

17th July 2022

Fifth Sunday after Trinity

Almighty God,
send down upon your Church
the riches of your Spirit,
and kindle in all who minister the gospel
your countless gifts of grace;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Genesis 18:1-10

The Lord appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day. He looked up and saw three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent entrance to meet them, and bowed down to the ground. He said, 'My lord, if I find favour with you, do not pass by your servant. Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. Let me bring a little bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on—since you have come to your servant.' So they said, 'Do as you have said.' And Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah, and said, 'Make ready quickly three measures of choice flour, knead it, and make cakes.' Abraham ran to the herd, and took a calf, tender and good, and gave it to the servant, who hastened to prepare it. Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree while they ate.

They said to him, 'Where is your wife Sarah?' And he said, 'There, in the tent.' Then one said, 'I will surely return to you in due season, and your wife Sarah shall have a son.'

Colossians 1:15-28

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

And you who were once estranged and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his fleshly body through death, so as to present you holy and blameless and irreproachable before him—provided that you continue securely established and steadfast in the faith, without shifting from the hope promised by the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven. I, Paul, became a servant of this gospel.

I am now rejoicing in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am completing what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church. I became its servant according to God's commission that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, the mystery that has been hidden throughout the ages and generations but has now been revealed to his saints. To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. It is he whom we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone in all wisdom, so that we may present everyone mature in Christ.

Luke 10:38-end

Now as they went on their way, he entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to what he was saying. But Martha was distracted by her many tasks; so she came to him and asked, 'Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me.' But the Lord answered her, 'Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her.'

24th July 2022

Sixth Sunday after Trinity

Creator God,
you made us all in your image:
may we discern you in all that we see,
and serve you in all that we do;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Genesis 18:20-32

Then the Lord said, 'How great is the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah and how very grave their sin! I must go down and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry that has come to me; and if not, I will know.'

So the men turned from there, and went towards Sodom, while Abraham remained standing before the Lord. Then Abraham came near and said, 'Will you indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked? Suppose there are fifty righteous within the city; will you then sweep away the place and not forgive it for the fifty righteous who are in it? Far be it from you to do such a thing, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous fare as the wicked! Far be that from you! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?' And the Lord said, 'If I find at Sodom fifty righteous in the city, I will forgive the whole place for their sake.' Abraham answered, 'Let me take it upon myself to speak to the Lord, I who am but dust and ashes. Suppose five of the fifty righteous are lacking? Will you destroy the whole city for lack of five?' And he said, 'I will not destroy it if I find forty-five there.' Again he spoke to him, 'Suppose forty are found there.' He answered, 'For the sake of forty I will not do it.' Then he said, 'Oh do not let the Lord be angry if I speak.

Suppose thirty are found there.' He answered, 'I will not do it, if I find thirty there.' He said, 'Let me take it upon myself to speak to the Lord. Suppose twenty are found there.' He answered, 'For the sake of twenty I will not destroy it.' Then he said, 'Oh do not let the Lord be angry if I speak just once more. Suppose ten are found there.' He answered, 'For the sake of ten I will not destroy it.'

Colossians 2:6-15

As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the universe, and not according to Christ. For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have come to fullness in him, who is the head of every ruler and authority. In him also you were circumcised with a spiritual circumcision, by putting off the body of the flesh in the circumcision of Christ; when you were buried with him in baptism, you were also raised with him through faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead. And when you were dead in trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive together with him, when he forgave us all our trespasses, erasing the record that stood against us with its legal demands. He set this aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and made a public example of them, triumphing over them in it.

Luke 11:1-13

He was praying in a certain place, and after he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, 'Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.' He said to them, 'When you pray, say:

Father, hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come.

Give us each day our daily bread.

And forgive us our sins,

for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us.

And do not bring us to the time of trial.'

And he said to them, 'Suppose one of you has a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say to him, "Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; for a friend of mine has arrived, and I have nothing to set before him." And he answers from within, "Do not bother me; the door has already been locked, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything." I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, at least because of his persistence he will get up and give him whatever he needs.

'So I say to you, Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. Is there anyone among you who, if your child asks for a fish, will give a snake instead of a fish? Or if the child asks for an egg, will give a scorpion? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!'

31st July 2022

Seventh Sunday after Trinity

Generous God,
you give us gifts and make them grow:
though our faith is small as mustard seed,
make it grow to your glory
and the flourishing of your kingdom;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Ecclesiastes 1:2, 12-14; 2:18-23

Vanity of vanities, says the Teacher,
vanity of vanities! All is vanity.

I, the Teacher, when king over Israel in Jerusalem,
applied my mind to seek and to search out by wisdom
all that is done under heaven; it is an unhappy business
that God has given to human beings to be busy with. I
saw all the deeds that are done under the sun; and
see, all is vanity and a chasing after wind.

