

Sunday 21 August 2022

The Tenth Sunday after Trinity



Holy Island © Tracy Hogan

Sermon and prayers of intercession © Revd Dr Paul Monk.

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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 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 [Come and see the King of love](#) (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 Tenth Sunday after Trinity

Let your merciful ears, O Lord,
be open to the prayers of your humble servants;
and that they may obtain their petitions
make them to ask such things as shall please you;
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 the Prophet Isaiah

You shall call and the Lord will answer; you shall cry for help and he will say, 'Here I am'. If you remove the yoke from among you, the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil, if you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday. The Lord will guide you continually, and satisfy your needs in parched places, and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters never fail. Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in.

If you refrain from trampling the sabbath, from pursuing your own interests on my holy day; if you call the sabbath a delight and the holy day of the Lord honourable; if you honour it, not going your own ways, serving your own interests, or pursuing your own affairs; then you shall take delight in the Lord, and I will make you ride upon the heights of the earth; I will feed you with the heritage of your ancestor Jacob, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken. *Isaiah 58:9b-14*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

Second reading

A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews

You have not come to something that can be touched, a blazing fire, and darkness, and gloom, and a tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that not another word be spoken to them. (For they could not endure the order that was given, 'If even an animal touches the mountain, it shall be stoned to death.' Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, 'I tremble with fear.') But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel. See that you do not refuse the one who is speaking; for if they did not escape when they refused the one who warned them on earth, how much less will we escape if we reject the one who warns from heaven! At that time his voice shook the earth; but now he has promised, 'Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heaven.'

This phrase, 'Yet once more,' indicates the removal of what is shaken—that is, created things—so that what cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us give thanks, by which we offer to God an acceptable worship with reverence and awe; for indeed our God is a consuming fire. *Hebrews 12:18-29*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

HYMN 2 Come into His presence singing Alleluia [\(click to hear the hymn\)](#)

Gospel reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke

All Glory to you O Lord.

Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath. And just then there appeared a woman with a spirit that had crippled her for eighteen years. She was bent over and was quite unable to stand up straight. When Jesus saw her, he called

her over and said, 'Woman, you are set free from your ailment.' When he laid his hands on her, immediately she stood up straight and began praising God.

The leader of the synagogue was indignant because Jesus had cured on the sabbath and kept saying to the crowd, 'There are six days on which work ought to be done; come on those days and be cured, and not on the sabbath day.' But the Lord answered him and said, 'You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger, and lead it away to give it water? And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen long years, be set free from this bondage on the sabbath day?' When he said this, all his opponents were put to shame; and the entire crowd was rejoicing at all the wonderful things that he was doing. *Luke 13:10-17*

This is the Gospel of the Lord

All Praise to you O Christ.

Sermon

One of Aesop's fables tells of a contest between the sun and the wind, seeing which of them can force a man to remove his coat. The wind puffs with increasing violence but the man responds by pulling his coat ever tighter around his cold shoulders. The sun shines with pleasant warmth and the man soon takes off his coat because he no longer needs it. It's a parable about kindness and love: the person showing love and friendship makes things happen in a mutual, positive way; threaten violence and any results are accompanied by grudging resentment.

Hold that thought and we'll use it as a lens through which we can read today's three Bible readings, not so much a taking off of a coat but an opening up to God.

We'll start with the second reading from Hebrews, which is written in highly poetic, figurative way, so it needs careful interpretation. It's calling us to look at God differently, asking us to move from a caricature of God from the Old Testament who is terrible distant deity, 'a voice whose words made the hearers beg that not another word be spoken to them' or is vindictive: '[He] orders that, "If even an animal touches the mountain, it shall be stoned to death" and even Moses said, "I tremble with fear".' To paraphrase, this God is nasty, we are afraid, and only listen out of fear. Like the man in Aesop's fable, those with this idea of God cling to their old ways of doing things and only grudgingly accept God, and only then out of fear.

That's why the author of Hebrews then invites us to consider a new vision of God and hence a new covenant, a New Testament. Our God, the Christian God, does not threaten with fire and damnation but offers Himself in love and hence relationship. The author therefore wants us to discern a loving and righteous God. We

follow Him because we're attracted to Him. We want Him and follow Him willingly.

