

Sunday 7 July 2024

Sixth Sunday after Trinity



Sermon © Pete Haslam.

Liturgy © 2000 The Archbishops' Council.

Prayers of intercession © Revd Jane Hyde

Bible readings © the publishers of the NRSV translation.

Image Sue Wood © on Twitter as [@SW_PhotoNature](#)

The liturgy assumes the service is Eucharistic. The prayers of consecration are included 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>

Introduction and welcome

HYMN 1 [We have a Gospel to proclaim](#) (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

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 the Sixth Sunday after Trinity

Merciful God,
you have prepared for those who love you
such good things as pass our understanding:
pour into our hearts such love toward you
that we, loving you in all things and above all things,
may obtain your promises,
which exceed all that we can desire;
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 Ezekiel

He said to me: O mortal, stand up on your feet, and I will speak with you. And when he spoke to me, a spirit entered into me and set me on my feet; and I heard him speaking to me. He said to me, Mortal, I am sending you to the people of Israel, to a nation of rebels who have rebelled against me; they and their ancestors have transgressed against me to this very day. The descendants are impudent and stubborn. I am sending you to them, and you shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord God.' Whether they hear or refuse to hear (for they are a rebellious house), they shall know that there has been a prophet among them. *Ezekiel 2:1-5*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

Second reading

A reading from St Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians

I know a person in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know; God knows. And I know that such a person—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know; God knows— was caught up into Paradise and heard things that are not to be told, that no mortal is permitted to repeat. On behalf of such a one I will boast, but on my own behalf I will not boast, except of my weaknesses. But if I wish to boast, I will not be a fool, for I will be speaking the truth. But I refrain from it, so that no one may think better of me than what is seen in me or heard from me, even considering the exceptional character of the revelations. Therefore, to keep me from being too elated, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me, to keep me from being too elated. Three times I appealed to the Lord about this, that it would leave me, but he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness.' So, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities for the sake of Christ; for whenever I am weak, then I am strong. *2 Corinthians 12:2-10*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

HYMN 2 [When I needed a neighbour](#) [\(click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

Gospel reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark

All Glory to you O Lord.

[Jesus] left that place and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him. On the sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astounded. They said, 'Where did this man get all this? What is this wisdom that has been given to him? What deeds of power are being done by his hands! Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?' And they took offense at him. Then Jesus said to them, 'Prophets are not without honour, except in their hometown, and among their own kin, and in their own house.' And he could do no deed of power

there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and cured them. And he was amazed at their unbelief.

Then he went about among the villages teaching. He called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. He ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts; but to wear sandals and not to put on two tunics. He said to them, 'Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave the place. If any place will not welcome you and they refuse to hear you, as you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them.' So they went out and proclaimed that all should repent. They cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them.

Mark 6:1-13

This is the Gospel of the Lord

All Praise to you O Christ.

Sermon

A former army drill sergeant took a new job as a schoolteacher; but just before the school year started, he injured his back. He was required to wear a plaster cast around the upper part of his body. Fortunately, the cast fitted closely under his shirt and wasn't noticeable. On the first day of class, he found himself assigned to the toughest students in the school. Having already heard the new teacher was a former drill sergeant, were leery of him. They decided to see how tough he really was, before trying any pranks. Walking confidently into the rowdy classroom, the new teacher opened the window wide and sat down at his desk. When a strong breeze made the teacher's tie flap, he picked up a stapler and promptly stapled the tie to his chest. He had no trouble with discipline that year.

The Gospel reading from Mark 6 occurs just after the healing of the woman with a haemorrhage and the raising of Jairus' daughter from the dead. It is two different stories about faith, and that's where the similarity ends. Unlike the two miracles that we heard about in last week's Gospel reading, which demonstrate faith in Jesus, the first parable we heard in this passage is about the *lack* of faith. By the time Jesus returned to his hometown of Nazareth, the stories of his healings and miracles had spread far and wide. Even the people in his hometown had heard of his popularity, so you would expect that he would have been accepted by the hometown crowd and welcomed with open arms. Unfortunately, that was not the case. He was seen as the son of a carpenter or the son of Mary and Joseph, and not as the Son of God.

Jesus was surprised by the unbelief of the crowd, and not because he was expecting to be welcomed as a hometown hero. The lack of faith always caused Jesus to be amazed because he is all-knowing, almighty, all-present and all-loving. Why would someone not trust him? If you consider the population of Nazareth at the time of Jesus, you can understand why he was not accepted. For starters, most of the people were poorly educated if they had any education at all. They could not read the precious scrolls in the synagogue, so the only way they could learn their religious heritage was to listen to the rabbis, who were educated. Jesus did not have the formal training required for rabbis, so in the eyes of the people, he was just a local boy who was 'putting on airs'. To make matters worse, the scribes in Jerusalem had been spreading rumours about Jesus—rumours which had also reached Nazareth.

Now a son was expected to follow in his father's footsteps but not go beyond them. If a boy's father was a carpenter, then the son was to be a carpenter as well ... but nothing more. When the people heard Jesus teach in the synagogue, they were on the verge of applauding him, but they didn't because they saw him as 'just' a carpenter. What they failed to see was that Jesus was following in his father's footsteps-his heavenly father's. Jesus really upset them when he told them that it takes outsiders to see what the locals refuse to see.

