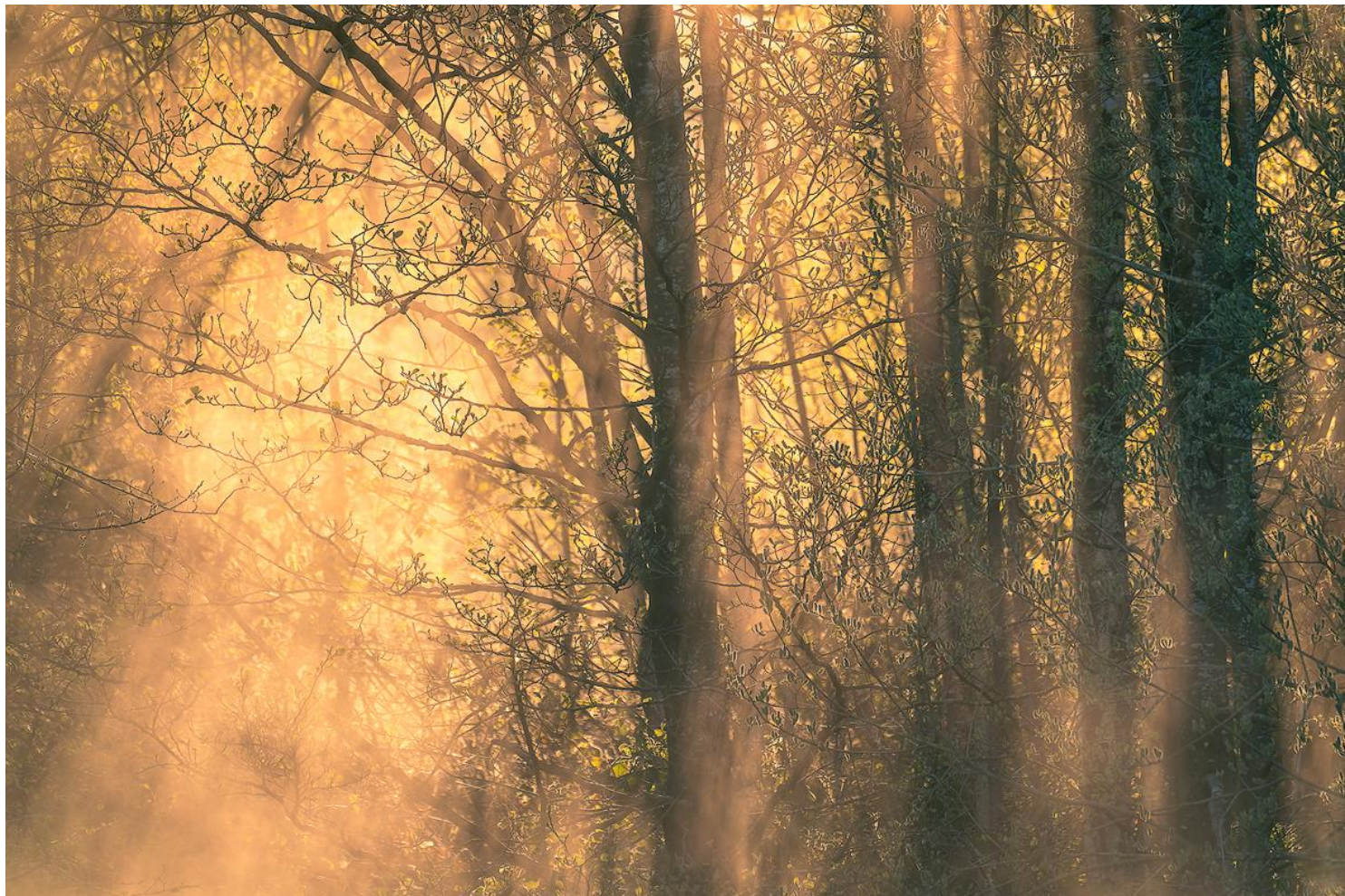


Sunday 16 October 2022

The Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity



Sermon © Gail Randall.

Prayers of intercession © Stephen Fearing (adapted).

Liturgy © 2000 The Archbishops' Council.

Bible readings © the publishers of the NRSV translation.

