

Evening Prayer – Trinity 1

1st August 2121, from The Book of Common Prayer



Hymn – Guide me, O thou great redeemer

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ICi6lMoatc>

Guide me, O thou great Redeemer,
pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but thou art mighty;
hold me with thy powerful hand:
bread of heaven, bread of heaven,
feed me now and evermore,
feed me now and evermore.

Open now the crystal fountain,
whence the healing stream doth flow;
let the fire and cloudy pillar
lead me all my journey through:
strong deliverer, strong deliverer,
be thou still my strength and shield;
be thou still my strength and shield.

When I tread the verge of Jordan,
bid my anxious fears subside;
death of death, and hell's destruction,
land me safe on Canaan's side:
songs and praises, songs and praises,
I will ever give to thee,
I will ever give to thee.

Opening prayers

God is love; and he that abideth in love abideth in God and God in him.

1 John 4.16

Beloved, we are come together in the presence of almighty God and of the whole company of heaven to offer unto him through our Lord Jesus Christ our worship and praise and thanksgiving; to make confession of our sins; to pray, as well for others as for ourselves, that we may know more truly the greatness of God's love and shew forth in our lives the fruits of his grace; and to ask on behalf of all men such things as their well-being doth require.

Wherefore let us kneel in silence, and remember God's presence with us now.

**Almighty and most merciful Father,
we have erred, and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep.
We have followed too much the devices and desires
of our own hearts.
We have offended against thy holy laws.
We have left undone those things
which we ought to have done;
and we have done those things which we ought not to have done;
and there is no health in us.
But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us, miserable offenders.
Spare thou them, O God, which confess their faults.
Restore thou them that are penitent;
according to thy promises declared unto mankind
in Christ Jesu our Lord.
And grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake,
that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life,
to the glory of thy holy name. Amen.**

Grant, we beseech thee, merciful Lord,
to thy faithful people pardon and peace,
that they may be cleansed from all their sins,
and serve thee with a quiet mind;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Our Father, which art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done,
in earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive them that trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.**

O Lord, open thou our lips
and our mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

O God, make speed to save us.

O Lord, make haste to help us.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Ghost;

**as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.**

Praise ye the Lord.

The Lord's name be praised.

Magnificat

My soul doth magnify the Lord :
and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

For he hath regarded :
the lowliness of his handmaiden.

For behold, from henceforth :
all generations shall call me blessed.

For he that is mighty hath magnified me :
and holy is his Name.

And his mercy is on them that fear him :
throughout all generations.

He hath shewed strength with his arm :
he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

He hath put down the mighty from their seat :
and hath exalted the humble and meek.

He hath filled the hungry with good things :
and the rich he hath sent empty away.

He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel :
as he promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his seed for ever.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son
and to the Holy Ghost;

**as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be :
world without end. Amen.**

Old Testament Lesson

Exodus 16:2-4, 9-15

The whole congregation of the Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. The Israelites said to them, 'If only we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and ate our fill of bread; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.'

Then the Lord said to Moses, 'I am going to rain bread from heaven for you, and each day the people shall go out and gather enough for that day. In that way I will test them, whether they will follow my instruction or not.'

Then Moses said to Aaron, 'Say to the whole congregation of the Israelites, "Draw near to the Lord, for he has heard your complaining." ' And as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the Israelites, they looked towards the wilderness, and the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud. The Lord spoke to Moses and said, 'I have heard the complaining of the Israelites; say to them, "At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall have your fill of bread; then you shall know that I am the Lord your God." '

In the evening quails came up and covered the camp; and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. When the layer of dew lifted, there on the surface of the wilderness was a fine flaky substance, as fine as frost on the ground. When the Israelites saw it, they said to one another, 'What is it?' For they did not know what it was. Moses said to them, 'It is the bread that the Lord has given you to eat.'

Psalm 78:23-29

So he commanded the clouds above
and opened the doors of heaven.

He rained down upon them manna to eat
and gave them the grain of heaven.

