

Wednesday 1 May 2024

Saints Philip and James



Philip and James appear in the lists of the twelve apostles in the first three gospels but are frequently confused with other saints who share the same names.

Philip has a more prominent role in John's gospel than in the others. He is the third apostle called by Jesus who then introduces his friend Nathanael. Philip is the spokesman for the other apostles and questions the capacity for feeding the five thousand and, at the Last Supper, he starts a kind of dialogue with Jesus which leads our Lord's Farewell Discourses.

James is said to be the son of Alphæus. He is often known as 'James the Less' to distinguish him. He may also be the 'James the Younger' who, in Mark's gospel, witnesses the Crucifixion.

Philip James are celebrated on the same day because the church in Rome, where their relics rest, was dedicated on this day in the year 560 AD.

Sermon © Revd Dr Paul Monk.

Liturgy © 2000 The Archbishops' Council.

Prayers of intercession © Revd Jane Hyde (adapted).

Bible readings © the publishers of the NRSV translation.

The liturgy assumes the service is Eucharistic. The prayers of consecration appear at the end.

The hymn can be accessed via a YouTube link. Please click on the links.

To see service transcripts from previous weeks, please visit the page,
<http://www.medlockhead.co.uk/resources/index.htm>

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.

Alleluia, Christ is risen!

All He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

HYMN [Father, hear the prayer we offer](#) (click on this link to hear the hymn)
[Father, hear the prayer we offer](#) (different version)

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

All Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.

**For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.**

The Collect for Saints Philip and James

Almighty Father,
whom truly to know is eternal life:
teach us to know your Son Jesus Christ as the way, the truth, and the life;
that we may follow the steps of your holy apostles Philip and James,
and walk steadfastly in the way that leads to your glory;
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 prophecy of Isaiah

Thus said the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel: In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and in trust shall be your strength. But you refused and said, 'No! We will flee upon horses'—therefore you shall flee! and, "We will ride upon swift steeds'—therefore your pursuers shall be swift! A thousand shall flee at the threat of one, at the threat of five you shall flee, until you are left like a flagstaff on the top of a mountain, like a signal on a hill. Therefore the Lord waits to be gracious to you; therefore he will rise up to show mercy to you. For the Lord is a God of justice; blessed are all those who wait for him.

Truly, O people in Zion, inhabitants of Jerusalem, you shall weep no more. He will surely be gracious to you at the sound of your cry; when he hears it, he will answer you. Though the Lord may give you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet your Teacher will not hide himself any more, but your eyes shall see your Teacher. And when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left, your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, 'This is the way; walk in it.' *Isaiah 30:15-21*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

Second reading

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians

This is the reason that I, Paul, am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that was given me for you, and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. In former generations this mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: that is, the Gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God's grace that was given me by the working of his power. Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the Gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ, and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.

Ephesians 1:3–10

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

HYMN 2 Lord's Prayer

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

Gospel reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John

All Glory to you O Lord.

Jesus said to his disciples, 'Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going.'

Thomas said to him, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?' Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.'

Philip said to him, 'Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.' Jesus said to him, 'Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, "Show us the Father"? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.'

John 14:1-14

This is the Gospel of the Lord

All Praise to you O Christ.

Sermon

Jesus' long discourse comes from the so-called 'High priestly prayer' that he said during the Last Supper, the night he was betrayed and the very day before he was murdered. It's full of soundbites, snippets, that are interconnected and meant to be life-enhancing. Jesus says he is the way, truth, and life of God; he is in God the Father and the Father is in him. And he says we can ask anything in his name and it will be given; we will do greater miracles than Jesus did if we pray in this way.

In this prayer, Jesus is not only talking to God but is instructing his disciples. By extension, he is also talking to us. It is therefore all very worrying because, for most of us, it's all quite simply not true. What are we missing?

The force of the Jesus' talk boils down to the phrase, 'In my name'. To some people, praying 'in Jesus' name' means adding those words such as 'we pray in Jesus' name' near the extreme end of a prayer just before saying 'Amen' and re-opening our eyes. But, in fact, Jesus meant something completely different.

There are few modern equivalents, but perhaps a police officer comes closest when saying something like, 'Stop in the name of the law'. That 'in the name of' implies both authority and consequence. They have authority (otherwise they would keep silent, stay away, do something else) and there is a consequence (if the person they are speaking to does stop, the officer will treat them humanely under the terms of the law; and, if they don't, the officer will arrest them and curtail their

liberty). In much the same way, when we pray 'in Jesus' name' we are praying with authority and with anticipated consequences.

