

Sunday 10 October 2021

Harvest Festival



Sermon © Revd Dr Paul Monk.

Liturgy and prayers of intercession © 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 All things bright and beautiful (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’s whole creation groans.

The land produces thorns and thistles and longs to be set free.

Our sin affects all around us.

We confess our sins in penitence and faith.

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 version of the 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 Harvest

Eternal God,
you crown the year with your goodness
and you give us the fruits of the earth in their season:
grant that we may use them to your glory,
for the relief of those in need and for our own well-being;
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 Prophet Joel

Do not fear, O soil;
be glad and rejoice,
for the Lord has done great things!
Do not fear, you animals of the field,
for the pastures of the wilderness are green;
the tree bears its fruit,
the fig tree and vine give their full yield.

O children of Zion, be glad
and rejoice in the Lord your God;
for he has given the early rain for your vindication,
he has poured down for you abundant rain,
the early and the later rain, as before.

The threshing-floors shall be full of grain,
the vats shall overflow with wine and oil.

I will repay you for the years
that the swarming locust has eaten,
the hopper, the destroyer, and the cutter,
my great army, which I sent against you.

You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied,
and praise the name of the Lord your God,
who has dealt wondrously with you. And my people shall never again be put to
shame.

You shall know that I am in the midst of Israel,
and that I, the Lord, am your God and there is no other.

And my people shall never again
be put to shame. *Joel:2:21-27*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

Second reading

A reading from St Paul's First Letter to Timothy

Of course, there is great gain in godliness combined with contentment; for we brought nothing into the world, so that we can take nothing out of it; but if we have food and clothing, we will be content with these. But those who want to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and in their eagerness to be rich some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains. *1 Timothy 6:6-10*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

HYMN 2 For the beauty of the earth (please 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 tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and

the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these.

If God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, “What will we eat?” or “What will we drink?” or “What will we wear?” For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Matthew 6:25–33

This is the Gospel of the Lord

All Praise to you O Christ.

Sermon

Today we celebrate harvest. Many of us do not grow food or even prepare our food. We simply buy it and cook it, eat it and enjoy it. But as Christians, the scope of harvest covers everything: sowing and reaping; what we receive and our responses. Today's Bible readings invite us to look specifically at the interaction between sowing in a physical way but reaping in the spiritual domain. We're looking at primary effects and at side-effects.

The word 'side-effects' implies medicine, so we start by imagining a doctor giving a bottle of strong medicine to a needy patient. It's known to be good stuff and always works well. Then imagine the patient receiving the medicine with gratitude and placing the unopened bottle in full view on the living-room mantelpiece. It's shown to everyone who visits with the words, 'Look what the doctor gave me! Look what I've got!' And then imagine the upset when the patient falls gravely ill. 'That medicine the doctor gave me is dud!' they shout and they throw out the unopened bottle with disgust.

It's obviously a silly story yet it simply recasts a common response to Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount. He's giving us the answer, a strong universal medicine, that we receive with joy and yet many of us refuse to use.

Jesus is offering 'Seek ye first ...' as a way of living God's life 'in the world while not being of the world' (cf. John 10). Viewed this way, the Sermon on the Mount does not so much offer advice but strict instruction. Do this and the problem will go away; do that and it won't. So, like all medicine, we follow the therapy as directed

by the expert. For best results follow manufacturer's instructions.

We can only seek God and His Kingdom if we know what he's instructing us to do. The 'seeking' he wants is firstly a physical activity operating in a physical world. It's genuinely work and requires sincere effort. And the 'Kingdom' it seeks is the will of God in the world. The slogan, 'Seeking God's Kingdom' means 'making the world a better place—the place that God intends.' It therefore involves agitating for justice, campaigning for peace, expending effort to ensure a fair distribution of the world's resources. And 'seeking the Kingdom' is to some extent customised according to local need. This seeking of the Kingdom is the essential action that occurs during the many intervals between our services in Church. And times of prayer and worship act as 'refuelling points' that empower those times of seeking.

This 'seeking' is also a spiritual quest: we seek the Kingdom but Jesus tells us we must also 'seek God's righteousness'. It's a way of talking about the way we seek God. Stated a different way, while seeking the Kingdom requires physical activity to change the world, Jesus also offers a cure for our spiritual sicknesses. He gave the Sermon on the Mount to illustrate the symptoms of that illness. In today's Gospel he mentions worrying, greed, pride etc. But these traits are warning signs, indicators, that a human soul is looking in the wrong places for meaning. They are ignoring God and therefore starved of Him. Our work for the Kingdom is a way of redirecting our soul toward goodness and hence the sponsor of all goodness—toward God Himself. To use the language of St Paul in Romans 12, '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.'

