



The Eleventh Sunday after Trinity: 15th August

Father God, help us to come to you this morning with open and thankful hearts. Fill us with the joy and peace that comes with knowing you. Be with us as we walk in your light, rejoice in your love and reflect your glory.

Amen

Hymn 305: Lord of the dance

Welcome

The Lord be with you,
and also with you

Prayer of Preparation

**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**

Prayer of Confession

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." 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.

Amen. Lord, have mercy.

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.

**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

Lord have mercy
Lord have mercy
Christ have mercy
Christ have mercy
Lord have mercy
Lord have mercy

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. **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.

Collect for today:

O God, you declare your almighty power most chiefly in showing mercy and pity: mercifully grant to us such a measure of your grace, that we, running the way of your commandments, may receive your gracious promises, and be made partakers of your heavenly treasure; 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.

Amen

Old Testament Reading: 1 Kings 19: 4 - 8

4 But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a solitary broom tree. He asked that he might die: 'It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life, for I am no better than my ancestors.' ⁵Then he lay down under the broom tree and fell asleep. Suddenly an angel touched him and said to him, 'Get up and eat.' ⁶He looked, and there at his head was a cake

baked on hot stones, and a jar of water. He ate and drank, and lay down again. ⁷The angel of the LORD came a second time, touched him, and said, 'Get up and eat, otherwise the journey will be too much for you.' ⁸He got up, and ate and drank; then he went in the strength of that food for forty days and forty nights to Horeb the mount of God.

Hymn 161: Father hear the prayer we offer

Gospel Reading: *John 6: 35, 41 - 51*

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John

Glory to you, O Lord

³⁵ Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

⁴¹ Then the Jews began to complain about him because he said, 'I am the bread that came down from heaven.' ⁴²They were saying, 'Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, "I have come down from heaven"?' ⁴³Jesus answered them, 'Do not complain among yourselves. ⁴⁴No one can come to me unless drawn by the Father who sent me; and I will raise that person up on the last day. ⁴⁵It is written in the prophets, "And they shall all be taught by God." Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me. ⁴⁶Not that anyone has seen the Father except the one who is from God; he has seen the Father. ⁴⁷Very truly, I tell you, whoever believes has eternal life. ⁴⁸I am the bread of life. ⁴⁹Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. ⁵⁰This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. ⁵¹I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live for ever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ

Sermon:

I wonder whether anyone here has ever been in a desert? What was it like?

A few years ago I was lucky enough to go to the United States with my family, and one of the places we visited was the Joshua Tree National Park so named after the strange shaped trees which reminded the early settlers to the area of the story in which Joshua keeps his hands reached out for an extended period of time to enable the Israelites in their conquest of Canaan. These strangely shaped trees grow in this area where two deserts meet - Mojave and Colorado deserts. When we visited it was hot and the ground was stony, not sandy as we often think deserts are like. But what I was most struck by was the silence – apart from the wind blowing across the arid landscape you couldn't hear anything.

For centuries deserts have been places where people have retreated to. Back in the third century St Anthony, a Christian monk from Egypt, was one of the first people to go into the wilderness in Egypt to live, and many people, both men and women followed him there. These early desert mothers and fathers spent time in the desert alone in their cells or room, which might have sometimes been a cave. And here in the silence they discovered things about themselves and about their relationship with God. They were considered to be very wise, and people went out into

the desert to seek their advice and to learn from them. Deserts are places where we are challenged, after all Jesus himself faced temptation in the desert - sometimes we have to face the things about ourselves that we would rather forget, we learn things in the difficult challenging environments of the desert.

And it is out in the desert or wilderness that we meet Elijah in our Old Testament reading this morning. With God's help, Elijah had won a battle against the priests of Baal. But Jezebel, King Ahab's wife who had already ordered the death of God's prophets, or messengers, had heard about Elijah's victory and she was angry, really angry. So angry that she had sent threats to Elijah. Poor Elijah was definitely not in a good place, he was tired, burnt out and depressed, and having heard the threats of Jezebel, he felt like just giving up and went into the desert. Elijah was in need. And just as God had provided food and water for Moses and the people in the Wilderness as we heard in our reading last week if you were here, God provided water and food for Elijah, in this case hot cakes and a jar of water. God provided for Elijah in a miraculous way, not once but twice to give him enough strength to continue on his long journey to Mount Horeb. And if you carry on reading this story you will read that it is on Mount Horeb that Elijah hears the voice of God, not in the wind, or the earthquake, or the fire, but in the sheer silence.

I wonder how you are feeling this morning? There are times when we are unhappy. Sometimes we are really tired and exhausted. These are human emotions, and it is OK to feel like that, but don't forget that it is important to tell our family, friends or teachers if we are not happy because they can help us. But Elijah was unhappy, really unhappy. Even though things had gone well, the threats that Jezebel had made against him frightened him and he feared for his life. So, he went into the wilderness, he took some time out, and there, God provided life for Elijah. Elijah met with God in the most wonderful way.

We all need to take some time out, whether or not we are feeling happy or unhappy. We are doing that this morning as we gather together in church or online, we remember that we gather in God's presence and we meet with God, as we read the Bible, in bread and wine. But we also need to take some time out from the business of our lives each day and we many of us are really busy these days aren't we? We need to take some time out so that we can meet with God like Elijah in the stillness and the silence. We can do that in different ways, we don't have to travel for miles to find a desert, we can go into our gardens or take a walk to the park, we can sit quietly in our bedroom, we can even just spend a moment when we are cleaning our teeth to remember that God is with us. God is always with us however we are feeling, in the good times and the difficult ones. So, this week let's try to take some time out each day, to be still and in the silence to remember God's presence with us.

Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made,

of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayers

The Peace:

Take a moment and offer a prayer of thanksgiving to God for each other and our church family church community. Maybe call or text someone who would enjoy sharing the peace with you.

May the God of peace make you perfect and holy, that you may be kept safe and blameless in spirit, soul and body, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

Hymn 437: Make me a channel

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.**

Hymn 483: O for a closer walk with God

Remembering the Lord's Supper:

Take a moment to remember the final meal that Jesus shared with his disciples. As we think about

this meal - with the washing of feet and bread and wine shared with friends - we remember Jesus' offering of himself on the cross. We rejoice in his resurrection from the dead and look forward to the coming of God's Kingdom. While we cannot receive Christ in the sacraments in the usual way, we can be the presence of Christ in our homes and communities and we can be a praying presence wherever we are.

Hymn 565: Praise my soul the king of heaven

Closing Prayer:

Lord God, we thank you for this time of worship; may your love and peace remain with us in the coming days. Be with us in all that we will think, say and do so that our lives may reflect your glory. We ask this in the name of your Son Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

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