes and Pharisees begins with a question of ritual purity. The Pharisees and scribes notice that some of Jesus’ disciples were eating food from the marketplace without washing their hands. The Pharisees followed ‘the tradition of the elders’, which was an interpretation of the Law of Moses that they considered authoritative, so they considered that these disciples were ritually unclean. And Jesus, as their leader and rabbi, is responsible for the disciples’ behaviour and adherence to the Jewish laws. So when the Pharisees ask why some of his disciples do not wash their hands, Jesus knows that it is not an innocent one. The Pharisees are out to get Jesus again, by accusing Jesus of not following the law himself, of acting as if he believes himself to be above the law.

Jesus responds by calling them hypocrites, saying that they follow human tradition rather than God’s laws. He is condemning empty worship, where only the trappings of faith are important. He is actually calling out more than this—in the verses missing from the Gospel passage we see how the scribes and Pharisees abuse tradition in order to circumvent the law, and Jesus is condemning this, too. It’s important to realise that Jesus is not rejecting the Law, which is the Law of God;

He is rebuking the Pharisees because they do not uphold it properly. They have done what God commanded them not to do in the reading from Deuteronomy—they have added to the law given to them by God, these additions have become ‘the tradition of the elders’, and have got in the way of the real laws.

Now, some of the man-made rules were concerned with cleanliness and some with ritual purity like the ones in this passage. However, many rules many were about how you should worship, how often to pray, what prayers to say when. They were intended to show honour to God. It’s just that the Pharisees, and by extension many of the Jewish people living at the time, had taken this to mean that if you obeyed all the rules, you were right with God.

And sometimes, we fall into the same trap. It’s easy enough to take in good stuff; we come to church, we read our Bibles, we pray, we listen to fabulous sermons and even play Christian music in our car on the way home. But somehow, over the hours that follow, the good stuff gets changed as it passes through. The going to Church becomes a self-righteous ‘I’m better than him’ when we see our neighbour washing his car instead. The reading our Bibles becomes an exercise in knowledge without wisdom, without it applying to our hearts. The prayers become a shopping list, or an exchange with a God who must answer them or suffer our resentment because our desires aren’t met. We start daydreaming through the fabulous sermons, or forget them, or criticise them.

Now, in themselves, these are obviously all good things. We **should** go to Church, and read our Bibles and pray. However, if that’s all we do—just do them, not live them – then we’re missing the whole point of the doing.

We don’t do the right thing so that we become right with God, It’s the other way around. We become right with God because of Jesus, and out being right grows the doing right. Our hearts change.

Jesus tells us this very clearly. He called the crowd, so everyone would hear what he had to say. He wanted them all to understand is that it is not what you take into yourself that renders you impure, but rather the things that come out are what defile.’ In other words, whatever your practice, whichever traditions you do or don’t uphold, these do not get you ready for God’s kingdom.

What gets you ready for God’s kingdom (or not!) is what is in your heart. Both good and evil things come from the heart—Jesus is helping his audience to hear this and prepare their hearts, and thereby their entire selves, for the kingdom of God.

And there’s an extra layer to the message. All the evil desires in Jesus’s list spring from a desire to take, to grasp, to own. If we let our desire for self-satisfaction loose, we become insatiable consumers: of things, of pleasure, of people, even of our own energy. So we need Jesus to help us, because if we’re clean on the inside,

then the outside, what we do, will be clean too (I know we're all still works-in-progress; it takes time and effort!). If we seek His will in all things, the disciplines of prayer, bible-reading, etc, help us mould our hearts to desire in the right way: to desire as God desires, by helping us understand God's will for us. Then we can become what the reading from St James letter says—can be slow to anger, and compassionate, with generous acts of giving, more ready for the kingdom of God. We will have clean hearts, and will truly become doers of the word. 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

Trusting, through the power of the Holy Spirit, in the goodness of our heavenly Father, let us pray in Jesus' name for the Church, the world, and one another.

A brief silence

Father, thank you for your commandments and ordinances, given to protect us from sin and limit its evil effect. Thank you for their goodness and wisdom. Help us to keep them out of love for You and for our neighbour.

Lord, in your mercy

All hear our prayer.

In this broken and fallen world, you array your Church in the armour of light and call it to words and deeds of valour. Make it a faithful, true, and bold doer of your strong Word. Form it into your strong fortress and safe haven for all who cry to you for help.

Lord, in your mercy

All hear our prayer.

Strengthen the Church when it is attacked by those who despise you. Make it wield the weapons of the Spirit not in hatred, but in humble witness to the Prince of Peace.

Lord, in your mercy

All hear our prayer.

Prosper the words and work of this congregation. In our ministries, let many hear the Good News, turn to you, and live. Make your love shine through our words and deeds, and shed its healing radiance upon those around us.

Lord, in your mercy

All hear our prayer.

As many children head back to school, bless them with good teachers who instil the love of learning and respect for one another. Help us to be mentors, tutors, cheerleaders, and guides, especially for kids who struggle in school. Lead us all by the light of your wisdom and truth.

Lord, in your mercy

All hear our prayer.

Shine the light of your countenance upon all who lead the nations. Give them wisdom, humility and integrity, so their people confidently turn to them for justice and may live in safety.

Lord, in your mercy

All hear our prayer.

Clothe in the armour of light all who risk their lives for the sake of defending the innocent and restoring justice and freedom. Heal their hurts; support their loved ones; and help this nation to use their skills for peaceable purposes when their tour of duty is ended.

Lord, in your mercy

All hear our prayer.

Grant healing, hope, and strength to all who are afflicted by sin and suffering. We lift before you the needs of ... Surround them with your holy angels. Give refreshment, cheerfulness, and confidence to all who care for them. Restore them to the joy of fellowship with all of us.

Lord, in your mercy

All hear our prayer.

Most gracious Father, thank you for the lives of all the faithful departed who were doers of your Word. Grant that we honourably wear the armour of light which you bestow upon us. Help us rightly wield the weapons of the Spirit, fight the good fight, and lay hold of the life, joy, and crown won for us by your Son, Jesus Christ, our Captain and our Lord.

Lord, in your mercy

All hear our prayer.

Incline your ear to our prayers, dear Lord; and answer them according to your most gracious and holy will, for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

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 Sweet hour of prayer

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

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 Nearer my God, to thee [\(please click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

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 creator,
you feed your children with the true manna,
the living bread from heaven:
let this holy food sustain us through our earthly pilgrimage
until we come to that place
where hunger and thirst are no more;
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.