I hated all my toil in which I had toiled under the sun,
seeing that I must leave it to those who come after me
—and who knows whether they will be wise or foolish?
Yet they will be master of all for which I toiled and used
my wisdom under the sun. This also is vanity. So I
turned and gave my heart up to despair concerning all
the toil of my labours under the sun, because
sometimes one who has toiled with wisdom and
knowledge and skill must leave all to be enjoyed by
another who did not toil for it. This also is vanity and a
great evil. What do mortals get from all the toil and
strain with which they toil under the sun? For all their
days are full of pain, and their work is a vexation; even
at night their minds do not rest. This also is vanity.

Colossians 3:1-11

So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things
that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right
hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above,
not on things that are on earth, for you have died, and
your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who
is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed
with him in glory.

Put to death, therefore, whatever in you is earthly:
fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed
(which is idolatry). On account of these the wrath of
God is coming on those who are disobedient. These
are the ways you also once followed, when you were
living that life. But now you must get rid of all such
things—anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive
language from your mouth. Do not lie to one another,
seeing that you have stripped off the old self with its
practices and have clothed yourselves with the new
self, which is being renewed in knowledge according
to the image of its creator. In that renewal there is no
longer Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised,
barbarian, Scythian, slave and free; but Christ is all and
in all!

Luke 12:13-21

Someone in the crowd said to him, ‘Teacher, tell my
brother to divide the family inheritance with me.’ But
he said to him, ‘Friend, who set me to be a judge or
arbitrator over you?’ And he said to them, ‘Take care!
Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one’s
life does not consist in the abundance of possessions.’
Then he told them a parable: ‘The land of a rich man
produced abundantly. And he thought to himself,
“What should I do, for I have no place to store my
crops?” Then he said, “I will do this: I will pull down
my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store
all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul,
Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years;
relax, eat, drink, be merry.” But God said to him, “You
fool! This very night your life is being demanded of
you. And the things you have prepared, whose will
they be?” So it is with those who store up treasures
for themselves but are not rich towards God.’

7th August 2022

Eighth Sunday after Trinity

Lord God,
your Son left the riches of heaven
and became poor for our sake:
when we prosper save us from pride,
when we are needy save us from despair,
that we may trust in you alone;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Genesis 15:1-6

After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, 'Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great.' But Abram said, 'O Lord God, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?' And Abram said, 'You have given me no offspring, and so a slave born in my house is to be my heir.' But the word of the Lord came to him, 'This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir.' He brought him outside and said, 'Look towards heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them.' Then he said to him, 'So shall your descendants be.' And he believed the Lord; and the Lord reckoned it to him as righteousness.

Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. Indeed, by faith our ancestors received approval. By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible.

By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to set out for a place that he was to receive as an inheritance; and he set out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he stayed for a time in the land he had been promised, as in a foreign land, living in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God. By faith he received power of procreation, even though he was too old—and Sarah herself was barren—because he considered him faithful who had promised. Therefore from one person, and this one as good as dead, descendants were born, 'as many as the stars of heaven and as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore.'

All of these died in faith without having received the promises, but from a distance they saw and greeted them. They confessed that they were strangers and foreigners on the earth, for people who speak in this way make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. If they had been thinking of the land that they had left behind, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; indeed, he has prepared a city for them.

Luke 12:32-40

'Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions, and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

'Be dressed for action and have your lamps lit; be like those who are waiting for their master to return from the wedding banquet, so that they may open the door for him as soon as he comes and knocks. Blessed are those slaves whom the master finds alert when he comes; truly I tell you, he will fasten his belt and have them sit down to eat, and he will come and serve them. If he comes during the middle of the night, or near dawn, and finds them so, blessed are those slaves.

'But know this: if the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.'

14th August 2022

Ninth Sunday after Trinity

Gracious Father,
revive your Church in our day,
and make her holy, strong and faithful,
for your glory's sake
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Jeremiah 23:23-29

Am I a God near by, says the Lord, and not a God far off? Who can hide in secret places so that I cannot see them? says the Lord. Do I not fill heaven and earth? says the Lord. I have heard what the prophets have said who prophesy lies in my name, saying, 'I have dreamed, I have dreamed!' How long? Will the hearts of the prophets ever turn back—those who prophesy lies, and who prophesy the deceit of their own heart? They plan to make my people forget my name by their dreams that they tell one another, just as their ancestors forgot my name for Baal. Let the prophet who has a dream tell the dream, but let the one who has my word speak my word faithfully. What has straw in common with wheat? says the Lord. Is not my word like fire, says the Lord, and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?

Hebrews 11:29-12:2

By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as if it were dry land, but when the Egyptians attempted to do so they were drowned. By faith the walls of Jericho fell after they had been encircled for seven days. By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had received the spies in peace.

And what more should I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets— who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Others were tortured, refusing to accept release, in order to obtain a better resurrection. Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned to death, they were sawn in two, they were killed by the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, persecuted, tormented— of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground.

Yet all these, though they were commended for their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had provided something better so that they would not, without us, be made perfect.

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for

the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

Luke 12:49-56

'I came to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! I have a baptism with which to be baptized, and what stress I am under until it is completed! Do you think that I have come to bring peace to the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division! From now on, five in one household will be divided, three against two and two against three; they will be divided:

father against son
and son against father,
mother against daughter
and daughter against mother,
mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law
and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.'