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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 **Father, hear the prayer we offer**
Father, hear the prayer we offer

(traditional version)
(different orchestration)

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 Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity

Almighty and everlasting God,
increase in us your gift of faith
that, forsaking what lies behind
and reaching out to that which is before,
we may run the way of your commandments
and win the crown of everlasting joy;
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 First book of Moses called Genesis

Jacob sent messengers before him to his brother Esau in the land of Seir, the country of Edom, instructing them, "Thus you shall say to my lord Esau: Thus says your servant Jacob, "I have lived with Laban as an alien, and stayed until now; and I have oxen, donkeys, flocks, male and female slaves; and I have sent to tell my lord, in order that I may find favour in your sight".' The messengers returned to Jacob, saying, 'We came to your brother Esau, and he is coming to meet you, and four hundred men are with him.' Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed; and he divided the people that were with him, and the flocks and herds and camels, into two companies, thinking, 'If Esau comes to the one company and destroys it, then the company that is left will escape.'

And Jacob said, 'O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, O Lord who said to me, "Return to your country and to your kindred, and I will do you good," I am not worthy of the least of all the steadfast love and all the faithfulness

that you have shown to your servant, for with only my staff I crossed this Jordan; and now I have become two companies. Deliver me, please, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, for I am afraid of him; he may come and kill us all, the mothers with the children. Yet you have said, 'I will surely do you good, and make your offspring as the sand of the sea, which cannot be counted because of their number'.'

So he spent that night there, and from what he had with him he took a present for his brother Esau: two hundred female goats and twenty male goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams, thirty milch camels and their colts, forty cows and ten bulls, twenty female donkeys and ten male donkeys. These he delivered into the hand of his servants, every drove by itself, and said to his servants, 'Pass on ahead of me, and put a space between drove and drove.' He instructed the foremost, 'When Esau my brother meets you, and asks you, "To whom do you belong? Where are you going? And whose are these ahead of you?" then you shall say, "They belong to your servant Jacob; they are a present sent to my lord Esau; and moreover he is behind us".' He likewise instructed the second and the third and all who followed the droves, 'You shall say the same thing to Esau when you meet him, and you shall say, "Moreover your servant Jacob is behind us".' For he thought, 'I may appease him with the present that goes ahead of me, and afterwards I shall see his face; perhaps he will accept me.' So the present passed on ahead of him; and he himself spent that night in the camp. The same night he got up and took his two wives, his two maids, and his eleven children, and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. He took them and sent them across the stream, and likewise everything that he had.

Jacob was left alone; and a man wrestled with him until daybreak. When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he struck him on the hip socket; and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. Then he said, 'Let me go, for the day is breaking.' But Jacob said, 'I will not let you go, unless you bless me.' So he said to him, 'What is your name?' And he said, 'Jacob.' Then the man said, "You shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with humans, and have prevailed.' Then Jacob asked him, 'Please tell me your name.' But he said, "Why is it that you ask my name?' And there he blessed him. So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, 'For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life is preserved.' The sun rose upon him as he passed Peniel, limping because of his hip. *Genesis 32:3-31*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

Second reading

A reading from St Paul's Second Letter to Timothy

As for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it, and how from childhood you have known the sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.

In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I solemnly urge you: proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favourable or unfavourable; convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching. For the time is coming when people will not put up with sound doctrine, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own desires, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander away to myths. As for you, always be sober, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, carry out your ministry fully. *2 Timothy 3:14—4:5*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

HYMN 2 [What a friend we have in Jesus](#) (click on this link to hear the hymn)
[What a friend we have in Jesus](#) (acapella version)

Gospel reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke

All Glory to you O Lord.

Jesus told them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart. He said, 'In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor had respect for people. In that city there was a widow who kept coming to him and saying, "Grant me justice against my opponent." For a while he refused; but later he said to himself, "Though I have no fear of God and no respect for anyone, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that she may not wear me out by continually coming".' And the Lord said, 'Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long in helping them? I tell you, he will quickly grant justice to them. And yet, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?' *Luke 18:1-8*

This is the Gospel of the Lord

All Praise to you O Christ.

Sermon

Can you remember some of the times in your life when you had to learn a new skill—maybe something that didn't come easily to you at first? I can just about remember learning to ride a bike. I was fortunate to have a three-wheeler first of all—that was quite easy—but then came the real thing—the two wheeled bicycle. I can't remember how many times I fell off, but when I could balance and wobble off on my own, it was wonderful. I guess I heard encouraging words from my parents: 'keep trying,' 'don't give up' and those familiar words: 'If at first you don't succeed, try, try, try again.' Like riding a bike, there are many things in life we have to do over and over again before we succeed—maybe learning to drive a car, or learning to play a musical instrument, and we have to persevere—we have to keep practising again and again. Today's Bible readings speak to us about faithful endurance and show us how persistence can be worthwhile even though it may come at a cost.

In the reading from Genesis, Jacob wrestled with a stranger at night. It went on for a long time and we don't know who won but the important thing is that even though he was hurt, Jacob wouldn't give up until he received the blessing he pleaded from the stranger.

