

**Wednesday 18 October 2023**

# St Luke



**Window in St Luke's RC Church, Salford (Irlams o' th' Height)**

Luke was a friend of the apostle Paul who mentions him three times in his Letters. Paul describes him as 'the beloved physician' and, in his second Letter to Timothy, as his only companion in prison.

Luke authored two books of the New Testament: the gospel which bears his name and the *Acts of the Apostles*. Luke's narrative of the life of Christ has a pictorial quality and shows the sequential pattern from the nativity through to the death and resurrection. As a Gentile, Luke makes clear that the good news of salvation is for all, regardless of gender, social position or nationality.

Tradition says that Luke was a portrait painter and painted an image of Mary; and that he wrote his gospel in Greece; and that he died in Boeotia at the age of 84 AD.

In iconography, his symbol is a bull, hence the image above.

**Sermon and prayers of intercession** © Revd Dr Paul Monk.

**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.

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** [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.**

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 Luke the Evangelist**

Almighty God,  
you called Luke the physician,  
whose praise is in the gospel,  
to be an evangelist and physician of the soul:  
by the grace of the Spirit  
and through the wholesome medicine of the gospel,  
give your Church the same love and power to heal;  
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 Isaiah

Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, 'Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you.'

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy; waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert. *Isaiah 35:3-6*

This is the Word of the Lord

**All Thanks be to God.**

## Second reading

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Paul and Timothy went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. When they had come opposite Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them; so, passing by Mysia, they went down to Troas. During the night Paul had a vision: there stood a man of Macedonia pleading with him and saying, 'Come over to Macedonia and help us.' When he had seen the vision, we immediately tried to cross over to Macedonia, being convinced that God had called us to proclaim the good news to them.

We set sail from Troas and took a straight course to Samothrace, the following day to Neapolis, and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. *Acts 16:6-12a*

This is the Word of the Lord

**All Thanks be to God.**

**HYMN 2 O my soul arise**

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

## Gospel reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke

**All Glory to you O Lord.**

[Jesus] appointed seventy other [disciples] and sent them on ahead of him in pairs to every town and place where he himself intended to go. He said to them, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest. Go on your way. See, I am sending you out like lambs into the midst of wolves. Carry no purse, no bag, no sandals; and greet no one on the road.

'Whatever house you enter, first say, "Peace to this house!" And if anyone is there who shares in peace, your peace will rest on that person; but if not, it will return to you. Remain in the same house, eating and drinking whatever they provide, for the labourer deserves to be paid. Do not move about from house to house. Whenever you enter a town and its people welcome you, eat what is set before you; cure the sick who are there, and say to them, "The kingdom of God has come near to you".'

*Luke 10:1-9*

This is the Gospel of the Lord

**All Praise to you O Christ.**

## Sermon

All aspects of our health are prone to illness and all of us know friends and family suffering from diseases of body, mind, and spirit.

In fact, the word 'disease' literally means 'dis-ease' and implies that the root cause of many illnesses stems from moving away from that which is not good. Our physical health improves when we avoid pathogens (hence the lock down during the recent Covid pandemic); our mental health can improve when we avoid negativity, violence, and stress; and in the same way our spiritual health responds to our spiritual environment.

Our modern world is good at talking about physical health so, for example, the news often discusses the NHS with its strikes and spending constraints, reports on miracle cures, but also warns about the effects that lifestyle and location can have on our health. Thankfully, in recent years we have started to learn how to talk more about mental health. But we are not so good at discussing issues of spiritual health.

There are many reasons for poor spiritual health. The symptoms are clear enough, from avoiding God, to spiritual 'pick and mix', via agnosticism, through to militant atheism. But what can we do about it? Today's readings suggest ways of avoiding some of the common spiritual pitfalls. In some respects, these three passages differ greatly, but they all relate to the ways in which our souls feed on images of God that can affect the health of a human soul.

First, in today's Old Testament reading, God speaks through Isaiah, saying, 'Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God ... He will come and save you".' God is saying that our spiritual health improves if we remember that He cares for us and desires what is best for us. We need hope to have a healthy image of a God who is infinitely loving and benefit from reminding ourselves that He is strong and compassionate. The 'saving' that Isaiah reports is primarily a spiritual salvation, so we may not feel it in a tangible, physical sense. But frequently reminding a soul that God's love extends beyond physical death can only improve its health.