He also said to the crowds, 'When you see a cloud rising in the west, you immediately say, "It is going to rain"; and so it happens. And when you see the south wind blowing, you say, "There will be scorching heat"; and it happens. You hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of earth and sky, but why do you not know how to interpret the present time?

21st August 2022

Tenth Sunday after Trinity

Lord of heaven and earth,
as Jesus taught his disciples to be persistent in prayer,
give us patience and courage never to lose hope,
but always to bring our prayers before you;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Isaiah 58:9-end

If you remove the yoke from among you,
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,
if you offer your food to the hungry
and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,
then your light shall rise in the darkness
and your gloom be like the noonday.
The Lord will guide you continually,
and satisfy your needs in parched places,
and make your bones strong;
and you shall be like a watered garden,
like a spring of water,
whose waters never fail.
Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;
you shall raise up the foundations of many
generations;
you shall be called the repairer of the breach,
the restorer of streets to live in.
If you refrain from trampling the sabbath,
from pursuing your own interests on my holy day;
if you call the sabbath a delight
and the holy day of the Lord honourable;
if you honour it, not going your own ways,
serving your own interests, or pursuing your own
affairs;
then you shall take delight in the Lord,

and I will make you ride upon the heights of the
earth;
I will feed you with the heritage of your ancestor
Jacob, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.

Hebrews 12:18-end

You have not come to something that can be touched,
a blazing fire, and darkness, and gloom, and a
tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and a voice
whose words made the hearers beg that not another
word be spoken to them. (For they could not endure
the order that was given, 'If even an animal touches
the mountain, it shall be stoned to death.' Indeed, so
terrifying was the sight that Moses said, 'I tremble
with fear.') But you have come to Mount Zion and to
the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and
to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the
assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven,
and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of the
righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of
a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that
speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

See that you do not refuse the one who is speaking;
for if they did not escape when they refused the one
who warned them on earth, how much less will we
escape if we reject the one who warns from heaven!
At that time his voice shook the earth; but now he has
promised, 'Yet once more I will shake not only the
earth but also the heaven.' This phrase 'Yet once
more' indicates the removal of what is shaken—that
is, created things—so that what cannot be shaken may
remain. Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom
that cannot be shaken, let us give thanks, by which we
offer to God an acceptable worship with reverence
and awe; for indeed our God is a consuming fire.

Luke 13:10-17

Now he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the
sabbath. And just then there appeared a woman with
a spirit that had crippled her for eighteen years. She
was bent over and was quite unable to stand up
straight. When Jesus saw her, he called her over and
said, 'Woman, you are set free from your ailment.'
When he laid his hands on her, immediately she stood
up straight and began praising God. But the leader of
the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had cured on
the sabbath, kept saying to the crowd, 'There are six
days on which work ought to be done; come on those
days and be cured, and not on the sabbath day.' But
the Lord answered him and said, 'You hypocrites! Does
not each of you on the sabbath untie his ox or his
donkey from the manger, and lead it away to give it
water? And ought not this woman, a daughter of
Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen long years,
be set free from this bondage on the sabbath day?'
When he said this, all his opponents were put to
shame; and the entire crowd was rejoicing at all the
wonderful things that he was doing.

28th August 2022

Eleventh Sunday after Trinity

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.

Ecclesiasticus 10:12-18

The beginning of human pride is to forsake the Lord;
the heart has withdrawn from its Maker.
For the beginning of pride is sin,
and the one who clings to it pours out abominations.
Therefore the Lord brings upon them unheard-of
calamities,
and destroys them completely.
The Lord overthrows the thrones of rulers,
and enthrones the lowly in their place.
The Lord plucks up the roots of the nations,
and plants the humble in their place.
The Lord lays waste the lands of the nations,
and destroys them to the foundations of the earth.
He removes some of them and destroys them,
and erases the memory of them from the earth.
Pride was not created for human beings,
or violent anger for those born of women.

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.

Luke 14:1, 7-14

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.'

4th September 2022

Twelfth Sunday after Trinity

God of constant mercy,
who sent your Son to save us:
remind us of your goodness,
increase your grace within us,
that our thankfulness may grow,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Deuteronomy 30:15-end

See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity. If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the Lord your God, walking in his ways, and observing his commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess. But if your heart turns away and you do not hear, but are led astray to bow down to other gods and serve them, I declare to you today that you shall perish; you shall not live long in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, loving the Lord your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him; for that means life to you and length of days, so that you may live in the land that the Lord swore to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

Philemon 1-21

Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother,

To Philemon our dear friend and co-worker, to Apphia our sister, to Archippus our fellow-soldier, and to the church in your house:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

When I remember you in my prayers, I always thank my God because I hear of your love for all the saints and your faith towards the Lord Jesus. I pray that the sharing of your faith may become effective when you perceive all the good that we may do for Christ. I have indeed received much joy and encouragement from your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, my brother.

