

Sunday 14 August 2022

The Ninth Sunday after Trinity



Sermon © Pete Haslam.

Prayers of intercession © Vanderbilt Library (adapted).

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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.

All the hymns are all from YouTube. Please click on the links to hear them.

To see service transcripts from previous weeks, please visit the page,

<http://www.medlockhead.co.uk/resources/index.htm>

Introduction and welcome

HYMN 1 All my hope on God is founded (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 Ninth Sunday after Trinity

Almighty God,
who sent your Holy Spirit
to be the life and light of your Church:
open our hearts to the riches of your grace,
that we may bring forth the fruit of the Spirit
in love and joy and peace;
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 the Prophet Jeremiah

Am I a God nearby, says the Lord, and not a God far off? Who can hide in secret places so that I cannot see them? says the Lord. Do I not fill heaven and earth? says the Lord. I have heard what the prophets have said who prophesy lies in my name, saying, 'I have dreamed, I have dreamed!' How long? Will the hearts of the prophets ever turn back—those who prophesy lies, and who prophesy the deceit of their own heart? They plan to make my people forget my name by their dreams that they tell one another, just as their ancestors forgot my name for Baal. Let the prophet who has a dream tell the dream, but let the one who has my word speak my word faithfully. What has straw in common with wheat? says the Lord. Is not my word like fire, says the Lord, and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?

Jeremiah 23:23-29

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

Second reading

A reading from Book of Hebrews

By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as if it were dry land, but when the Egyptians attempted to do so they were drowned. By faith the walls of Jericho fell after they had been encircled for seven days. By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had received the spies in peace.

And what more should I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets—who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Others were tortured, refusing to accept release, in order to obtain a better resurrection. Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned to death, they were sawn in two, they were killed by the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, persecuted, tormented—of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground.

Yet all these, though they were commended for their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had provided something better so that they would not, without us, be made perfect.

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God. *Hebrews 11:29—12:2*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

HYMN 2 [As we are gathered, Jesus is here](#) (click on this link to hear the hymn)

Gospel reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke

All Glory to you O Lord.

Jesus said, 'I came to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! I have a baptism with which to be baptised, and what stress I am under until it is

completed! Do you think that I have come to bring peace to the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division! From now on, five in one household will be divided, three against two and two against three; they will be divided:

father against son
and son against father,
mother against daughter
and daughter against mother,
mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law
and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.'

He also said to the crowds, 'When you see a cloud rising in the west, you immediately say, "It is going to rain"; and so it happens. And when you see the south wind blowing, you say, "There will be scorching heat"; and it happens. You hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of earth and sky, but why do you not know how to interpret the present time?' *Luke 12:49-56*

This is the Gospel of the Lord

All Praise to you O Christ.

Sermon

Did you hear what Jesus is saying in today's gospel reading. 'I came to throw fire on the earth. I wish it were already kindled ... Do you think that I have come to give peace in the earth? I tell you, no, but rather division' (12:49, 51). Fire? Division? Families set against one another? Was Jesus just having a bad day? Was he run-down, depressed, moody because all he could see was suffering and death in his immediate future?

Jesus states clearly that because of him families will now be divided—father against son, mother against daughter, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law, father-in-law against son-in-law. We have problems enough in our families. Jesus is supposed to help our families. He is supposed to be the glue that keeps us together.

No, I don't believe that Jesus was just having a bad day. He is telling us an important truth. We sing about '*Gentle Jesus, meek and mild*', Jesus the '*Beautiful Saviour*', and '*Fairest Lord Jesus*'. Beautiful and fair he might be but mouse-like and compliant he is not. When it comes to the meaning of discipleship, the cost that is involved, the conflict and division that the gospel can cause, he calls a spade a spade.

He is telling it like it is because he knows that in the future the strength of the disciples' faith in their Lord and the discipleship of the early Christians will be severely tested. It will mean that families will be divided—those who follow Christ and those who ignore and reject the hope and true peace that he is offering. He is

giving his followers this warning now so that they will not be shocked when following Jesus will mean some very tough choices—and what can be tougher than choosing between loyalty to family and loyalty to Jesus.

Now Francis Bernardone was born at the end of twelfth century. His father was a wealthy cloth merchant and had high hopes for his son. He became a knight in a war with a neighbouring province and had a fabulous future in front of him. Over time, he became convinced that God did not want him to be a dashing knight, but rather to be a follower of Christ, a genuine disciple. God wanted Francis to serve the poorest of the poor, and in those times there were a lot of very poor people.

Francis sold all that he had and gave it to the poor. He even changed clothes with a beggar, and spent time begging in the streets of Rome.

But his father took exception to all this since Francis had given away everything that his father had given to him. He threw Francis in jail, then took him to court. We might admire Francis—we're talking about Francis of Assisi—for his heroic and noble stand and his persistence to follow the call of the gospel in spite of the cost. But the pain is real and lasting. He experienced first-hand the division that following Jesus can cause. Following Jesus sets father against son.

Francis of Assisi wasn't the first to feel the harshness and difficulty that came with following Jesus, nor will he be the last. I therefore wonder about us here today let us. Ponder over a few questions raised by today's Gospel. To what extent does being a Christian put you in a situation of tension, even conflict? To what extent are you prepared to put yourself at risk, go out on a limb so to say, as a Christian?