Paul's letter to Timothy urges him to persevere in his teaching, remaining firmly committed to the truth that he had been taught.

In recent weeks, our Gospel readings have featured one of Jesus' parables, often focused on social justice, particularly for the marginalised. Today we heard the parable of the widow and the judge and I think the opening words of the parable sum up its message: 'One day Jesus told his disciples a story to show that they should always pray and never give up.'

Jesus used people and situations that would be well known to the people of the day in order to help them understand his teaching. His audience would probably have smiled knowingly as religious literature as well as the Bible often used poor widows and unjust judges as subjects. Yet throughout the Old Testament, God's people are repeatedly told that in order to reflect God's values and love, they need to show particular care to the widow as well as the orphan.

In the story today, the judge has all the power on his side and the woman who doesn't even have a male relative to do her pleading for her is at the bottom of the pecking order—in fact, she was probably considered to be a social outcast. All the same, by sheer persistence, she gets what she wants in the end, even if the judge just wanted a quiet life. Jesus' parable also reminds us that God is the supreme judge who is just and merciful and who will always respond to our petitions according to our needs. If even an unjust judge can give a just decision in the end,

then God will surely give justice to those who persevere in prayer.

And perhaps there's another message too. We often hear or read news headlines about people who are persistent in their striving for justice; we will all be familiar with the prolonged petition for justice for the victims of the Hillsborough football tragedy. Do we ourselves (like the judge) just desire a quiet life or (like the widow) are we strong enough to stand up for what we believe?

I think part of the essence of prayer is being persistent, having regular conversations with God. I could talk about times in my life when I prayed to God at a moment of crisis—when my life was in danger—and God answered my prayer immediately. I recall those moments as miracles. But at other times, God answers our prayers by giving us opportunities to be the answer to them ourselves. Sometimes, prayers are prayed but because outcomes can be difficult to identify, we might wonder if God listens. But God loves us too much to always give us easy solutions. Prayer is an act of faith. God knows that we learn and grow most, and value solutions most, when we have to keep on working towards them, persevering through prayer.

I'd like to share this poem. It's called 'Perseverance Works.'

I sought a job, a new career, and found a factory fairly near;
I signed away a year or two to work as factory workers do.
The walls were grey and working grim,
to spend one's days in light so dim,
for in that dull and dusty place, could scarcely see another's face.
But through a window in the wall a shaft of light would sometimes fall
upon the factory's name, which lurked in darkness:
'Perseverance Works.'

For weeks and months, I learnt of hope
though through long days of toil I'd grope
and 'ere I thought all hope had gone,
the factory's name would lead me on.
Now I've moved on and been gone for many years,
but in my memory still lurks the promise: 'Perseverance Works'.

(Adapted—author unknown).

Dear Lord, help us to persevere in prayer; teach us to be patient as we await your response, for we know that you hear all our prayers; give us enduring faith to trust your wonderful love and care for us.

Amen.

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, saying:
Source of eternal salvation,

All Hear our prayer. *Hebrews 5:9*

We gather this day to bow before your wondrous magnificence.

We come to you as followers eager to learn,
as disciples seeking to serve,
as children trying to absorb your wisdom.

It is a difficult task, indeed.

Where we have been stubborn, give us discerning ears.

Where we have been cruel, give us gracious hearts.

Where we have been short-sighted, give us open eyes.

Make and mould us into the community you are calling us to embody.

Source of eternal salvation,

All Hear our prayer.

Today we pray for the all leaders and those who seek to serve.
We are reminded this day that Jesus Christ calls us to place aside our ego
in order that we might serve more fully and more faithfully.
We pray that all candidates seeking office may understand
that their voices and their votes affect the least of these among us.
Source of eternal salvation,

All Hear our prayer.

Today we pray for this congregation,
that in this season of divisiveness,
that we might be guided by the unity of the Holy Spirit
to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with you.
Source of eternal salvation,

All Hear our prayer.

God of all healing and wholeness,
we pray for the those close to our hearts
that are struggling with issues of various kinds.
Especially those that are craving kindness,
for those that are seeking employment,
for those that are yearning to be whole,
for those that are calling for justice,
for those that are discerning righteousness.
Source of eternal salvation,

All Hear our prayer.

We gather as your servants this day
to lift up our supplications for your mercy.
Hear now the prayers we lift to you
either out loud or in silence...
Source of eternal salvation,

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 Jesus, good above all other [\(click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

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 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

We praise and thank you, O Christ, for this sacred feast:
for here we receive you,
here the memory of your passion is renewed,
here our minds are filled with grace,
and here a pledge of future glory is given,
when we shall feast at that table where you reign
with all your saints for ever.

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.