For this reason, though I am bold enough in Christ to command you to do your duty, yet I would rather appeal to you on the basis of love—and I, Paul, do this as an old man, and now also as a prisoner of Christ Jesus. I am appealing to you for my child, Onesimus, whose father I have become during my imprisonment. Formerly he was useless to you, but now he is indeed useful both to you and to me. I am sending him, that is, my own heart, back to you. I wanted to keep him with me, so that he might be of service to me in your place during my imprisonment for the gospel; but I preferred to do nothing without your consent, in order that your good deed might be voluntary and not something forced. Perhaps this is the reason he was separated from you for a while, so that you might have him back for ever, no longer as a slave but as more than a slave, a beloved brother—especially to me but

how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

So if you consider me your partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. If he has wronged you in any way, or owes you anything, charge that to my account. I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand: I will repay it. I say nothing about your owing me even your own self. Yes, brother, let me have this benefit from you in the Lord! Refresh my heart in Christ. Confident of your obedience, I am writing to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say.

Luke 14:25-33

Now large crowds were travelling with him; and he turned and said to them, 'Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple. Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it will begin to ridicule him, saying, "This fellow began to build and was not able to finish." Or what king, going out to wage war against another king, will not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to oppose the one who comes against him with twenty thousand? If he cannot, then, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for the terms of peace. So therefore, none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions.

11th September 2022

Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity

Almighty God,
you search us and know us:
may we rely on you in strength
and rest on you in weakness,
now and in all our days;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Exodus 32:7-14

The Lord said to Moses, 'Go down at once! Your people, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, have acted perversely; they have been quick to turn aside from the way that I commanded them; they have cast for themselves an image of a calf, and have worshipped it and sacrificed to it, and said, "These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!" ' The Lord said to Moses, 'I have seen this people, how stiff-necked they are. Now let me alone, so that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them; and of you I will make a great nation.'

But Moses implored the Lord his God, and said, 'O Lord, why does your wrath burn hot against your people, whom you brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? Why should the Egyptians say, "It was with evil intent that he brought them out to kill them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth"? Turn from your fierce wrath; change your mind and do not bring disaster on your people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, how you swore to them by your own self, saying to them, "I will multiply your

descendants like the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it for ever." ' And the Lord changed his mind about the disaster that he planned to bring on his people.

1 Timothy 1:12-17

I am grateful to Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because he judged me faithful and appointed me to his service, even though I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and a man of violence. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the foremost. But for that very reason I received mercy, so that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display the utmost patience, making me an example to those who would come to believe in him for eternal life. To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Luke 15:1-10

Now all the tax-collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, 'This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.'

So he told them this parable: 'Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbours, saying to them, "Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost." Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who need no repentance.'

'Or what woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one of them, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbours, saying, "Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost." Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.'

18th September 2022

Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity

Merciful God,
your Son came to save us
and bore our sins on the cross:
may we trust in your mercy
and know your love,
rejoicing in the righteousness
that is ours through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amos 8:4-7

Hear this, you that trample on the needy,
and bring to ruin the poor of the land,
saying, 'When will the new moon be over
so that we may sell grain;
and the sabbath,
so that we may offer wheat for sale?
We will make the ephah small and the shekel great,
and practise deceit with false balances,
buying the poor for silver
and the needy for a pair of sandals,
and selling the sweepings of the wheat.'

The Lord has sworn by the pride of Jacob:
Surely I will never forget any of their deeds.

1 Timothy 2:1-7

First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers,
intercessions, and thanksgivings should be made for
everyone, for kings and all who are in high positions,
so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all
godliness and dignity. This is right and is acceptable in
the sight of God our Saviour, who desires everyone to
be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.
For
there is one God;
there is also one mediator between God and
humankind,
Christ Jesus, himself human,
who gave himself a ransom for all
—this was attested at the right time. For this I was
appointed a herald and an apostle (I am telling the
truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith
and truth.

Luke 16:1-13

Then Jesus said to the disciples, 'There was a rich man
who had a manager, and charges were brought to him
that this man was squandering his property. So he
summoned him and said to him, "What is this that I
hear about you? Give me an account of your
management, because you cannot be my manager any
longer." Then the manager said to himself, "What will I
do, now that my master is taking the position away
from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am
ashamed to beg. I have decided what to do so that,
when I am dismissed as manager, people may
welcome me into their homes." So, summoning his
master's debtors one by one, he asked the first, "How
much do you owe my master?" He answered, "A
hundred jugs of olive oil." He said to him, "Take your
bill, sit down quickly, and make it fifty." Then he asked
another, "And how much do you owe?" He replied, "A
hundred containers of wheat." He said to him, "Take
your bill and make it eighty." And his master
commended the dishonest manager because he had
acted shrewdly; for the children of this age are more
shrewd in dealing with their own generation than are
the children of light. And I tell you, make friends for
yourselves by means of dishonest wealth so that when
it is gone, they may welcome you into the eternal
homes.

'Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in
much; and whoever is dishonest in a very little is
dishonest also in much. If then you have not been
faithful with the dishonest wealth, who will entrust to
you the true riches? And if you have not been faithful
with what belongs to another, who will give you what
is your own? No slave can serve two masters; for a
slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be
devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot
serve God and wealth.'

