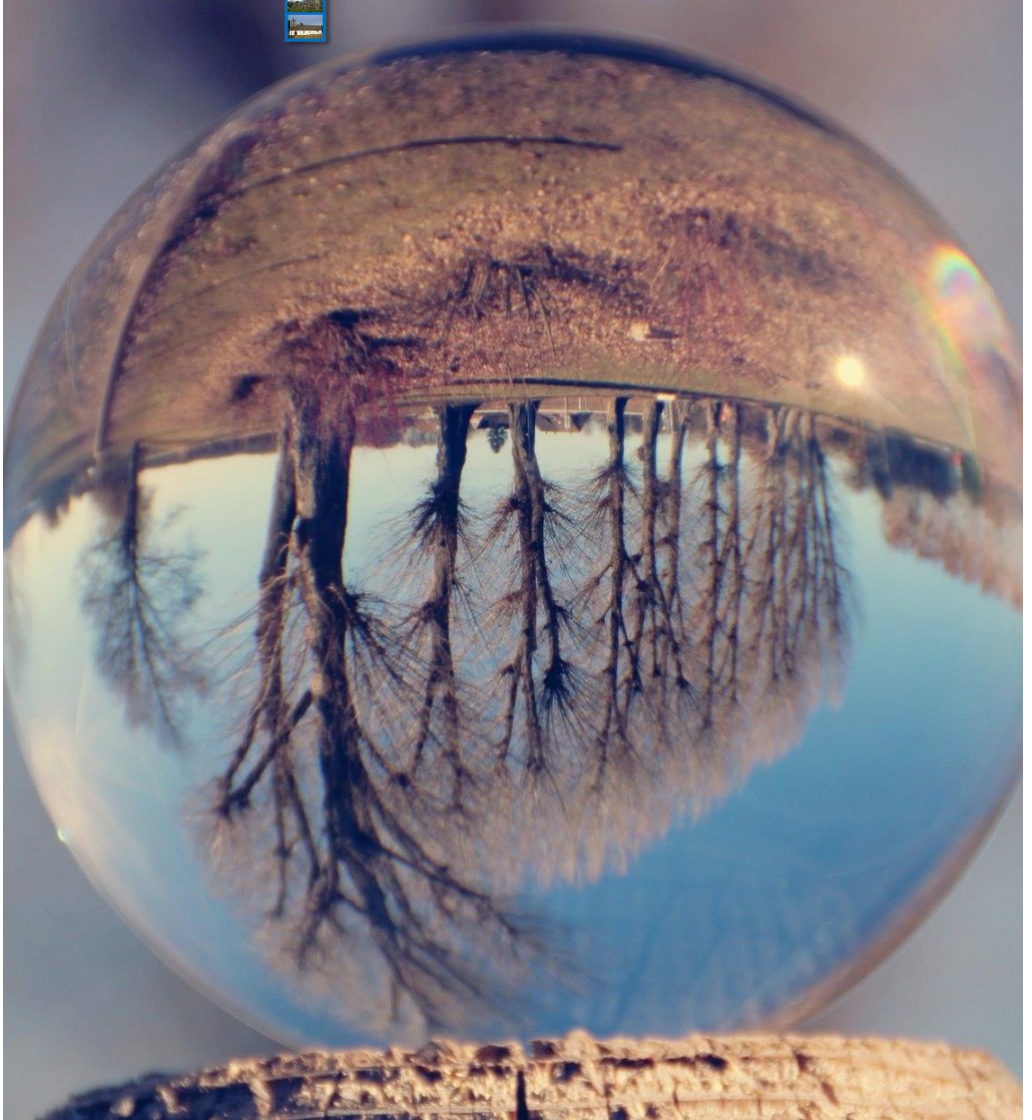




Chet Valley Churches



Holy Communion

Eleventh Sunday of Trinity

28th August 2022

The Greeting and Welcome

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**
The Lord be with you, **and also with you.**

♪ **Hymn:** *At the Name of Jesus*

**At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow,
Every tongue confess him king of glory now.
'Tis the Father's pleasure we should call him Lord,
Who from the beginning was the mighty Word.**

