



Thursday 24th September Holy Communion

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

Prayers 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 us, pardon and deliver us from all our sins, confirm and strengthen us in all goodness, and keep us 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.

Collect

God, who in generous mercy sent the Holy Spirit upon your Church in the burning fire of your love: grant that your people may be fervent in the fellowship of the gospel that, always abiding in you, they may be found steadfast in faith and active in service; 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: *Ecclesiastes 1:2-11*

“Meaningless! Meaningless!” says the Teacher. “Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless.” What do people gain from all their labors at which they toil under the sun? Generations come and generations go, but the earth remains forever. The sun rises and the sun sets, and hurries back to where it rises. The wind blows to the south and turns to the north; round and round it goes, ever returning on its course. All streams flow into the sea, yet the sea is never full. To the place the streams come from, there they return again. All things are wearisome, more than one can say. The eye never has enough of seeing, nor the ear its fill of hearing. What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun. Is there anything of which one can say, “Look! This is something new”? It was here already, long ago; it was here before our time. No one remembers the former generations, and even those yet to come will not be remembered by those who follow them.

This is the word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Gospel Reading: *Luke 9:7-9*

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke

Glory to you, O Lord

Now Herod the tetrarch heard about all that was going on. And he was perplexed because some were saying that John had been raised from the dead, others that Elijah had appeared, and still others that one of the prophets of long ago had come back to life. But Herod said, "I beheaded John. Who, then, is this I hear such things about?" And he tried to see him.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ

Sermon: Rev'd Petra Shakeshaft

This Gospel reading is a very odd little passage.

It might seem that it's just a story-teller's device to point towards something that will happen later; something to increase the tension, if you like,

which, of course, it is, but also, if we look more carefully, it's much more.

The previous chapters describe the build-up of Jesus's ministry; there are teachings, parables, healings, the gathering together of a community of followers and the sending out of the first disciples.

Herod gets to hear about this.

Herod has his ear to the ground, because Herod lives a life of fear.

He's terrified of anything or anyone that might upset the balance of power – his power.

Herod is part of a dysfunctional, murderous, cruel dynasty and he spends a lot of energy watching his back.

Remember it's *his* father, at the beginning of this Gospel of Luke who massacres the innocent children of Bethlehem to protect his own kingship; his earthly kingship.

John the Baptist dared to cross him and paid with his life

and now, this man; this Jesus, seems to be gathering a similar following.

Herod is perplexed.

This tiny passage, just two verses,

provides an unexpected break in a narrative about an alternative kind of power.

Jesus' power is not an earthly power that has to be grasped at and clung to.

Vanity of vanities, says the writer of Ecclesiastes.

What do people gain from all the toil

at which they toil under the sun?

A generation goes, and a generation comes,

but the earth remains for ever.

Earthly power is finite, fallible, as we are finite and fallible

Jesus' power is an alternative vision of power –

to heal and love and serve one another;

not to break and crush and oppress and destroy anything that gets in your way.

Herod doesn't understand that kind of alternative to earthly power;
he doesn't understand the kind of person who would want that kind of power
and yet, somehow, somewhere deep down, he senses a threat.

Herod is perplexed.

Herod wants to see Jesus for himself, to try to understand what kind of man he is
and he asks the fundamental question,

Who is this?

Who is this Jesus?

The question on which the whole of the Christian Gospel turns.

And the answer?

This is God – but this knowledge is beyond Herod.

These two verses provide a juxtaposition of the power that Herod has;
power that suppresses and oppresses,
and the tension under which he lives for fear of losing grip of that power (oh, vanity of vanities),
and Jesus whose power is not worldly, but world transforming.

This is the Creative Power of God.

The oppressive regime that Herod rules will be overturned.

The miraculous healings and preaching he hears about
are but moments in a whole project of liberation and renewal of God's people.

Jesus's healing extends beyond the individual body,
bringing about the healing and reordering of our relationship with God
and the healing and reordering of society.

In King's College Chapel the top section of the East Window bears an image of the Crucifixion.
Jesus hangs on a cross between the two thieves.

Below him is an image of, not Herod, but Pilate,
another tyrant clinging to power,
whose friendship with Herod was cemented over this barbaric execution.

Pilate washes his hands – there is some recognition that this is not right.

It's an image that serves as a warning, perhaps,
that earthly power is overthrown by something much more powerful,
commanding, mighty, gentle, loving, serving and utterly giving.

Those leaders in our own country and across the globe we see daily jockeying for position;
making decisions that benefit themselves and their friends,
doing whatever it takes to hang on to power, no matter how corrupt,
should take note.

*Vanity of vanities, ... The people of long ago are not remembered,
nor will there be any remembrance
of people yet to come by those who come after them.*

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

The peace of the Lord always be with you

And also with you.

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

The Eucharistic Prayer

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.

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:

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

Christ has died

Christ has 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. **Amen**

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.

Jesus, Lamb of God, have mercy on us.

Jesus, bearer of our sins, have mercy on us.

Jesus, redeemer 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.

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

Prayer after Communion

Keep, O Lord, your Church, with your perpetual mercy; and, because without you our human frailty cannot but fall, keep us ever by your help from all things hurtful, and lead us to all things profitable to our salvation; 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.

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 peace to love and serve the Lord

In the name of Christ. Amen

If you have any prayer or pastoral needs, please don't hesitate to contact
Revd Petra Shakeshaft (07847 307416)
or Sally Bard (01223 501165)