Lord God,
defend your Church from all false teaching
and give to your people knowledge of your truth,
that we may enjoy eternal life
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amos 6:1, 4-7

Alas for those who are at ease in Zion,
and for those who feel secure on Mount Samaria.
Alas for those who lie on beds of ivory,
and lounge on their couches,
and eat lambs from the flock,
and calves from the stall;
who sing idle songs to the sound of the harp,
and like David improvise on instruments of music;
who drink wine from bowls,
and anoint themselves with the finest oils,
but are not grieved over the ruin of Joseph!
Therefore they shall now be the first to go into exile,
and the revelry of the loungers shall pass away.

1 Timothy 6:6-19

Of course, there is great gain in godliness combined
with contentment; for we brought nothing into the
world, so that we can take nothing out of it; but if we
have food and clothing, we will be content with these.
But those who want to be rich fall into temptation and
are trapped by many senseless and harmful desires
that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the
love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and in their

eagerness to be rich some have wandered away from
the faith and pierced themselves with many pains.

But as for you, man of God, shun all this; pursue
righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance,
gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith; take hold
of the eternal life, to which you were called and for
which you made the good confession in the presence
of many witnesses. In the presence of God, who gives
life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his
testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good
confession, I charge you to keep the commandment
without spot or blame until the manifestation of our
Lord Jesus Christ, which he will bring about at the right
time—he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the
King of kings and Lord of lords. It is he alone who has
immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom
no one has ever seen or can see; to him be honour
and eternal dominion. Amen.

As for those who in the present age are rich,
command them not to be haughty, or to set their
hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but rather on God
who richly provides us with everything for our
enjoyment. They are to do good, to be rich in good
works, generous, and ready to share, thus storing up
for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for
the future, so that they may take hold of the life that
really is life.

Luke 16:19-end

‘There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and
fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day.
And at his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus,
covered with sores, who longed to satisfy his hunger
with what fell from the rich man’s table; even the dogs
would come and lick his sores. The poor man died and
was carried away by the angels to be with Abraham.
The rich man also died and was buried. In Hades,
where he was being tormented, he looked up and saw
Abraham far away with Lazarus by his side. He called
out, “Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send
Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my
tongue; for I am in agony in these flames.” But
Abraham said, “Child, remember that during your
lifetime you received your good things, and Lazarus in
like manner evil things; but now he is comforted here,
and you are in agony. Besides all this, between you
and us a great chasm has been fixed, so that those
who might want to pass from here to you cannot do
so, and no one can cross from there to us.” He said,
“Then, father, I beg you to send him to my father’s
house— for I have five brothers—that he may warn
them, so that they will not also come into this place of
torment.” Abraham replied, “They have Moses and the
prophets; they should listen to them.” He said, “No,
father Abraham; but if someone goes to them from
the dead, they will repent.” He said to him, “If they do
not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they
be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.” ’

2nd October 2022

Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity

Lord of creation,
whose glory is around and within us:
open our eyes to your wonders,
that we may serve you with reverence
and know your peace at our lives' end,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Habakkuk 1:1-4; 2:1-4

The oracle that the prophet Habakkuk saw.

O Lord, how long shall I cry for help,
and you will not listen?
Or cry to you 'Violence!'
and you will not save?
Why do you make me see wrongdoing
and look at trouble?
Destruction and violence are before me;
strife and contention arise.
So the law becomes slack
and justice never prevails.
The wicked surround the righteous—
therefore judgement comes forth perverted.

I will stand at my watch-post,
and station myself on the rampart;
I will keep watch to see what he will say to me,
and what he will answer concerning my complaint.
Then the Lord answered me and said:
Write the vision;
make it plain on tablets,
so that a runner may read it.
For there is still a vision for the appointed time;
it speaks of the end, and does not lie.

If it seems to tarry, wait for it;
it will surely come, it will not delay.
Look at the proud!
Their spirit is not right in them,
but the righteous live by their faith.

2 Timothy 1:1-14

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, for
the sake of the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus,

To Timothy, my beloved child:

Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and
Christ Jesus our Lord.

I am grateful to God—whom I worship with a clear
conscience, as my ancestors did—when I remember
you constantly in my prayers night and day. Recalling
your tears, I long to see you so that I may be filled with
joy. I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that
lived first in your grandmother Lois and your mother
Eunice and now, I am sure, lives in you. For this reason
I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within
you through the laying on of my hands; for God did
not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of
power and of love and of self-discipline.

Do not be ashamed, then, of the testimony about our
Lord or of me his prisoner, but join with me in
suffering for the gospel, relying on the power of God,
who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not
according to our works but according to his own
purpose and grace. This grace was given to us in Christ
Jesus before the ages began, but it has now been
revealed through the appearing of our Saviour Christ
Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and

immortality to light through the gospel. For this gospel
I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher,
and for this reason I suffer as I do. But I am not
ashamed, for I know the one in whom I have put my
trust, and I am sure that he is able to guard until that
day what I have entrusted to him. Hold to the standard
of sound teaching that you have heard from me, in the
faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. Guard the good
treasure entrusted to you, with the help of the Holy
Spirit living in us.

