



## All Saints Day Sunday 31<sup>st</sup>October

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 177: For all the Saints

#### 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:**

God of glory, touch our lips with the fire of your Spirit, that we with all creation may rejoice to sing your praise; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

## **Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 55: 1 - 11**

Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you that have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

<sup>2</sup> Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which does not satisfy? Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food.

<sup>3</sup> Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live.

I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David.

<sup>4</sup> See, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples.

<sup>5</sup> See, you shall call nations that you do not know, and nations that do not know you shall run to you, because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you.

<sup>6</sup>Seek the LORD while he may be found, call upon him while he is near;  
<sup>7</sup> let the wicked forsake their way, and the unrighteous their thoughts; let them return to the LORD, that he may have mercy on them, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.  
<sup>8</sup> For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD.  
<sup>9</sup> For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

<sup>10</sup> For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there until they have watered the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,

<sup>11</sup> so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

## Hymn 590: Seek ye first

### Gospel Reading: *John 5: 36b - end*

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke

#### **Glory to you, O Lord**

<sup>36</sup>But I have a testimony greater than John's. The works that the Father has given me to complete, the very works that I am doing, testify on my behalf that the Father has sent me. <sup>37</sup>And the Father who sent me has himself testified on my behalf. You have never heard his voice or seen his form, <sup>38</sup>and you do not have his word abiding in you, because you do not believe him whom he has sent.

<sup>39</sup> 'You search the scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that testify on my behalf. <sup>40</sup>Yet you refuse to come to me to have life. <sup>41</sup>I do not accept glory from human beings. <sup>42</sup>But I know that you do not have the love of God in you. <sup>43</sup>I have come in my Father's name, and you do not accept me; if another comes in his own name, you will accept him. <sup>44</sup>How can you believe when you accept glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the one who alone is God? <sup>45</sup>Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; your accuser is Moses, on whom you have set your hope. <sup>46</sup>If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me. <sup>47</sup>But if you do not believe what he wrote, how will you believe what I say?

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

#### **Praise to you, O Christ**

### Sermon: Kathryn Bible Sunday 2021

Over the last 18 months or so, we have not been able to attend many of the celebrations that we might normally have done in the ordinary course of events, weddings, baptisms, anniversary and birthday parties. Consequently, we have not received many invitations – the thick envelopes containing a beautiful card, sometimes handmade, sometimes with wonderful calligraphy – invitations that are often placed in prominent positions in our homes on the mantelpiece or a shelf.

Today's Old Testament reading begins with an invitation, an invitation to all who are thirsty to come to the water.

It was an invitation that was first given to the Israelites in exile in Babylon, a city which straddled the mighty river Euphrates. It is now thought that unlike the first 39 chapters of Isaiah which were written in the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC during the reign of King Ahaz to the people in Jerusalem, chapters 40-55 of Isaiah were written some 150 years later. Given the time gap these cannot have been written by the same person but by someone who came from the 'school of Isaiah' or wrote down God's words in similar ways, but to people in a very different situation.

For the people were now living in chaotic and difficult circumstances after having spent almost 70 years in exile in a foreign land, in Babylon. Their world had been turned upside down and the centre of worship, the temple in Jerusalem had been destroyed. They were torn between turning to the Gods and idols of their new home ignoring their former lives and holding onto their former traditions but being prepared to change. Sounds familiar? The writings of 'second Isaiah' of which this passage is the culmination are an encouragement to the people to look to God the creator of the universe, to see beyond their current situation to a time when there would once again be restoration of their worshipping community of faith.

This invitation to come to the water is one that is for all people, to all who are thirsty, to all who want more from life than just emptiness, to all who want meaning and love in their lives. It is an invitation to people who thirst for justice in their own lives and in those around them. It includes those who have no money, not just the financial poor but also the outsider, those who feel they have been forgotten by the world. It is also an invitation to those who labour, to people who work. Isaiah is very aware of the people and their daily lives. People who work day in and day out for very little reward, who are struggling to make ends meet. The invitation is for all of us to come, to come to the waters and to experience life in all its fulness.

The invitation that Isaiah is extending to the people is to come and to listen to God who Isaiah reports as saying 'I will make an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David.' For the Jews living in exile this phrase would really have resonated. They would have been very familiar with the creation story, one that we have thought about in the weeks leading up to and including harvest. A story in which God made a beautiful world and in it a beautiful garden – a place for people to live, work and to worship God. A place where a river flowed, bringing life to all. But before very long we see humans rebelling and turning away from God. Humans doing their own thing and causing a breakdown in the relationship between God and humankind.

But God never gives up. Throughout the story of salvation in the Bible, God continues to rescue and meet the people's needs. And quite often these take place by water or involve water. God provides at wells, for example Jacob, through springs in the desert, think of Hagar fleeing from Abraham, or at oases in the wilderness, as God did for the Israelites following the Exodus out of Egypt. And Jesus, the word made flesh, also provides and ministers by water, just think of him teaching the crowds by the Sea of Galilee, the miracle of turning water into wine and his interaction with the Samaritan Woman by the Well. I'm sure you can think of many more.

These stories are a reminder that God is faithful and committed to his people throughout history. God's covenant or promise is that however we behave God will never forsake us. God loves us and will continue to love us. To a people in exile the message is one not to give up, to not stop believing and to never forget that God's love and promises are eternal

And that message, God's word contained within the pages of the Bible is one that many people in the world desperately need to hear. People who are searching for meaning, people who are thirsting for life.

There are a number of organisations around the world that are ensuring that God's life-giving word is heard. One of these organisations, the Bible Society is currently working in more than 200 countries and regions of the world, translating the Bible, updating versions of the Bible and delivering the Bible to those who are thirsty to read God's message. This includes working in dangerous and challenging places including Southern Africa, the Middle East and China where more than 1 million people are becoming Christians each year.

God's word continues to transform lives, bringing life giving water to those who thirst. I am fortunate enough to have a small collection of Bibles, different versions that I have been given and bought over the years and it is all too easy to forget just how amazing it is to have a Bible in our own language. And not just one translation but different ones which we are able to compare and from which we learn. We should not underestimate the gift of a Bible to others

Today we give thanks for all those who translate the Bible and ensure that it is distributed around the world so that all people have access to God's live giving word. And we give thanks for God's life-giving word in our lives. And having come to the water and received from God, we need to be prepared to share the good news of God with those around us, to extend God's invitation to all who are thirsty.

## **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 686: Through all the changing scenes**

### **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 608: Songs of praise**

## 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 758: Ye watchers and ye Holy ones

### 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**