



Chet Valley Churches

Holy Communion for Eleventh Sunday after Trinity

23rd August 2020

The Greeting and Welcome

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you
and also with you.

♪ *Hymn: O God Our Help in Ages Past*

**O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home.**

**Under the shadow of thy throne
Thy saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is thine arm alone,
And our defence is sure.**

**Before the hills in order stood,
Or earth received her frame,
From everlasting thou art God,
To endless years the same.**

**A thousand ages in thy sight
Are like an evening gone,
Short as the watch that ends the night
Before the rising sun.**

**Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
Bears all its sons away;
They fly forgotten, as a dream
Dies at the opening day.**

**O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Be thou our guard while troubles last,
And our eternal home. Amen.**

Prayers of Penitence

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.



**Most merciful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
we confess that we have sinned in thought, word and deed.
We have not loved you with our whole heart.
We have not loved our neighbour as ourselves.
In your mercy forgive what we have been,
help us to amend what we are, and direct what we shall be;
that we may do justly, love mercy,
and walk humbly with you, our God. Amen.**

Almighty God have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Collect for Trinity II

God of glory, the end of our searching, help us to lay aside all that prevents us from seeking your kingdom, and to give all that we have to gain the pearl beyond all price, through our Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Gloria

**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.**

Epistle: Romans 12:1-8

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober

judgement, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

For the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

♪ Hymn: *There is a Hope*

**There is a hope that burns within my heart,
That gives me strength for every passing day;
A glimpse of glory now revealed in meagre part,
Yet drives all doubt away:
I stand in Christ, with sins forgiven;
And Christ in me, the hope of heaven!
My highest calling and my deepest joy,
To make His will my home.**

**There is a hope that lifts my weary head,
A consolation strong against despair,
That when the world has plunged me
In its deepest pit,
I find the Saviour there!
Through present sufferings, future's fear,
He whispers 'courage' in my ear.
For I am safe in everlasting arms,
And they will lead me home.**

**There is a hope that stands the test of time,
That lifts my eyes beyond the beckoning grave,
To see the matchless beauty of a day divine
When I behold His face!
When sufferings cease and sorrows die,
And every longing satisfied.
Then joy unspeakable will flood my soul,
For I am truly home.**

Gospel: Matthew 16:13-20

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, ‘Who do people say that the Son of Man is?’ And they said, ‘Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.’ He said to them, ‘But who do you say that I am?’ Simon Peter answered, ‘You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.’

And Jesus answered him, ‘Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.’ Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

For the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Exploring the Word [Rev David]

The way that the pattern of readings works that the church here follows means that the same group of readings crop up every three years. In that time it’s fascinating to wonder what might have changed in our lives and what thoughts we may have long forgotten. Some talks or sermons remain with us, others we all have to admit float away. I thought that I’d look to see if I could find my notes from three and six years ago. I could, but they were of no immediate help since six years ago when these readings were to be used I’d talked instead about St Bartholomew—his feast day being 24th August—and then three years ago I may well have been on holiday since my notes go from the week before to the week after! Ah well.

The passage from Matthew’s gospel is pivotal. One lesson I do recall with great clarity goes back to my teenage years. When I was in the Lower Sixth form at school doing my science-based A levels I also studied three other O level subjects. One was the ubiquitous General Studies, the second was Welsh—as foreign language—well I was living across the border in England so perfectly entitled to do it that way; and the third was Religious Studies. Clearly a glutton for punishment! I have to confess that much of what I was taught in that year in RS disappeared quite quickly but one point, in particular, stuck. That Jesus’s question to the disciples and their response is a pivotal point in both Matthew’s and Mark’s account of his ministry.

So what of it?

I suppose there are several aspects to it...

When does it occur?

What does it ask?

What is the consequence?

When does it occur? If you care to look back at Matthew's gospel and re-read the previous chapter you'll read of Jesus's encounter with the Canaanite woman and the banter they indulge in which results in Jesus acknowledging that his mission is wider than just to the people of Israel. I have often tried to grasp—probably because I endeavour to have a mathematical attitude to it—how Jesus could be 100% human as well as 100% divine. There in that encounter I believe we get a glimpse of his dual nature. A realisation that the human instinct and understanding is transcended by the divine realisation that the purpose of God is greater than first perceived. He has also reminded them to beware of the teachings of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Now he has taken them to the far north—two day's journey from the sea of Galilee and poses the question...

“Who do people say that the Son of Man is?”

The disciples' reply tells us a great deal about how Jesus was seen by the people. Not a gentle strolling teacher but one of the prophets—those fire-blazing ones, such as Elijah or Jeremiah, or John the Baptist.

Then he asks them, “But who do you say that I am?” Notice the link: ‘Son of Man’ and ‘I’; yes, he links the two. Many know Simon Peter's reply: “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” You're the One we've been waiting for, you're the One whom those prophets the people perceive you to be, foretold. The disciples had moved from thinking of Jesus as God's mouthpiece, to believing that he was the Messiah. That was dangerous, since that put him in a place of challenge not just to the Temple authorities but to the wider authorities. The disciples, as Tom Wright says in his commentary on this passage, are now moving up a notch from signing up to a prophetic movement to a royal challenge. One which would require courage and a sure foundation—Simon gets a new understanding of his name Peter: “...on this rock I will build my church.”