Luke 17:5-10

The apostles said to the Lord, 'Increase our faith!' The
Lord replied, 'If you had faith the size of a mustard
seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, "Be
uprooted and planted in the sea", and it would obey
you.

'Who among you would say to your slave who has just
come in from ploughing or tending sheep in the field,
"Come here at once and take your place at the table"?
Would you not rather say to him, "Prepare supper for
me, put on your apron and serve me while I eat and
drink; later you may eat and drink"? Do you thank the
slave for doing what was commanded? So you also,
when you have done all that you were ordered to do,
say, "We are worthless slaves; we have done only what
we ought to have done!" '

9th October 2022

Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity

Gracious God,
you call us to fullness of life:
deliver us from unbelief
and banish our anxieties
with the liberating love of Jesus Christ our Lord.

2 Kings 5:1-3, 7-15

Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Aram, was a great man and in high favour with his master, because by him the Lord had given victory to Aram. The man, though a mighty warrior, suffered from leprosy. Now the Arameans on one of their raids had taken a young girl captive from the land of Israel, and she served Naaman's wife. She said to her mistress, 'If only my lord were with the prophet who is in Samaria! He would cure him of his leprosy.' When the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his clothes and said, 'Am I God, to give death or life, that this man sends word to me to cure a man of his leprosy? Just look and see how he is trying to pick a quarrel with me.' But when Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes, he sent a message to the king, 'Why have you torn your clothes? Let him come to me, that he may learn that there is a prophet in Israel.' So Naaman came with his horses and chariots, and halted at the entrance of Elisha's house. Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, 'Go, wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored and you shall be clean.' But Naaman became angry and went away, saying, 'I thought that for me he would surely come out, and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, and would wave his hand over the spot, and cure the leprosy! Are not Abana and Pharpar, the rivers

of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them, and be clean?' He turned and went away in a rage. But his servants approached and said to him, 'Father, if the prophet had commanded you to do something difficult, would you not have done it? How much more, when all he said to you was, "Wash, and be clean"?' So he went down and immersed himself seven times in the Jordan, according to the word of the man of God; his flesh was restored like the flesh of a young boy, and he was clean.

Then he returned to the man of God, he and all his company; he came and stood before him and said, 'Now I know that there is no God in all the earth except in Israel.'

2 Timothy 2:8-15

Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, a descendant of David—that is my gospel, for which I suffer hardship, even to the point of being chained like a criminal. But the word of God is not chained. Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, so that they may also obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory. The saying is sure: If we have died with him, we will also live with him; if we endure, we will also reign with him; if we deny him, he will also deny us; if we are faithless, he remains faithful—for he cannot deny himself.

Remind them of this, and warn them before God that they are to avoid wrangling over words, which does no good but only ruins those who are listening. Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved by him, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly explaining the word of truth.

Luke 17:11-19

On the way to Jerusalem Jesus was going through the region between Samaria and Galilee. As he entered a village, ten lepers approached him. Keeping their distance, they called out, saying, 'Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!' When he saw them, he said to them, 'Go and show yourselves to the priests.' And as they went, they were made clean. Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice. He prostrated himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him. And he was a Samaritan. Then Jesus asked, 'Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they? Was none of them found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?' Then he said to him, 'Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well.'

16th October 2022

Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity

God, our judge and saviour,
teach us to be open to your truth
and to trust in your love,
that we may live each day
with confidence in the salvation which is given
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Genesis 32:22-31

The same night he got up and took his two wives, his two maids, and his eleven children, and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. He took them and sent them across the stream, and likewise everything that he had. Jacob was left alone; and a man wrestled with him until daybreak. When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he struck him on the hip socket; and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. Then he said, 'Let me go, for the day is breaking.' But Jacob said, 'I will not let you go, unless you bless me.' So he said to him, 'What is your name?' And he said, 'Jacob.' Then the man said, 'You shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with humans, and have prevailed.' Then Jacob asked him, 'Please tell me your name.' But he said, 'Why is it that you ask my name?' And there he blessed him. So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, 'For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life is preserved.' The sun rose upon him as he passed Peniel, limping because of his hip.

2 Timothy 3:14-4:5

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it, and how from childhood you have known the sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.

In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I solemnly urge you: proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favourable or unfavourable; convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching. For the time is coming when people will not put up with sound doctrine, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own desires, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander away to myths. As for you, always be sober, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, carry out your ministry fully.

Luke 18:1-8

Then Jesus told them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart. He said, 'In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor had respect for people. In that city there was a widow who kept coming to him and saying, "Grant me justice against my opponent." For a while he refused; but later he said to himself, "Though I have no fear of God and no respect for anyone, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that she may not wear me out by continually coming." ' And the Lord said, 'Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long in helping them? I tell you, he will quickly grant justice to them. And yet, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?'