**Humbled for a season, to receive a name
From the lips of sinners unto whom he came.
Faithfully he bore it spotless to the last,
Brought it back victorious, when from death he passed.**

**Bore it up triumphant with its human light,
Through all ranks of creatures, to the central height;
To the throne of Godhead, to the Father's breast;
Filled it with the glory, of that perfect rest.**

**Surely, this Lord Jesus shall return again,
With his Father's glory, with his angel train.
For all wreaths of empire meet upon his brow,
And our hearts confess him king of glory now.**

🙏 The Prayers of Penitence

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.
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 neighbours 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.**



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

Gloria in Excelsis

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—Prayer of the Day

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.**

The Liturgy of the Word

Old Testament Reading: *Proverbs 25:6-7*

Do not put yourself forward in the king's presence or stand in the place of the great; for it is better to be told, 'Come up here', than to be put lower in the presence of a noble.

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

New Testament Reading: *Hebrews 13:1-8; 15-16*

Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it. Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them; those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured. Let marriage be held in honour by all, and let the marriage bed be kept undefiled; for God will judge fornicators and adulterers. Keep your lives free from the love of money, and be content with what you have; for he has said, 'I will never leave you or forsake you.' So we can say with confidence,

‘The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can anyone do to me?’

Remember your leaders, those who spoke the word of God to you; consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and for ever.

Through him, then, let us continually offer a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that confess his name. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

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

♪ **Hymn: *Teach Me, My God and King***

**Teach me, my God and King, in all things thee to see;
And what I do in anything to do it as for thee!**

**A man that looks on glass, on it may stay his eye;
Or if he pleaseth, through it pass, and then the heaven espy.**

**All may of thee partake; nothing can be so mean,
Which, with this tincture, ‘for thy sake’,
Will not grow bright and clean.**

**A servant with this clause makes drudgery divine;
Who sweeps a room, as for thy laws,
Makes that and the action fine.**

**This is the famous stone that turneth all to gold;
For that which God doth touch and own cannot for less be told.**

📖 **Gospel Reading *Luke 14:1; 7-14 [John]***

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.
Glory to you, O Lord.

On one occasion when Jesus was going to the house of a leader of the Pharisees to eat a meal on the sabbath, they were watching him closely.

When he noticed how the guests chose the places of honour, he told them a parable. ‘When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, do not sit down at the place of honour, in case someone more distinguished than you has been invited by your host; and the host who invited both of you may come and say to you, “Give this person your place”, and then in disgrace you would start to take the lowest place. But when you are invited, go and sit down at the lowest place, so that when your



host comes, he may say to you, “Friend, move up higher”; then you will be honoured in the presence of all who sit at the table with you. For all who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.

He said also to the one who had invited him, “When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbours, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.’

This is the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

I had the joy of going to a wedding celebration just a couple of weekends ago now. It was a glorious multicultural day with Nigerian tradition and custom in the morning and English tradition and custom in the afternoon, which I led. Full of faith throughout the day expressed exuberantly in the morning and more formally, but no less sincerely, in the afternoon.

And then the wedding breakfast...

I wonder what would have happened if I had gone to sit at the top table. After all, I am the aunt of the groom and the person who led the afternoon ceremony. Surely that would have been OK?

Well, of course, it wouldn't have been OK and I would have been politely shown where to sit by the wedding co-ordinator. There was a table plan!

Obviously, Jesus knew wedding etiquette. His first miracle had been conducted at a wedding and his actions there meant that the host was not embarrassed by the wine running out. So what are the rules? At Palestinian wedding feasts, the male guests recline on couches with the central couches being the place of honour reserved for those with wealth, power or office. If a more prominent man arrives late, as is often the case, someone of lesser rank is asked to move to a less prestigious location, potentially embarrassing them in front of other guests. Perhaps Jesus is just offering sound advice in this passage of Luke: choose the lowest place at the feast so that you can be invited up.

I don't think so!

Jesus's parables were rarely, if ever, that obvious and simple. They are always about the same thing: the kingdom of God. He told parables to make people think. So there must be more.