In first-century Jewish culture, a name was a sacred and prophetic thing. That's why so many names in scripture have a meaning: 'Jesus', for example, means 'The Lord saves'. Invoking a name was a cultural means of authorising something and speaking in the name of God was therefore invoking the very essence of God. That's why, for example, many people thought it was blasphemous to say aloud the name of God.

We invoke the essence of God when we pray, which explains why Jesus' trademark prayer (in Matthew 6) says near the start in its second line, 'Hallowed be your name': it is saying that the very spirit, heart, substance of God is recognised as being utterly holy as a direct consequence of praying this way. It also implies a casual prayer is an irreverent thing and, for that reason, can be seen as working against God.

Praying in Jesus' name means aligning ourselves to God and His wonderful purposes. A prayer genuinely uttered in Jesus' name can tap into the purity and power of God, and sponsors that spiritual spotlessness and authority entering a situation, person, or problem. And praying in Jesus' name for something contrary to God and His nature is therefore contradictory and can be likened to using a flame thrower to promote cooling or a garden sprinkler to dry the garden.

The task of the Christian disciple becomes the work of aligning themselves with Jesus. Jesus works in and through us in proportion that we seek to live his life; indeed, the honest, naked, deliberate intention to live that life is often sufficient because, of course, none of us can be perfect for more than an instant at a time. If we try to live the same life as Jesus, we often find that his holiness and Godliness 'rub off' to some extent and we also become progressively holy and Godly. Today's church calls it sanctification; at the time of Jesus, it would have been more common to talk rather of living or acting in Jesus' name. In the same way, the prayers of a person aligning their life with Jesus would be said to be 'praying in Jesus' name'.

'Praying in Jesus name' is merely a middle eastern way of saying 'holiness is life'. There is therefore no need to place the exact words '... in Jesus' name' at the end of our prayers. In fact, it is much more important to live Jesus' life before we start to pray than to utter the words at some point during those prayers.

Prayers of intercession

We remember the apostles Philip and James and recall how God invites and sends us out into the world to be his hands and his feet. We pray in Jesus' name.

We thank you, Loving Father, for the tasks you have entrusted to us. Help us to become more aware of our calling to serve you.

In Jesus' name:

All hear our prayer.

Loving Father, we pray for the needs of the world, remembering particularly those regions where people's daily lives are tainted by violence and oppression, hunger and disease. Prosper the work of agencies and organisations whose work is to bring aid and relief.

In Jesus' name:

All hear our prayer.

Loving Father, as we remember Philip and the saints who spread the Good News to all nations, we thank you for all who teach especially those who help us to grow in faith.

In Jesus' name:

All hear our prayer.

Loving Father, we thank you for the apostle James and the hidden and unknown work he did in service of the gospel. We thank you for all those who have an impact on our lives and who are working to maintain our wellbeing. We pray for those who dedicate and risk their lives in the service of others.

In Jesus' name:

All hear our prayer.

Loving Father, in a few moments of quiet, we call to mind those who are suffering in body mind and spirit, and all who mourn today ... be present to us all and bring your healing and peace.

In Jesus' name:

All hear our prayer.

Loving Father, we commend to your infinite care, and to the perfect peace of your kingdom, all who have died. Those known to us ... those we hear about in daily news bulletins, and those known only to you. May they all receive the joys of life with you in heaven.

In Jesus' name:

All **hear our prayer.**

Loving Father, we thank you for providing us with the example of the lives of Philip and James, and we pray that, like them, we will have the courage and strength to face what is before us and not be overwhelmed.

In Jesus' name:

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 **In Jesus name**

In Jesus name (God of possible)

His name is Jesus

At the name of Jesus

No other name but the name of Jesus

All hail the power of Jesus' name

[\(click to hear the hymn\)](#)

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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
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be with you now and remain with you always.

All Amen.

**HYMN 4 Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise God from whom all blessings flow**

[\(click on this link\)](#)
[\(rock version\)](#)

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

**All In the name of Christ.
Amen.**

Alleluia, Christ is risen!

All He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

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 George 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

Lord God, the source of truth and love,
keep us faithful to the apostles' teaching and fellowship,
united in prayer and the breaking of bread,
and one in joy and simplicity of heart,
in 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.