It's now time to employ the R- word, 'religion.' We need it because the nasty God (the one we're afraid of offending) is a God who operates on the level of religion, which means compiling lists of 'do this' and 'don't do that'. There's a reward of sorts for obeying the rules and punishment if we do not. Today's Gospel depicts a religious man, a 'leader of a synagogue' who is furious with Jesus when he heals a woman on the sabbath. We suppose the man is afraid he will forfeit his reward because he's seen Jesus heal the woman and might be afraid the taint will rub off and he will be punished too. religion is infectious like that. By contrast, Jesus is responding to a God who operates through love, which explains why the Gospel says, 'the entire crowd' who witness this miracle 'rejoice at all the wonderful things that he was doing.' People are more likely to open up to an attractive God.

Which all leads us to today's most important reading which comes from Isaiah, chapter 58. Actually, there are two halves to this chapter: verses 1-8 (which we didn't hear) and verses 9-14 (which we did hear). The missing half says:

1 Shout out, do not hold back!

Lift up your voice like a trumpet!

Announce to my people their rebellion,
to the house of Jacob their sins.

2 Yet day after day they seek me
and delight to know my ways,
as if they were a nation that practised righteousness
and did not forsake the ordinance of their God;
they ask of me righteous judgements,
they delight to draw near to God.

3 'Why do we fast, but you do not see?

Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?'

Look, you serve your own interest on your fast-day,
and oppress all your workers.

4 Look, you fast only to quarrel and to fight
and to strike with a wicked fist.

Such fasting as you do today
will not make your voice heard on high.

5 Is such the fast that I choose,
a day to humble oneself?

Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush,
and to lie in sackcloth and ashes?

Will you call this a fast,
a day acceptable to the Lord?

⁶ Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of injustice,
to undo the thongs of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?

⁷ Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover them,
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?

⁸ Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,
and your healing shall spring up quickly;
your vindicator shall go before you,
the glory of the Lord shall be your rear-guard.

I've reproduced that reading in full here because we need it to find a correct response to the central problem of learning about our God: is He a God of religion or a God of love: do we follow rules in order to placate Him or do we love Him?

In this reading, Isaiah says the people are genuinely religious—they fast, they sing, worship, but it's going through the motions. It's not genuinely done for love. He says, 'Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke?' We can fast and do without food as a religious observance—think of Lent—or we can amend out lifestyles as an act of love, and do without things made by slave labour in China or, for that matter, burgers served by near-slave labour in MacDonald's. We can treat our religion like a checklist: prayers, tick; hymns, tick; the peace, tick ... or we can express our love of God by looking for the image of God in our fellow human beings and sharing love in action. Isaiah is explicit that God wants the latter. Jesus chose between honouring the Sabbath and doing good.

Thomas Merton was an American Trappist monk. He said that 'all Christians become like the God they adore'. We can believe in a religious God or a God of love. People who believe in a religious God generally become rule bound, then hard, then harsh. Those who believe in a God of love look for ways of sharing that love. I may be simplifying but not much.

It's time to summarise: like the man in Aesop's fable, people will experience two visions of God, the religious and the loving, and they will do so through us. They *will* respond. Quite rightly, they will only open their hearts to the nice one.

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 come to the Father in the name of the Son and in the power of the Holy Spirit.
Loving Lord, thank you for your love. Help us to love you. To that end, hone our
knowledge of who you are.

Lord, in your mercy:

All Hear our prayer.

We pray for the Church. We ask you to guard and guide the Church as it seeks to
become today's vehicle of your love. In particular, we pray for ...

Lord, in your mercy:

All Hear our prayer.

We pray for the world. We ask your blessing on all those who seek to make it a
better place: peacemakers, medics, those who care. In particular, we pray for ...

Lord, in your mercy:

All Hear our prayer.

We pray for ourselves, our family and friends, and all those we know. We ask you
to direct their lives of faith and heal them in any way they need. In particular, we
pray for ...

Lord, in your mercy:

All Hear our prayer.

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 our pilgrimage,
you have willed that the gate of mercy
should stand open for those who trust in you:
look upon us with your favour
that we who follow the path of your will
may never wander from the way of life;
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.