To what extent are you prepared to stand up for what you believe, even though it means separation from others, or have we just blended in with those who clearly don't have any time for Jesus or the church or with a society that lives and conducts business as if there was no God? To what extent have we shrunk back from the whole idea that being a Christian will often bring us into a state of tension with the rest of the world?

I wonder how much we have given in to the rest of the world. Let's look at a couple of examples. This can be a touchy thing to talk about but here goes. Once Sunday was a day dedicated to worship and rest. I remember as a child not being allowed to play out until I had been to church on a Sunday because it would disturb the peace and quiet of Sunday. You certainly wouldn't mow your grass on Sunday, and the only sport played on Sunday was a not too rowdy Sunday afternoon cricket game and certainly no attending sporting events or visiting the local supermarkets. Maybe some of the rules about what could and could not be done on a Sunday were more a reflection of the culture of the time, but it was like that to preserve the distinctiveness of the first day of the week. The reality is this: the secular world

has taken over Sunday. Has it become this way because Christians have let it happen? Have we blended in with the rest of the world so that Sunday is no longer a day of worship. We squeeze in a quick hour at church only if it fits in with the football team or the golf club, family picnic or holiday time? What would happen if every Christian around the world together with one voice said 'Sorry I can't do that—that's my time to worship God'? Would it make a difference?

Or what about this? Listening to some radio stations and watching some movies can be quite an education in filthy talk and gutter language. Why has this happened? Have we as Christians just shrugged our shoulders, given up, and just merged in with the world because it is easier to go along with everyone than be called a 'Bible basher', prudish, old fashioned or whatever? What difference would there be if every Christian refused to fall in line with what the world offers? At the least, people would see that there is another way, a better way of speaking and a healthier way of being entertained or getting a few laughs.

Whatever your opinion on matters such as these, you can't get around Jesus' words today that his presence in our lives sets us apart, makes us different, causes us to be like a purifying fire. Or are we prepared to just go along with everyone else, not rock the boat, just being comfortable and cosy?

When we are faced with choices which mean either following God's way or the way of the world, is Jesus really the controlling factor in how we decide what we're going to spend our money on, how we will use our time, the way we raise our children, what kind of language we use. No doubt today's text contains uncomfortable words. Cutting words. Words we are inclined to ignore as we stay with warmer sentiments and more harmonious thoughts. But Jesus said it, Matthew and Luke wrote it down it, and those who selected the readings for today included it. It seems that the world and society have tried to domesticate the Gospel and tame the Holy Spirit of God by reducing it to such a degree to make it acceptable and to fit in with our particular life style.

Jesus died for us. He died so that we are made fresh and clean, given a new life, a new way of living, a new relationship, a new rule of God in our hearts and minds. Jesus does mind if we try to tack our Christianity on to our old ways. The new life demands an end to the old—old loyalties, old ways of behaviour, old attitudes—in fact, everything that does not fit with the command of putting God and the needs of others before ourselves. Jesus calls for a division between faith and unfaith, good and evil, easy and hard. Jesus calls us to have a lifestyle that is opposed to that of the world. He calls us to let the light that came into our lives at our baptism shine into the dark places of our world where sin rules. Where there is light there can be no darkness. These words of Jesus are a wakeup call to us his followers. The values

and the way of life that the world is not the way Jesus has called us to. He has called us not simply to blend in but to stand against the sin that has taken control of the world. This stuff is outside our comfort zone, but it's the raw truth.

There is only one way that we are able to do this. The Letter to the Hebrews gives us the answer, 'Let us lay aside every weight and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith' (Hebrews 12:1,2).

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

Friends in Christ,

God invites us to hold the needs of our sisters and brothers
as dear to us as our own needs.

Loving our neighbours as ourselves,
we offer our thanksgivings and our petitions
on behalf of the church and the world.

Lord, hear us.

All Lord, graciously hear us.

As you heard the prayer of your children of old, O God,
and guided them in the way of your love,
so listen now to those who call upon you.

Lord, hear us.

All Lord, graciously hear us.

Lord God, friend of those in need,
your Son Jesus has untied our burdens
and healed our spirits.

We lift up the prayers of our hearts for those still burdened,
those seeking healing,
those in need within the church and the world.

Lord, hear us.

All Lord, graciously hear us.

Creator God,
you call us to love and serve you
with body, mind, and spirit
through loving your creation
and our sisters and brothers.
Open our hearts in compassion
and receive these petitions
on behalf of the needs of the church and the world.

Lord, hear us.

All Lord, graciously hear us.

We praise your abiding guidance, O God,
for you sent us Jesus, our teacher and Messiah,
to model for us the way of love for the whole universe.

We offer these prayers of love
on behalf of ourselves and our neighbours,
on behalf of your creation and our fellow creatures.

Lord, hear us.

All Lord, graciously hear us.

God of mercy and healing,
you who hear the cries of those in need,
receive these petitions of your people
that all who are troubled
may know peace, comfort, and courage.

Lord, hear us.

All Lord, graciously hear us.

God of salvation,
who sent your Son to seek out and save what is lost,
hear our prayers
on behalf of those who are lost in our day,
receiving these petitions and thanksgivings
with your unending compassion.
Lord, hear us.

All Lord, graciously hear us.

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

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 of God the Almighty,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
be with you now and remain with you always.
All Amen.

HYMN 4 Christ triumphant [\(please click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

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

Holy Father,
who gathered us here around the table of your Son
to share this meal with the whole household of God:
in that new world where you reveal the fullness of your peace,
gather people of every race and language
to share in the eternal banquet 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.