The second reading from the Acts of the Apostles suggests that God wants to direct our actions as a way of helping, and we will surely suffer disillusionment if we go against His will. These wrong views about God feed into our spirituality and thence our spiritual health. In today's reading, St Paul is planning yet another missionary tour, and seems to have been listening to his own inner drives and enthusiasms rather than God. He's telling God what to do rather than the other way round. Similarly, our own spiritual health deteriorates when we think of God

doing what *we* tell *Him*. It's a common problem and, incidentally, explains why so many of our prayers of intercession appear to go unanswered. But God intervenes and tells him the correct spiritual approach; St Paul listened which thereby saved a great amount of work, effort, and (presumably) disillusionment and stress, which might have caused him to stop. God's intervention not only preserved Paul's spiritual health but also changed the history of the church because Macedonia was a powerhouse in the earliest church.

Which brings us to today's reading from Luke's Gospel. By saying 'I am sending you ... into the midst of wolves' Jesus is warning his disciples that the powers which rule our world will try to stop their sharing of faith. In context, he is instructing them about genuine evangelism which is best regarded as educating in terms of 'spiritual best practice' rather than merely sharing our faith: God wants us to follow Him in love, which is best achieved through following the Lord Jesus.

Some evangelism works but clearly much does not, with the most obvious cause of failure being resistance from the spiritual powers that oppose God. They try to stop us spreading the true faith in ways that are authentic and meaningful because they oppose all expressions of genuine faith. Our own spiritual health depends on our following the God of truth, so they will seek to subvert our faith, taking us away from God. They do not want us to build the Kingdom of God and divert us to following them instead. That's why Jesus' trademark prayer tells us to pray, '*Your Kingdom come ...*' rather than any other forms of spiritual powerbase; and the same prayer ends, '*and lead us not into temptation*' because the powers of this world generally work through impulsive urges intended to take us away from God. It's germane to note how Jesus' own ministry was accompanied by temptations to follow the devil rather than God (see Luke 4:1-13, for example, with its chilling last line, '*When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left Jesus until later opportunities*').

Today in the Church calendar we remember St Luke 'the beloved physician'. Because he was a doctor, it has become customary on this day to pray for healing. We will therefore pray for physical healing and may also pray for mental healing. But we must also seek healing for our soul. That healing will seek comfort from spiritual injuries incurred during our earthly time as followers of the Lord Jesus. But we should also ask God to keep us close to Him, seeking protection from spiritual error, and protect us from other spiritual powers. That way we address our health in terms of spirit as well as body and mind.

## 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 present our prayers to our loving, living God.

St Luke in his Gospel gives parables that illustrate the all-embracing love of God.  
We pray for all those who have rejected that love.  
We pray to the God who is love.

**All Hear our prayer.**

St Luke in the Acts of Apostles describes the work of the Holy Spirit enabling conversion and mission. We pray for all missionaries and the spread of the Gospel.  
We pray to the God who is love.

**All Hear our prayer.**



St Luke in his Gospel speaks of God's welcome to those who were powerless or outsiders. We pray for all those who feel unwelcome, unwanted, or unloved.

We pray to the God who is love.

**All Hear our prayer.**

Tradition says that St Luke was a physician. We pray for all those who suffer in any way, whether in body, mind, and/or spirit.

We pray to the God who is love.

**All Hear our prayer.**

St Luke in his Gospel describes the passion, crucifixion, and resurrection that leads to new life. We pray for those have died in the faith desiring eternal life.

We pray to the God who is love.

**All Hear our prayer.**

Merciful Father,

**All accept these prayers  
for the sake of your Son,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ.  
Amen.**

## **The peace**

Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and his name shall be called the Prince of Peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you,

**All And also with you.**

**HYMN 3 Let our praise be as incense**      [\(click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

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 A new commandment** [\(please click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

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 indeed right, our duty and our joy,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
And now we give thanks, most gracious God,  
surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses  
and glorified in the assembly of your saints.  
The glorious company of apostles praise you.  
The noble fellowship of prophets praise you.  
The white-robed army of martyrs praise you.  
We, your holy Church, acclaim you.  
In communion with angels and archangels,  
and with all who served you on earth and worship you now in heaven,  
we raise our voice to 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 Luke 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**

Almighty God,  
who on the day of Pentecost  
sent your Holy Spirit to the disciples  
with the wind from heaven and in tongues of flame,  
filling them with joy and boldness to preach the gospel:  
by the power of the same Spirit  
strengthen us to witness to your truth  
and to draw everyone to the fire of your love;  
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.