

Sunday 27 August 2023

The Twelfth Sunday after Trinity



Rainbow mountain, Peru

Sermon © Revd Dr Paul Monk.

Prayers of intercession © Vanderbilt Library (altered).

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The liturgy assumes the service is Eucharistic. The prayers of consecration appear at the end.

All the hymns are hosted on 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 One church, one faith, one Lord ([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

Almighty and everlasting God,
you are always more ready to hear than we to pray
and to give more than either we desire or deserve:
pour down upon us the abundance of your mercy,
forgiving us those things of which our conscience is afraid
and giving us those good things
which we are not worthy to ask
but through the merits and mediation
of 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 Isaiah

Listen to me, you that pursue righteousness, you that seek the Lord. Look to the rock from which you were hewn, and to the quarry from which you were dug. Look to Abraham your father and to Sarah who bore you; for he was but one when I called him, but I blessed him and made him many. For the Lord will comfort Zion; he will comfort all her waste places, and will make her wilderness like Eden, her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the voice of song.

Listen to me, my people, and give heed to me, my nation; for a teaching will go out from me, and my justice for a light to the peoples. I will bring near my deliverance swiftly, my salvation has gone out and my arms will rule the peoples; the coastlands wait for me, and for my arm they hope. Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look at the earth beneath; for the heavens will vanish like smoke, the earth will

wear out like a garment, and those who live on it will die like gnats; but my salvation will be forever, and my deliverance will never be ended. Listen to me, you who know righteousness, you people who have my teaching in your hearts; do not fear the reproach of others, and do not be dismayed when they revile you. For the moth will eat them up like a garment, and the worm will eat them like wool; but my deliverance will be forever, and my salvation to all generations.

Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord! Awake, as in days of old, the generations of long ago! Was it not you who cut Rahab in pieces, who pierced the dragon? Was it not you who dried up the sea, the waters of the great deep; who made the depths of the sea a way for the redeemed to cross over? So the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Isaiah 51:1-11

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

Second reading

A reading from St Paul's Letter to the Romans

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect. For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

Romans 12:1-8

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

HYMN 2 I dream of a Church

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

Gospel reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

All **Glory to you O Lord.**

When Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, 'Who do people say that the Son of Man is?' And they said, 'Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.' He said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?' Simon Peter answered, 'You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.' And Jesus answered him, 'Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.' Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah. *Matthew 16:13-20*

This is the Gospel of the Lord

All **Praise to you O Christ.**

Sermon

We have three readings about rocks. In the first, Isaiah tells the chosen people that they should, 'Look to the rock from which you were hewn, and to the quarry from which you were dug'. He wants them to remember their heritage and tradition as the chosen people of God. They should therefore *live* the covenant between God and Moses, celebrate that He led them from slavery to freedom, and therefore customise everything they ever do to demonstrate that God loves them and desires them.

In today's Gospel, Jesus is speaking to Peter and tells him that he is like a rock and any true Church will be built on a foundation of people like him—he means people with a first-hand knowledge of Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the Living God.

And the reading from St Romans talks about sacrifices, which surely implies an image of a stone altar.

Combining these three rock-related themes suggests that we are the most truly the people of God when we allow Him to build His Church on us, and do so in a way that demonstrates that we've gone back to basics, the quarry from which we were hewn—a first-hand faith like that of Peter. The church will then delight in sacrifice in the way that God first intended.

A word of warning before we go further. The word 'sacrifice' has a very broad range of meanings, and some of them are not very useful to the modern ear. It can

mean killing, say, a sheep or goat. *The implied meaning here is the sacrifice of thanksgiving.* The Law of Moses dictates a very wide range of sacrifices, a great many of which are responses to the goodness of God. For example, remember how Mary and Joseph go to the Jerusalem Temple to say ‘Thank you’ when Jesus is born. That sacrifice is often spiritualised, so this time think of Psalm 27, ‘One thing I ask from the Lord, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the Lord and to seek him in his Temple ... I will sacrifice with shouts of joy; I will sing and make music to the Lord’ (vv. 4, 6).

We are to remember the quarry from which we were hewn. Isaiah was talking to the chosen people, whose defining story is surely Moses when he led the chosen people from slavery to freedom, from Egypt to the Promised Land. They are to remember that they were slaves and are now free. And God provided for everything they could need on that journey from slavery to freedom. God gave them the Law and Commandments as a way of reminding them, and so ensuring they stayed free. They forgot and were enslaved again, which is why Isaiah talked to them as recorded in the first of today’s reading. The people kept forgetting which is why both St Peter and St Paul take the story of Moses and created a new, spiritual metaphor out of it: the new chosen people, those who follow Jesus, have moved from slavery to sin and inherited the freedom to be the people that God always wanted.

It’s time to splice these themes together. God wants to create a Church, a collective of the redeemed. The true Church includes people like you and like me—ordinary people with the extraordinary task of being Christlike and holy. The Church (when it is being faithful) follows the original desires of the Lord Jesus and is built on foundations like the first disciples ... so people like Peter.

In today’s Gospel, we see Peter moving from a secondhand faith to a firsthand faith. He is moving slavery to sin to the freedom that comes through knowing the Lord Jesus as the Son of the living God, as Messiah. He’s not there yet and will need to wait until Pentecost for the power that enabled his transformation, but God has already started building His Church on him. And once the Holy Spirit was properly living within him, he became unstoppable. Nothing was too much; he would do anything for his Lord and master. To use the phrase from St Paul, he was ‘Presenting his body as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God’. everything he did for Jesus was an act of ‘spiritual worship.’ And we must do so too.

This ‘sacrifice of praise’ is not the saccharin ‘count your blessings’ of sentimental Victorian piety. Quite the opposite. It’s asking God to turbo-charge our praise with everything to hand. It’s sacrificial because it’s asking the Holy Spirit to direct and empower everything we do. When we are like this, we move from the slavery of sin to the freedom that makes us the holy people God wants us to be.

We are to remember the quarry from which we have been hewn—a rich Jewish background of people in transition from slavery to freedom, who offer their bodies as a spiritual sacrifice in proportion to the freedom they know and live—the kind that God can use. Jesus is able to build his church on souls such as these. Jesus is able to build his church on souls such as ours. In fact, he requires nothing less.

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 neighbors as ourselves,
we offer our thanksgivings and our petitions
on behalf of the church and the world.
Lord in your mercy.

All Hear our prayer.

Hear our prayers, God of power,
and through the ministry of your Son
free us from the grip of the tomb,
that we may desire you as the fullness of life
and proclaim your saving deeds to all the world.
Lord in your mercy.

All **Hear our prayer.**

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 in your mercy.

All **Hear our prayer.**

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 in your mercy.

All **Hear our prayer.**

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 neighbors,
on behalf of your creation and our fellow creatures.
Lord in your mercy.

All **Hear our prayer.**

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 in your mercy.

All Hear our prayer.

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 in your mercy.

All Hear our prayer.

Redeeming Sustainer,
visit your people
and pour out your strength and courage upon us,
that we may hurry to make you welcome
not only in our concern for others,
but by serving them
generously and faithfully in your name.

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 2 All I Once held dear

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

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 the Almighty,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
be with you now and remain with you always.

All Amen.

HYMN 4 Walk in the Light

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

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.