23rd October 2022
Last Sunday after Trinity

Merciful God,
teach us to be faithful in change and uncertainty,
that trusting in your word
and obeying your will
we may enter the unfailing joy of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Ecclesiasticus 35:12-17

Give to the Most High as he has given to you,
and as generously as you can afford.
For the Lord is the one who repays,
and he will repay you sevenfold.

Do not offer him a bribe, for he will not accept it;
and do not rely on a dishonest sacrifice;
for the Lord is the judge,
and with him there is no partiality.
He will not show partiality to the poor;
but he will listen to the prayer of one who is
wronged.
He will not ignore the supplication of the orphan,
or the widow when she pours out her complaint.

2 Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18

As for me, I am already being poured out as a libation,
and the time of my departure has come. I have fought
the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the
faith. From now on there is reserved for me the crown
of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge,
will give to me on that day, and not only to me but
also to all who have longed for his appearing.

At my first defence no one came to my support, but all
deserted me. May it not be counted against them! But
the Lord stood by me and gave me strength, so that
through me the message might be fully proclaimed
and all the Gentiles might hear it. So I was rescued
from the lion's mouth. The Lord will rescue me from
every evil attack and save me for his heavenly
kingdom. To him be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Luke 18:9-14

He also told this parable to some who trusted in
themselves that they were righteous and regarded
others with contempt: 'Two men went up to the
temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax-
collector. The Pharisee, standing by himself, was
praying thus, "God, I thank you that I am not like other
people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this
tax-collector. I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all
my income." But the tax-collector, standing far off,
would not even look up to heaven, but was beating his
breast and saying, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner!" I
tell you, this man went down to his home justified
rather than the other; for all who exalt themselves will
be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be
exalted.'

30th October 2022

Fourth Sunday before Advent

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.

Isaiah 1:10-18

Hear the word of the Lord,
you rulers of Sodom!
Listen to the teaching of our God,
you people of Gomorrah!
What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices?
says the Lord;
I have had enough of burnt-offerings of rams
and the fat of fed beasts;
I do not delight in the blood of bulls,
or of lambs, or of goats.
When you come to appear before me,
who asked this from your hand?
Trample my courts no more;
bringing offerings is futile;
incense is an abomination to me.
New moon and sabbath and calling of convocation—
I cannot endure solemn assemblies with iniquity.
Your new moons and your appointed festivals
my soul hates;
they have become a burden to me,
I am weary of bearing them.
When you stretch out your hands,
I will hide my eyes from you;
even though you make many prayers,
I will not listen;
your hands are full of blood.

Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean;
remove the evil of your doings
from before my eyes;
cease to do evil,
learn to do good;
seek justice,
rescue the oppressed,
defend the orphan,
plead for the widow.
Come now, let us argue it out,
says the Lord:
though your sins are like scarlet,
they shall be like snow;
though they are red like crimson,
they shall become like wool.

2 Thessalonians 1

Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,
To the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ:
Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the
Lord Jesus Christ.

We must always give thanks to God for you, brothers
and sisters, as is right, because your faith is growing
abundantly, and the love of every one of you for one
another is increasing. Therefore we ourselves boast of
you among the churches of God for your steadfastness
and faith during all your persecutions and the
afflictions that you are enduring.

This is evidence of the righteous judgement of God,
and is intended to make you worthy of the kingdom of
God, for which you are also suffering. For it is indeed
just of God to repay with affliction those who afflict
you, and to give relief to the afflicted as well as to us,

when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his
mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on
those who do not know God and on those who do not
obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. These will suffer the
punishment of eternal destruction, separated from the
presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might,
when he comes to be glorified by his saints and to be
marvelled at on that day among all who have believed,
because our testimony to you was believed. To this
end we always pray for you, asking that our God will
make you worthy of his call and will fulfil by his power
every good resolve and work of faith, so that the name
of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in
him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord
Jesus Christ.

Luke 19:1-10

He entered Jericho and was passing through it. A man
was there named Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax-
collector and was rich. He was trying to see who Jesus
was, but on account of the crowd he could not,
because he was short in stature. So he ran ahead and
climbed a sycamore tree to see him, because he was
going to pass that way. When Jesus came to the place,
he looked up and said to him, 'Zacchaeus, hurry and
come down; for I must stay at your house today.' So he
hurried down and was happy to welcome him. All who
saw it began to grumble and said, 'He has gone to be
the guest of one who is a sinner.' Zacchaeus stood
there and said to the Lord, 'Look, half of my
possessions, Lord, I will give to the poor; and if I have
defrauded anyone of anything, I will pay back four
times as much.' Then Jesus said to him, 'Today
salvation has come to this house, because he too is a
son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek out
and to save the lost.'

6th November 2022

Third Sunday before Advent

Heavenly Lord,
you long for the world's salvation:
stir us from apathy,
restrain us from excess
and revive in us new hope
that all creation will one day be healed
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Job 19:23-27

'O that my words were written down!
O that they were inscribed in a book!
O that with an iron pen and with lead
they were engraved on a rock for ever!
For I know that my Redeemer lives,
and that at the last he will stand upon the earth;
and after my skin has been thus destroyed,
then in my flesh I shall see God,
whom I shall see on my side,
and my eyes shall behold, and not another.'