So mortals ate the bread of angels;
he sent them food in plenty.

He caused the east wind to blow in the heavens
and led out the south wind by his might.

He rained flesh upon them as thick as dust
and winged fowl like the sand of the sea.

He let it fall in the midst of their camp
and round about their tents.

So they ate and were well filled,
for he gave them what they desired.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son
and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be
world without end. Amen.

Epistle

Ephesians 4:1-16

I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.

But each of us was given grace according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore it is said,
'When he ascended on high he made captivity itself a captive;
he gave gifts to his people.'

(When it says, 'He ascended', what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is the same one who ascended far above all the heavens, so that he might fill all things.) The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ.

We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people's trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming. But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knitted together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love.

Nunc Dimittis

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace :
according to thy word.

For mine eyes have seen :
thy salvation;

Which thou hast prepared :
before the face of all people;

To be a light to lighten the Gentiles :
and to be the glory of thy people Israel.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son :
and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be
world without end. Amen.

Gospel Reading

John 6:24-35

When the crowd saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were at the place where Jesus had given the bread, they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum looking for Jesus.

When they found him on the other side of the lake, they said to him, 'Rabbi, when did you come here?' Jesus answered them, 'Very truly, I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal.'

Then they said to him, 'What must we do to perform the works of God?' Jesus answered them, 'This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.'

So they said to him, 'What sign are you going to give us then, so that we may see it and believe you? What work are you performing? Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, "He gave them bread from heaven to eat."' Then Jesus said to them, 'Very truly, I tell you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.' They said to him, 'Sir, give us this bread always.'

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

The Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth:
and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried.
He descended into hell;
the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father almighty;
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Ghost;
the holy catholic Church;
the communion of saints;
the forgiveness of sins;
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.
Amen.**

The Lord be with you.
And with thy spirit.

Let us pray.

Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.

**Our Father, which art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done,
in earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive them that trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil. Amen.**

○ Lord, shew thy mercy upon us.
And grant us thy salvation.

○ Lord, save the Queen.
And mercifully hear us when we call upon thee.

Endue thy ministers with righteousness.
And make thy chosen people joyful.

○ Lord, save thy people.
And bless thine inheritance.

Give peace in our time, O Lord.
**Because there is none other that fighteth for us,
but only thou, O God.**

○ God, make clean our hearts within us.
And take not thy Holy Spirit from us.

The Collect of the Day

Almighty God,
who didst send thy Holy Spirit
to be the life and light of thy Church:
open our hearts to the riches of thy grace,
that we may bring forth the fruit of the Spirit
in love and joy and peace;
through Jesus Christ thy Son our Lord,
who liveth and reigneth with thee,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

The Collect for Peace

O God, who art the author of peace and lover of concord,
in knowledge of whom standeth our eternal life,
whose service is perfect freedom;
defend us thy humble servants in all assaults of our enemies;
that we, surely trusting in thy defence,
may not fear the power of any adversaries;
through the might of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Collect for Aid against all Perils

Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord;
and by thy great mercy
defend us from all perils and dangers of this night;
for the love of thy only Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Hymn – Seek ye first the kingdom of God

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FFxZeY2D5tc>

Seek ye first the kingdom of God
and His righteousness;
and all these things shall be added unto you
Allelu, Alleluia!

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Man shall not live by bread alone,
But by ev'ry word
that proceeds from the mouth of God;
Allelu, Alleluia!

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Ask, and it shall be given unto you;
Seek, and ye shall find.
Knock, and the door shall be opened unto you.
Allelu, Alleluia!

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Sermon

Many years ago I travelled across a desert in a coach – it was cool and comfortable inside the coach and I was watching the endless dry sand stretching into the distance, with just a few prickly, brown, thorny bushes to be seen.

The coach was eating up the miles and I was very pleased that I wasn't outside. We passed a few people walking along with a pony or camel and I tried to imagine what it was like having to walking for days through that heat.