In one sense, our work for the Kingdom is a fruit of our yearning for God. We do it for Him. But our work for the Kingdom also yields fruit in to enhance our discipleship. They are so utterly connected that one quest cannot be divorced from the other without a catastrophic loss of fruit. That's what Jesus' final clause, '... and all these things will be given to you as well' is trying to say.

Today we celebrate harvest. Many of use do not grow food or even prepare our food. We simply buy it and cook it, eat it and enjoy it. As Christians, then, one of the principal themes of harvest is considering the fruitfulness of our discipleship.

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

Let us pray to God the almighty, the King of creation.

God said, 'Let there be light.'

Eternal God, we thank you for your light and your truth.

We praise you for your fatherly care

in creating a universe which proclaims your glory.

Inspire us to worship you, the creator of all,

and let your light shine upon our world.

God of life:

All hear our prayer.

God said, 'Let there be a firmament in the midst of the heavens.'

We thank you for the vastness of the universe
and the mysteries of space.

We pray for all scientists and astronomers
who extend the boundaries of our knowledge.

As we contemplate the wonder of the heavens,
confirm us in the truth that every human being is

known and loved by you.

God of life:

All hear our prayer.

God said, 'Let the waters be gathered together,
and let dry land appear.'

We thank you for the beauty of the earth,
for the diversity of land and sea,
for the resources of the earth.

Give us the will to cherish this planet
and to use its riches for the good and welfare of all.

God of life:

All hear our prayer.

God said, 'Let there be lights in the sky
to separate the day and the night.'

We thank you for the warmth of the sun,
the light of the moon, the glory of the stars.
We praise you for the formations of clouds,
the radiance of dawn and sunset.

Save us from wasting or abusing the energy
on which all life depends.

Open our eyes to behold your beauty,
and our lips to praise your name.

God of life:

All hear our prayer.

God said, 'Let the waters bring forth living creatures,
and let birds fly across the sky.'

We thank you for the teeming life of the seas,
and the flight of the birds.

Help us to protect the environment
so that all life may flourish.

God of life:

All hear our prayer.

God said, 'Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind.'

We rejoice in the variety of animal life.

Grant us grace to treat all animals with respect and care;
to protect endangered species,
to preserve the variety of habitats,
and to honour the delicate balance of nature.

God of life:

All hear our prayer.

God said, 'Let us create human beings in our own image.'

We pray for the human family.

We exult in its diversity and giftedness,
we repent of its sins, divisions and violence.

By the power of your Spirit, restore your image within us,
through Christ who came to remake us
by his death and resurrection.

God of life:

All hear our prayer.

Heavenly Father, you have filled the world with beauty:
open our eyes to behold your gracious hand in all your works;
that, rejoicing in your whole creation,
we may learn to serve you with gladness;
for the sake of him through whom all things were made,
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

You shall go out in joy and be led back in peace;
the mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song,
and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. *Isaiah 55:12*

The peace of the Lord be always with you,

All And also with you.

HYMN 3 Come ye thankful people come (click on this link to hear the hymn)

The liturgy of the Communion Service appears below

The Dismissal

May God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
who is the source of all goodness and growth,
pour his blessing upon all things created,
and upon you his children,
that you may use his gifts to his glory
and the welfare of all peoples;
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 [We plough the fields and scatter](#) (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, it is our duty and our joy,
always and everywhere to give you thanks,
holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For you have created the heavens and the earth,
and formed us in your own image.

In the fullness of time you sent forth your Son, your eternal Word,
who laid down his life for our salvation
and rose from the grave, the first-fruits of your new creation.

You send forth your holy and life-giving Spirit
to give life to our mortal bodies
and to renew the face of the earth.

Therefore with all the heavenly hosts,
we give voice to everything that you have made,
and sing the eternal hymn of praise.

**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

Lord of the harvest,
with joy we have offered thanksgiving for your love in creation
and have shared in the bread and the wine of the kingdom:
by your grace plant within us a reverence for all that you give us
and make us generous and wise stewards
of the good things we enjoy;
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.