So why couldn't Jesus perform many miracles in Nazareth? Scripture says it was because of a lack of faith. We know that unbelievers, like the people of Nazareth, often fail to tap into God's power. If they had put faith in Jesus' wisdom, they would have heard God's guidance and encouragement. If they had looked deeper into Jesus' cures, they would have seen God reaching out to rescue them. Instead, they missed out on the greatest miracles of all. Yet Jesus took the rejection in His stride and continued his ministry by sending out the twelve disciples. He sent them out with only the barest of essentials-one cloak and a staff. He wanted them to trust God to provide for their needs. They were to concentrate on their mission. Plus, Jewish custom at that time was to offer hospitality to travellers. Jesus wanted the disciples to stay at the first house that offered them a place to stay in each city or town that they visited, rather than moving from house to house.

Warnings about the trappings of affluence need to be heard again today, especially when we hear stories of monies being used to finance so much evil in the world. We maybe need to be more like people who believe that functional simplicity is better. That is because just as the twelve disciples travelled lightly and depended on the hospitality of the people in the towns and cities they visited, there are many people who have very few possessions of their own and must rely on charity or handouts for house furnishings and hospitality. So, God calls us to let go

of some of the assumptions and rules we have about how we have always done things. These human devised rules can be more of an obstacle than an aid in our spiritual journey. God calls us to leave behind our pride and ego. He strips these things from us so that we might travel light again and rely on His power alone to guide us and trust His grace to support and sustain us.

So why did Jesus send the twelve out in pairs? He had three main reasons. First, a partner provides strength, protection and companionship. Second, a partner also provides credibility. For example, Deuteronomy 15:19 required two or three witnesses in order to convict a person of a crime, because a single witness was likely to make a mistake. For the same reason, one witness had less credibility than two (and perhaps that is why Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses always come knocking on our doors in pairs today). Finally, a partner holds people accountable. A person is less likely to succumb to temptation when accompanied by a partner.

Jesus wanted the disciples to know that they would travel the open roads of Palestine penniless and expecting to be welcomed with open arms, especially in their own hometowns. He also wanted them to know that the Gospel message was a hard one to preach and a hard one to hear-not popular, not easy, and not automatically earning respect, especially at home. Those who refused to show proper hospitality, or those who refused to listen to the disciples' message, were to be treated as pagans. As such, the disciples were to do what the Jews did after they walked through Gentile lands-namely, shake the dust off of their feet as they left. Not only did this warn the offenders, it freed the disciples to move to more fertile territory-just like Jesus did after the people of Nazareth rejected him. Jesus and the disciples always challenged the status quo, and we need more people like them today. We need to be people who speak the truth and shake each other out of our comfortable lives, We all need to be people who will cooperate with God's plan for their lives. In other words, we need people of faith.

Just like the people of Nazareth did not really know Jesus, it is possible for us to not really know Jesus. We can understand him and what he can do for us, but we often play it safe and refuse to take risks. More important, we might not know him personally. God uses ordinary people to do extraordinary things in our world. Jesus was just an ordinary man in the eyes of the people of Nazareth, but he was God in human form and could do extraordinary things. Every Christian has a part to play in God's master plan. This story represents one of the few failures in Jesus' ministry, but it also shows his human side. Like Jesus, we will all face failure at some point in our lives. Some of us might be feeling a sense of failure now. It might be a sense of failure as a provider, or a sense of failure in life, or a sense of some other form of failure. Failure is hard because society has conditioned us for success,

but it has not adequately prepared us for failure. We look at celebrities and see only success. The only time we really see failure is when it involves someone famous.

Now those who accept God's call to follow him will face rejection in its many forms-persecutions, insults, hostility, contempt, scorn, etc. They are the common situation for those who accept the call. Just like Christ rejected the way of glory and found glory in obedience and death, we must also reject the way of the world and accept the way of the cross. Christianity is not a religion for those who want success or power in the traditional worldly sense.

Jesus faced failure, but he kept on going. We can face failure and keep on going if we have the faith, courage, wisdom and strength that come with both believing in Jesus and fellowship with fellow believers. When Jesus sent the twelve disciples out, he prepared them to handle failure. He constantly prepares us for failure through his word and our faith. If we want to do something for the Gospel or for God, we must believe them and behave according to their teachings. We must have faith and let our actions match our faith. When we do, Christ will do deeds of power through us, and the world will be blessed by our having been here.

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

Heavenly Father, we are the body of Christ
because your Spirit binds us together with your life.
Send us out strong in our weakness and littleness.

Lord in your mercy,

All Hear our Prayer

Heavenly Father, we pray for all who will be ordained this Petertide,
that your blessing will rest upon them
and that you will prosper their ministries.

Lord in your mercy,

All Hear our Prayer

Heavenly Father, all governments
are answerable to your authority,
and much evil is allowed to flourish
through the silence of good people;
give us all the courage to speak out your truth,
whether it is popular or not.

Lord in your mercy,

All Hear our Prayer

Heavenly Father, be in all our listening
at home at school and at work;
may we give our full attention to you
and to one another,
happy to grow wiser through each conversation.

Lord in your mercy,

All Hear our Prayer

Heavenly Father, we pray for those
who suffer in silence;
for those who have no one to confide in,
no one to listen.

We pray for your love to enfold them,
your peace to calm them
and your healing to transform them.

Lord in your mercy,

All Hear our Prayer

Heavenly Father, prepare us all during this life
for the life to come;
we commend to your keeping all those
who have recently made their journey through death.

Lord in your mercy,

All Hear our Prayer

Merciful Father,

**All accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.**

The Peace

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, and peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

All And also with you

HYMN 3 We are one body

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

The liturgy of the Communion Service appears below

The Dismissal

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you.

The Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you
and give you his peace;

and the blessing of God the Almighty:

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

All Amen.

HYMN 4 What a friend we have in Jesus

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

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

God of our pilgrimage,
you have led us to the living water:
refresh and sustain us
as we go forward on our journey,
in the name of 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.