



## Thursday 8th October 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

Almighty God, you have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless till they find their rest in you: pour your love into our hearts and draw us to yourself, and so bring us at last to your heavenly city where we shall see you face to face; 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**

## New Testament Reading: Galatians 3:1-5

You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? Before your very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified. I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by believing what you heard? Are you so foolish? After beginning by means of the Spirit, are you now trying to finish by means of the flesh? Have you experienced so much in vain—if it really was in vain? So again I ask, does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you by the works of the law, or by your believing what you heard?

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## Gospel Reading: Luke 11:5-13

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke

**Glory to you, O Lord**

Then Jesus said to them, “Suppose you have a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have no food to offer him.’ And suppose the one inside answers, ‘Don’t bother me. The door is already locked, and my children and I are in bed. I can’t get up and give you anything.’ I tell you, even though he will not get up and give you the bread because of friendship, yet because of your shameless audacity he will surely get up and give you as much as you need.

“So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

“Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ**

## Sermon: Rosey Feuell

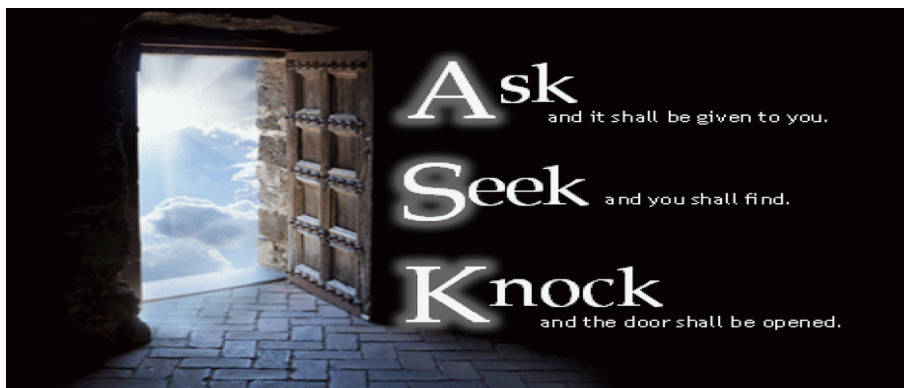
Luke Chapter 11 is not accidental: after the Lord's Prayer come two pieces on keeping up our prayer: the famous Friend at Midnight, and the often sung, paraphrased and echoed "Ask, knock, seek" reminders not to give up on prayer.



Perseverance was something you got a small badge for at my school, though it was far less coveted than glittering Speech Day prizes or, especially, the sports' victories and colours. It seemed a bit unglamorous, just "to try, try, try again, if at first you don't succeed", for girls who couldn't really win anything. That was to us the nineteenth century; in the 21<sup>st</sup> we want it fast, want it smart and gorgeous if we **do have to** go over something again – and often those truly persevering have discovered things people initially wish they hadn't. However, Jesus commends keeping on and on in the story of the reluctant friend: he will only express his love to you if you badger till he gets out of bed and helps you, just to shut you up. Human unpreparedness, repeated knocking, wins the friend over, not apparently the friend's affection. If the friend in bed is God, we might say He appears to need our persistence; our desperation, rather than His love, may unloose His goodness; then, only then, He offers loaves needed by the worried host, the unexpected hungry guest.

Perhaps that says something too: is he readier to give if our requests embrace someone else? Jesus follows this up, perplexing as it may be, with some plain speaking about explicit and continued asking, diligently searching, and deliberately knocking – or maybe **exploring** - trying the door instead of imagining it locked and lurking nearby. But our efforts are not the point; we are not promised all we want and more, necessarily, even if we ask and bang enough.

The key reminder is to consider **our nature**, and **especially the nature of God Who is willing to give to us**. As parents, we readily give children wholesome things: here, fish, egg – and, in another version, bread - not stones or scorpions. Our natural desire is to grow life in the child: tender, obvious - but how is this connected to prayer?



We now have one of Jesus' **great emphases**: **how much more** will the Father give .. **the best** of good things. That is the sense of it, the Holy Spirit being the very splendid best of all the Father's

treasury of good things – and of course it is the Spirit Who joins us to the Father and Jesus in the first place: “When we cry, ‘Abba! Father!’ it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God.” (*Romans 8: 15b & 16*).

I would say Jesus shows us we can have **confidence** our prayers will be dealt with effectively, lovingly... Speed is not mentioned, and some things I ask might take time anyhow e.g to bring someone to faith, clear up despair etc. And time is, I suggest, not what we easily give, and less so nowadays. We want instant outcomes, answers, leaps into another stage of life, whatever – or an outcome imposed rapidly on someone else, maybe something that would feel unloving and awful if dropped splat! on someone’s head. We might need more attention to what we are doing too, if **we ask to be changed**: “make me patient, Lord”. Again quick time is not what we are given, though a time of longer waiting, longer prayer effort, might bring in lasting change, since the Change-Maker, Life-Giver, is all good.

God is sometimes known as “God of the 59<sup>th</sup> minute” i.e. He may answer your prayer, come to comfort me, in almost the last minute of those 60, or 20, I have so reluctantly put aside for Him. People even say He may make us persist till the 62<sup>nd</sup> minute or so, answering us **after** we rise from prayer and head off out. Some of us wait longer than that, and there’s no magic formula. Everything here points back to these reminders of Jesus to persist in our prayer, with Him sensing the delights in our persistence, loving us in it, through it, beyond ... but He does not unfailingly show up larger than life when we expect, or make things happen our way. He gives no stones or scorpions. Nevertheless, a strange quietness may occur, a sense He is around somewhere, as we ask, knock, look... but, like the night heron, He may not come out just because we want to see Him... yet He also may...

I’d like to read a poem about this connection, likely but not guaranteed, by Ann Lewin. Her heron is a kingfisher, and, to her, prayer is like waiting for this unpredictable, beautiful bird to appear. Effort cannot command him, but persistence makes glimpses of his wonders likely:

Prayer is like watching for the  
Kingfisher. All you can do is  
Be where he is likely to appear, and  
Wait.  
Often, nothing much happens;  
There is space, silence and  
Expectancy.  
No visible sign, only the  
Knowledge that he’s been there,  
And may come again.  
Seeing or not seeing cease to matter,  
You have been prepared.  
But sometimes, when you’ve almost  
Stopped expecting it,  
A flash of brightness  
Gives encouragement.

I’d like to end with 2 minutes’ quiet where we offer to God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, our own prayer. How is His elusiveness meant? Might it underline how He is working for us over time?

Can I keep asking when I see Him, and when I don't? Try to connect with His patience, His loving and giving?

No visible sign, only the  
Knowledge that he's been there,  
And may come again.  
Seeing or not seeing cease to matter,  
You have been prepared.  
But sometimes, when you've almost  
Stopped expecting it,  
A flash of brightness  
Gives encouragement.

## **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**

Lord, we pray that your grace may always precede and follow us, and make us continually to be given to all good works; 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)