

**Sunday 2 October 2022**

# The Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity



Men an Tol, Orkney

**Sermon** © Pete Haslam.

**Prayers of intercession** © <https://lutheranchurch.co.uk/resources/>.

**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** [O God of earth and altar](#) (please click on this link to hear the hymn)  
[O God of earth and altar](#) (different version)

## 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 Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity**

O Lord, we beseech you mercifully to hear the prayers  
of your people who call upon you;  
and grant that they may both perceive and know  
what things they ought to do,  
and also may have grace and power faithfully to fulfil them;  
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 Habakkuk

The oracle that the prophet Habakkuk saw. O Lord, how long shall I cry for help, and you will not listen? Or cry to you 'Violence!' and you will not save? Why do you make me see wrong-doing and look at trouble? Destruction and violence are before me; strife and contention arise. So the law becomes slack and justice never prevails. The wicked surround the righteous—therefore judgment comes forth perverted.

I will stand at my watchpost, and station myself on the rampart; I will keep watch to see what he will say to me, and what he will answer concerning my complaint. Then the Lord answered me and said: Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so that a runner may read it. For there is still a vision for the appointed time; it speaks of the end, and does not lie. If it seems to tarry, wait for it; it will surely come, it will not delay. Look at the proud! Their spirit is not right in them, but the righteous live by their faith. *Habakkuk 1:1-4, 2:1-4*

This is the Word of the Lord

**All Thanks be to God.**

## Second reading

A reading from St Paul's Second Letter to Timothy

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, for the sake of the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus, To Timothy, my beloved child: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. I am grateful to God—whom I worship with a clear conscience, as my ancestors did—when I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day. Recalling your tears, I long to see you so that I may be filled with joy. I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that lived first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, lives in you.

For this reason I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands; for God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline. Do not be ashamed, then, of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel, relying on the power of God, who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace. This grace was given to us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Saviour Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. For this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher, and for this reason I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know the one in whom I have put my trust, and I am sure that he is able to guard until that day what I have entrusted to him. Hold to the standard of sound teaching that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. Guard the good treasure entrusted to you, with the help of the Holy Spirit living in us. *2 Timothy 1:1-14*

This is the Word of the Lord

**All Thanks be to God.**

**HYMN 2 One thing I ask**

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

## Gospel reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke

**All Glory to you O Lord.**

The apostles said to the Lord, 'Increase our faith!' The Lord replied, 'If you had faith the size of a mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, "Be uprooted and planted in the sea," and it would obey you. 'Who among you would say to your slave who has just come in from ploughing or tending sheep in the field, "Come



here at once and take your place at the table”? Would you not rather say to him, “Prepare supper for me, put on your apron and serve me while I eat and drink; later you may eat and drink”? Do you thank the slave for doing what was commanded? So you also, when you have done all that you were ordered to do, say, “We are worthless slaves; we have done only what we ought to have done!” ’ *Luke 17:5-10*

This is the Gospel of the Lord

**All Praise to you O Christ.**

## Sermon

I’ll start this morning by sharing a number of classified adverts found in classified section of daily newspapers:

- Wanted: man to take care of cow that does not smoke or drink.
- Dog for sale: eats anything and is fond of children.
- Illiterate? write today for free help.
- For sale: antique desk suitable for lady with thick legs and large drawers.
- Used Cars: why go elsewhere to be cheated. Come here first

Many of those classifieds are funny, because somebody left out, or misspelled, one small word or phrase. Sometimes, it’s the things you don’t notice—the little things that have greatest value. In today’s Gospel Jesus tells a parable using one of the smallest of seeds known to the people in that day: the mustard seed. How many of you have ever seen a mustard seed? It’s not much bigger than a speck of dust, and yet Jesus uses this small, seemingly insignificant little seed to tell us something about His kingdom, and the Church.

Parables were stories that Jesus told where He used common items that people often saw everyday (such as birds, flowers, seeds) to describe spiritual truths and realities they’d never seen or would never see. No one had ever seen the ‘Kingdom of God’ Jesus was describing, so. He told parables like this to help people visualize what it was going to be like. But, why use an item like a mustard seed? It was a small, insignificant, relatively unimportant seed. It wasn’t highly prized. It was useful for flavouring food, its leaves were edible, and some believed (if prepared properly) parts of the plant had medicinal properties.

But, it was also something of nuisance plant. Jesus here calls it a tree ... but it’s actually more of a shrub. It grew sometimes to a height of 10–12 feet and it wasn’t an overly attractive plant. In fact, at times, people regarded it as a bit of a weed.

You didn’t dare plant it in your garden it would crowd out all the other plants and literally and take over. So why choose the mustard seed to represent the Kingdom?