1 Thessalonians 2:1-5, 13-end

You yourselves know, brothers and sisters, that our coming to you was not in vain, but though we had already suffered and been shamefully maltreated at Philippi, as you know, we had courage in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in spite of great opposition. For our appeal does not spring from deceit or impure motives or trickery, but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the message of the gospel, even so we speak, not to please mortals, but to please God who tests our hearts. As you know and as God is our witness, we never came with words of flattery or with a pretext for greed;

We also constantly give thanks to God for this, that when you received the word of God that you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word but as what it really is, God's word, which is also at work in you believers. For you, brothers and sisters, became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea, for you suffered the same things from your own compatriots as they did from the Jews, who killed both the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and drove us out; they displease God and oppose everyone by hindering us from speaking to the Gentiles so that they may be saved. Thus they have constantly been filling up the measure of their sins; but God's wrath has overtaken them at last.

As for us, brothers and sisters, when, for a short time, we were made orphans by being separated from you—in person, not in heart—we longed with great eagerness to see you face to face. For we wanted to come to you—certainly I, Paul, wanted to again and again—but Satan blocked our way. For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you? Yes, you are our glory and joy!

Luke 20:27-38

Some Sadducees, those who say there is no resurrection, came to him and asked him a question, 'Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies, leaving a wife but no children, the man shall marry the widow and raise up children for his brother. Now there were seven brothers; the first married, and died childless; then the second and the third married her, and so in the same way all seven died childless. Finally the woman also died. In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife will the woman be? For the seven had married her.'

Jesus said to them, 'Those who belong to this age marry and are given in marriage; but those who are considered worthy of a place in that age and in the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage. Indeed they cannot die any more, because they are like angels and are children of God, being children of the resurrection. And the fact that the dead are raised Moses himself showed, in the story about the bush, where he speaks of the Lord as the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. Now he is God not of the dead, but of the living; for to him all of them are alive.'

13th November 2022

**Second Sunday before Advent
Remembrance Sunday**

God, our refuge and strength,
bring near the day when wars shall cease
and poverty and pain shall end,
that earth may know the peace of heaven
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Malachi 4:1-2

See, the day is coming, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble; the day that comes shall burn them up, says the Lord of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch. But for you who revere my name the sun of righteousness shall rise, with healing in its wings.

2 Thessalonians 3:6-13

Now we command you, beloved, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to keep away from believers who are living in idleness and not according to the tradition that they received from us. For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us; we were not idle when we were with you, and we did not eat anyone's bread without paying for it; but with toil and labour we worked night and day, so that we might not burden any of you. This was not because we do not have that right, but in order to give you an example to imitate. For even when we were with you, we gave you this command: Anyone unwilling to work should not eat. For we hear that some of you are living in idleness, mere busybodies, not doing any work. Now such persons we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living. Brothers and sisters, do not be weary in doing what is right.

Luke 21:5-19

When some were speaking about the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and gifts dedicated to God, he said, 'As for these things that you see, the days will come when not one stone will be left upon another; all will be thrown down.'

They asked him, 'Teacher, when will this be, and what will be the sign that this is about to take place?' And he said, 'Beware that you are not led astray; for many will come in my name and say, "I am he!" and, "The time is near!" Do not go after them.

'When you hear of wars and insurrections, do not be terrified; for these things must take place first, but the end will not follow immediately.' Then he said to them, 'Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be great earthquakes, and in various places famines and plagues; and there will be dreadful portents and great signs from heaven.

'But before all this occurs, they will arrest you and persecute you; they will hand you over to synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors because of my name. This will give you an opportunity to testify. So make up your minds not to prepare your defence in advance; for I will give you words and a wisdom that none of your opponents will be able to withstand or contradict. You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, by relatives and friends; and they will put some of you to death. You will be hated by all because of my name. But not a hair of your head will perish. By your endurance you will gain your souls.

20th November 2022

Christ the King

God the Father,
help us to hear the call of Christ the King
and to follow in his service,
whose kingdom has no end;
for he reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, one glory.

Jeremiah 23:1-6

Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! says the Lord. Therefore, thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who shepherd my people: It is you who have scattered my flock, and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them. So I will attend to you for your evil doings, says the Lord. Then I myself will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the lands where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, and they shall be fruitful and multiply. I will raise up shepherds over them who will shepherd them, and they shall not fear any longer, or be dismayed, nor shall any be missing, says the Lord.

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. And this is the name by which he will be called: 'The Lord is our righteousness.'

Colossians 1:11-20

May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light. He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

Luke 23:33-43

When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. [[Then Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.']] And they cast lots to divide his clothing. And the people stood by, watching; but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, 'He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one!' The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine, and saying, 'If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!' There was also an inscription over him, 'This is the King of the Jews.'

One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, 'Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!' But the other rebuked him, saying, 'Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong.' Then he said, 'Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.' He replied, 'Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.'