How about if we think of the feast as being akin to God's Kingdom, which we are invited to join: an example of the overflowing and generous hospitality of God,

welcoming all in his love. Maybe those who think that they deserve to be on the top table will find that they are asked to move down. Maybe those who are poor, humble and of lowly birth will find themselves being led to the top table. Maybe those who think of themselves as worthy—the lawyers, the leaders, the rich and powerful—will find a different rule in place in God’s Kingdom. A somewhat topsy turvy place.

Jesus is often found to be with the ‘wrong’ people: prostitutes, tax collectors, the poor, the sick and lame, those possessed and regarded as mad, people who aren’t even Jews, Samaritans for heavens sake. Treating them with honour, re-habilitating them into community, caring for them, healing them, loving them.

Just think of the blessings that Jesus taught:

‘Blessed are you who are poor,
‘Blessed are you who are hungry now,
‘Blessed are you who weep now,
‘Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you,
revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man.

And the woes:

‘But woe to you who are rich,
‘Woe to you who are full now,
‘Woe to you who are laughing now,
‘Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is what their ancestors did
to the false prophets.

These are not the rules that were enacted in first century Palestine under either Roman or Jewish law. Those on the margins struggled to get by, but they were also the people with whom Jesus associated, who Jesus loved.

And remember Mary’s wonderful outburst of praise—what we call the Magnificat:

He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud
in the thoughts of their hearts.
He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,
and lifted up the lowly;
he has filled the hungry with good things,
and sent the rich away empty.



Again this doesn’t sound like the rules in first century Palestine; but they are God’s rules. In the kingdom of God, those with the least will be lovingly welcomed and invited in; blessed richly and generously even when they feel they don’t deserve it.

It got me thinking...

How often in our behaviour do we put ourselves first and put others down?

How often do we exclude people rather than welcoming them?

How often do we fail to bless those who most need it?

None of us are worthy of God's extraordinary generosity and there's nothing that we can do to deserve it; Jesus has already gone before us to prepare the way into God's Kingdom.

I'm going to finish with a poem. It was written by George Herbert in the time of James I. He was a brilliant man who became Public Orator at Cambridge University, a Member of Parliament and seemed destined for a career amongst the great and the good of the land.

Instead, he gave up his chance to sit at the top table to become the vicar of a small country parish, where he served for the rest of his life. His poetry was published after his death and he was recognised as one of the greatest of English-language poets.

Love bade me welcome. Yet my soul drew back,
guilty of dust and sin.
But quick-eyed Love, observing me grow slack
from my first entrance in,
drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning, if I lacked any thing.

'A guest,' I answered, 'worthy to be here.'
Love said, 'you shall be he.'
'I, the unkind, ungrateful? Ah my dear,
I cannot look on thee.'
Love took my hand, and smiling did reply,
'Who made the eyes but I?'

'Truth Lord, but I have marred them: let my shame
go where it doth deserve.'
'And know you not,' says Love, 'who bore the blame?'
'My dear, then I will serve.'
'You must sit down,' says Love, 'and taste my meat':
So I did sit and eat.

The Confession of Faith

Let us affirm our faith in Jesus Christ the Son of God.

**Though he was divine, he did not cling to equality with God,
but made himself nothing.**

Taking the form of a slave, he was born in human likeness.

**He humbled himself and was obedient to death,
even the death of the cross.**

**Therefore God has raised him on high,
and given him the name above every name:
that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
and every voice proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession

Strengthen your Church in the assurance of Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and for ever. May she continually offer through him, the sacrifice of praise. Hold your people in mutual love of the fellowship but always ready to receive and welcome strangers.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Come with power into the world where so many live in suspicion and distrust of each other. Heal the old hostilities that still divide races and nations. Come to those who are proud in their power or wealth, to show them that all things are from you alone.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Bless us in our families with the grace of hospitality. Keep us always open to those who call upon us for help, whoever they may be. Give us goodwill towards all our neighbours.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Have mercy on those who are deprived and rejected through poverty or disability. Help all who are working towards a more just society.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We give thanks for those who have died secure in the faith of Christ. We pray too for those whose hearts were closed to him in this world, that they may receive mercy at the last.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