Why choose something so common and so ordinary to paint a picture of the powerful and majestic Kingdom Jesus would soon invest so much to create? It just doesn't make any sense... or does it?

There is a possibility that Jesus chose the mustard seed because it was so small, so insignificant. Jesus chose the mustard seed to represent His Kingdom? Because God is always consistent: He 'chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, so that no one may boast before him' (1 Corinthians 1:27–29).

Most of us would love to see our church full and become the 'in place' to be. But we need to be careful as churches often run into the danger of being a place where people go to see each other... but not to see Jesus. Jesus didn't His church to be an mighty Oak ... He wanted it to be a humble mustard shrub. He doesn't want people to go to church and be impressed with how important we are, and how valuable to the people around us He wants people to bow in modesty before His throne. IN SHORT, he doesn't want people to get excited about themselves. He wants them to get excited about what He can do thru them ... what He can do in their lives ... and the changes and healing He can bring to them.

That's part of the reason He chose the mustard plant to represent His kingdom. HE wanted us to keep our eyes off of ourselves and focused on Him Jesus chose the mustard seed for His parable because of its size. He used it because even something as small as a mustard seed had miraculous power within it. Think about it. A seed—not much bigger than a pinhead—had within it the power to become a towering plant

Now let's say next week Bill Gates gathers all the world's most brilliant scientists together and tells them 'I'll give you all the money you could possibly want if make something for me. I want you to create an item the size of pinhead that I can bury in my back yard out in the sun. And I want this item to grow up out of the ground become a living, life giving plant.' Will he be able to do it? Will his brilliant scientists, be able to take inanimate material and produce something as simple as a garden variety seed? Of course not. There's no scientist alive that can duplicate that kind of miracle.

In other words, you can't duplicate what God intends to do in His church. God's power in the church has a life within it that defies understanding. And it all starts with a small seed inside the heart of an individual. And once that seed takes root and begins to grow, that which was lifeless and empty becomes filled with the

power of God. Jesus chose the mustard seed, because of the humility it represented, and because of the life-giving power it had within it.

And lastly, Jesus chose a mustard plant to represent His church, because the mustard seed has to die in order to give life.

In 1 Corinthians 15:35–38, St Paul writes:

*But someone may ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come?" How foolish! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. When you sow, you do not plant the body that will be, but just a seed, perhaps of wheat or of something else. But God gives it a body as he has determined, and to each kind of seed he gives its own body.*

In other words, a seed has to die to bring life. Was it possible, Jesus was saying (that in the same way) in order for the Kingdom of God to come into being—something had to die? Jesus knew He had to die and be buried in order to give life to His church and to us.

So to conclude: It's amazing how a tiny mustard seed could say so much about Christ's Kingdom. The very idea of using a small seed—a little larger than a speck of dust—being used to describe power and the mystery of what Jesus did to create His Kingdom.

Was there that much power in a tiny seed—that Jesus would want to use something so small to represent something so majestic? I think the answer is yes. I don't think there's anything on earth that has the ability to bury the power that lies within one tiny seed. In a cemetery in Hanover, Germany, is a grave on which were placed huge slabs of granite and marble cemented together and fastened with heavy steel clasps. It belongs to a woman who did not believe in the resurrection of the dead. Yet strangely, she directed in her will that her grave be made so secure that if there were a resurrection, it could not reach her. On the marker were inscribed these words: 'This burial place must never be opened.' In time, a seed, covered over by the stones, began to grow. Slowly it pushed its way through the soil and out from beneath them. As the trunk enlarged, the great slabs were gradually shifted so that the steel clasps were wrenched from their sockets. A tiny seed had become a tree that had pushed aside the stones. Resurrection will find a way.

## **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**

Trusting in the power of God to deliver us,  
let us make our prayers of intercession for all, saying:  
God our Saviour

**All Hear our prayer.**

We pray for the church . . .

Teach us to trust in your saving power,  
to rely on the gifts of your Holy Spirit,  
and to be bold in our testimony to the Lord.

God our Saviour

**All Hear our prayer.**

We pray for the world ...

Give us leaders who are committed  
to doing what is just and right,  
so that all may live in peace and safety.

God our Saviour

**All Hear our prayer.**

We pray for this community ...

Restore our abandoned cities,  
rebuild our ruined neighbourhoods,  
and renew our broken relationships.

God our Saviour

**All Hear our prayer.**

We pray for loved ones ...  
Comfort those who are suffering  
or wasting away in their sorrow.  
Sustain them with your steadfast love.  
God our Saviour

**All Hear our prayer.**

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 Purify my heart**

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

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 Seek ye first  
Seek ye first**

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

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**

Almighty God,  
you have taught us through your Son  
that love is the fulfilling of the law:  
grant that we may love you with our whole heart  
and our neighbours as ourselves;  
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.