So, what is the consequence? Having made that declaration, having recognised that this Jesus is the Messiah, there's a journey to be made.

Peter wasn't perfect. Later in the story this same Peter was more like crumbling sand than a secure rock when he denied that he even knew who Jesus was, let alone that he was a follower. But once that acknowledgement has been made, if we are able to do so then we are encouraged to walk the journey with Jesus. I'm currently reading a novel, it's a light read, in which there is a thread of perseverance, a desire by the main character to see the affair that begins quite casually but becomes more and more complex, through to its conclusion.

Knowing that the Son of Man is indeed the Son of God who can sustain us through the trials of life. We too might begin our dalliance with faith in a casual manner but as we progress, the journey becomes more complex and deeper. But that is also the joy of faith and the security to help us through the challenges that the world throws at us.

Affirmation of Faith

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Intercessions

In the power of the Spirit let us pray to our heavenly Father.

We pray for the beautiful places of this earth, that we may look after them properly...

Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

We pray for the church and its role in society...

Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

We pray for the communities where we live...



Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

We pray for the people we know and for ourselves...

Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

🎵 **Hymn: Brother, Sister, Let Me Serve You**

**Brother, sister, let me serve you;
Let me be as Christ to you;
Pray that I may have the grace to
Let you be my servant too.**

**We are pilgrims on a journey,
And companions on the road;
We are here to help each other
Walk the mile and bear the load.**

**I will hold the Christ-light for you
In the night time of your fear;
I will hold my hand out to you,
Speak the peace you long to hear.**

**I will weep when you are weeping;
When you laugh, I'll laugh with you;
I will share your joy and sorrow,
'Till we've seen this journey through.**

**When we sing to God in heaven,
We shall find such harmony,
Born of all we've known together
Of Christ's love and agony.**

**Brother, sister, let me serve you;
Let me be as Christ to you;
Pray that I may have the grace to
Let you be my servant too.**

Preparation of the Table

Wise and gracious God,
you spread a table before us;
nourish your people with the word of life
and the bread of heaven. **Amen.**



Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, it is our duty and our joy, at all times and in all places to give you thanks and praise, holy Father, heavenly King, almighty and eternal God, through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.

For he is your living Word; through him you have created all things from the beginning, and formed us in your own image.

Through him you have freed us from the slavery of sin, giving him to be born of a woman and to die upon the cross; you raised him from the dead and exalted him to your right hand on high. Through him you have sent upon us your holy and life-giving Spirit, and made us a people for your own possession. Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we proclaim your great and glorious name, for ever praising you and saying:

**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.**

Accept our praises, heavenly Father, through your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, and as we follow his example and obey his command, grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit these gifts of bread and wine may be to us his body and his blood; who, in the same night that he was betrayed, took bread and gave you thanks; he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way, after supper he took the cup and gave you thanks; he gave it to them, saying: 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.

Therefore, heavenly Father, we remember his offering of himself made once for all upon the cross; we proclaim his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension; we look for the coming of your kingdom, and with this bread and this cup we make the memorial of Christ your Son our Lord. Great is the mystery of faith:

Christ has died: Christ is risen: Christ will come again.

Accept through him, our great high priest, this our sacrifice of thanks and praise, and as we eat and drink these holy gifts in the presence of your divine majesty, renew us by your Spirit, inspire us with your love and unite us in the body of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Through him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, with all who stand before you in earth and heaven, we worship you, Father almighty, in songs of everlasting praise:

Blessing and honour and glory and power be yours for ever and ever. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**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 the bread of life,
and that life is the light of the world

Our Lord comes to us in bread and wine.

They are the gifts of God for the people of God.



♪ Hymn: Lord, For the Years

**Lord, for the years
Your love has kept and guided,
Urged and inspired us,
Cheered us on our way,
Sought us and saved us,
Pardoned and provided:
Lord of the years,
We bring our thanks today.**

**Lord, for that word,
The word of life which fires us,
Speaks to our hearts
And sets our souls ablaze,
Teaches and trains,
Rebukes us and inspires us:
Lord of the word,
Receive your people's praise.**

**Lord, for our land
In this our generation,
Spirits oppressed by
Pleasure, wealth and care:
For young and old,
For commonwealth and nation,
Lord of our land,
Be pleased to hear our prayer.**

**Lord, for our world
When we disown and doubt him,
Loveless in strength,
And comfortless in pain,
Hungry and helpless,
Lost indeed without him:
Lord of the world,
We pray that Christ may reign.**

**Lord for ourselves;
In living power remake us:
Self on the cross
And Christ upon the throne,
Past put behind us,
For the future take us:
Lord of our lives,
To live for Christ alone.**

The Blessing

The peace of God which passes all our understanding keep our hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be amongst you and remain with you, and those whom you love, now and always. **Amen.**

Dismissal

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ. Amen.