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

The Peace

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts,
since as members of one body you are called to peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you, **and also with you.**

♪ **Offertory Hymn:** *Let us Build a House*

**Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can safely live,
A place where saints and children tell how hearts learn to forgive.
Built of hopes and dreams and visions, rock of faith and vault of grace;
Here the love of Christ shall end divisions;
All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.**

**Let us build a house where prophets speak,
And words are strong and true,
Where all God's children dare to seek to dream God's reign anew.
Here the cross shall stand as witness and a symbol of God's grace;
Here as one we claim the faith of Jesus:
All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.**

**Let us build a house where love is found in water, wine and wheat:
A banquet hall on holy ground, where peace and justice meet.
Here the love of God, through Jesus, is revealed in time and space;
As we share in Christ the feast that frees us:
All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.**

**Let us build a house where hands will reach beyond the wood and stone
To heal and strengthen, serve and teach,
And live the Word they've known.
Here the outcast and the stranger bear the image of God's face;
Let us bring an end to fear and danger.
All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.**

**Let us build a house where all are named, their songs and visions heard
And loved and treasured, taught and claimed
As words within the Word.
Built of tears and cries and laughter, prayers of faith and songs of grace,
Let this house proclaim from floor to rafter.
All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.**

Yours, Lord, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the splendour, and the
majesty; for everything in heaven and on earth is yours.

All things come from you, and of your own do we give you.

The Eucharistic Prayer



The Lord is here. **His Spirit is with us.**

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.

Almighty God, good Father to us all, your face is turned towards your world. In love you gave us Jesus your Son to rescue us from sin and death. Your Word goes out to call us home to the city where angels sing your praise. We join with them in heaven's song:

**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.**

Father of all, we give you thanks for every gift that comes from heaven. To the darkness Jesus came as your light. With signs of faith and words of hope he touched untouchables with love and washed the guilty clean.

This is his story. **This is our song: Hosanna in the highest.**

The crowds came out to see your Son, yet at the end they turned on him. On the night he was betrayed he came to table with his friends to celebrate the freedom of your people.

This is his story. **This is our song: Hosanna in the highest.**

Jesus blessed you, Father, for the food; he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and said: This is my body, given for you all. Jesus then gave thanks for the wine; he took the cup, gave it and said: This is my blood, shed for you all for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in remembrance of me.

This is our story. **This is our song: Hosanna in the highest.**

Therefore, Father, with this bread and this cup we celebrate the cross on which he died to set us free. Defying death he rose again and is alive with you to plead for us and all the world.

This is our story. **This is our song: Hosanna in the highest.**

Send your Spirit on us now that by these gifts we may feed on Christ with opened eyes and hearts on fire. May we and all who share this food

offer ourselves to live for you and be welcomed at your feast in heaven where all creation worships you, Father, Son and Holy Spirit:

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

The Lord's Prayer

**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.**

The Breaking of the Bread

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.
**Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.**



At table with our LORD

Agnus Dei

**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.**

The Giving of Communion

Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.
Blessèd are those who are called to his supper.

**Lord, I am not worthy to receive you
but only say the word and I shall be healed.**

The president and people receive communion.



Prayer after Communion

Lord of all mercy, we your faithful people have celebrated that one true sacrifice which takes away our sins and brings pardon and peace: by our communion keep us firm on the foundation of the gospel and preserve us from all sin; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

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.

Hymn: *Tell Out My Soul*

**Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord!
Unnumbered blessings give my spirit voice;
Tender to me the promise of his word;
In God my saviour shall my heart rejoice.**

**Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his name!
Make known his might, the deeds his arm has done;
His mercy sure, from age to age the same;
His holy name, the Lord, the mighty one.**

**Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his might!
Powers and dominions lay their glory by;
Proud hearts and stubborn wills are put to flight,
The hungry fed, the humble lifted high.**

**Tell out, my soul, the glories of his word!
Firm is his promise, and his mercy sure.
Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord
To children's children and forever more!**

The Blessing

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 almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Go in the peace of Christ. **Thanks be to God.**