I was excited – I'd always wanted to see a desert – I'd often read about them, and now I knew what they were like. They were desolate.

To the south was a great dry lake of salt – shimmering white. To the north, somewhere, was the Caspian sea.

I was really enjoying looking at the desert, watching the miles slip pass, but then the coach sort of hesitated a moment, and then stopped. We had a puncture....

And then it started being rather less fun. We were asked to go outside (presumably to make the coach lighter) while the driver examined the wheel and puzzled over what to do next .

Outside, in the boiling sun, it was a different story. The sun burnt down, there was no breeze. There was nowhere to go – no shade or shelter. There was a little bottled water to drink, but not enough, and nothing to eat. I was getting hotter and hotter, drier and drier and then hungry as well.

How long was this going to go on for?

I can't remember, but it was dusk before a breakdown truck turned up to change the wheel. Eventually the puncture was fixed and we continued on our way.

It made me realise that living in a desert was very challenging. No sign of water, no crops, nothing to eat.

I wasn't that far from where the people from Israel found themselves after they had escaped from Egypt – they had gone north into a desert just like the one that I'd crossed – and they'd been wandering for months, if not years.

They were fed up, and blamed their two leaders, Moses and Aaron for landing them in this mess.

Moses had found them a spring of water when he struck a rock with his

staff, so they were able to quench their thirst. But the food had run out...

I've never tried this, but there are stories of people who are GETTING hungrier and hungrier, so they "tighten their belts". Maybe an empty tummy feels better when it's squeezed a bit?

I know what it feels like to go without food for half a day, or even the whole of a day, but imagine having no food day after day?

So the people complained – even though Moses and Aaron would have been just as hungry as they were. "Do something!" they were told. "This is your fault."

But it wasn't – Moses and Aaron had been guided by God, so they turned to God and said "Do something. This is your fault!". Which is exactly what God wanted. Whatever is wrong, God wants to told!

They were hungry for food, but then became hungry for God – they really wanted God to help them. And when they asked him to help, he did. They felt lonely and desolate, and they wanted God to comfort them, and he did.

He arranged that two types of food would appear in the desert each night – a flock of quail, and some very small, flat flakes of something like bread that they called "manna".

In the picture you can see men gathering manna, and a girl with a basket, full of manna, ready to take to the tents that were their homes.

And so the people in the desert cheered up – they had food to eat, and they had discovered that God was with them. They were comforted. They needn't feel lonely, because they learnt that they were not alone.

Just as we are never alone, because God is always near. Some people feel his presence is like Jesus travelling beside them.

Jesus tries to explain this to his disciples – God will not only provide for our physical needs, but also fill us with his comfort and his love. Which is why Jesus said "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry."

This is first of seven amazing statements that Jesus makes about himself in St John's gospel – statements that show how Jesus can be to us everything we need:

I am the bread of life.

I am the light of the world.

I am the gate.

I am the good shepherd.

I am the resurrection, and the life.

I am the way, the truth, and the life.

I am the true vine.

It takes a lifetime to begin to understand these wonderful sayings, but each time we encounter them we can give new thanks to God for his son.

Amen.

Hymn – One more step along the world I go

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=81zv93rznYs>

One more step along the world I go,

one more step along the world I go;

from the old things to the new

keep me travelling along with you:

And it's from the old I travel to the new;

keep me travelling along with you.

Round the corner of the world I turn,

more and more about the world I learn;

all the new things that I see

you'll be looking at along with me:

As I travel through the bad and good,

keep me traveling the way I should;

where I see no way to go

you'll be telling me the way, I know:

Give me courage when the world is rough,

keep me loving though the world is tough;

leap and sing in all I do,

keep me travelling along with you:

You are older than the world can be,

you are younger than the life in me;

ever old and ever new,

keep me travelling along with you:

Prayers

In the power of the Spirit and in union with Christ, let us pray to the Father.

Almighty and ever-living God, who by thy holy apostle hast taught us to make prayers and supplications, and to give thanks, for all men: we humbly beseech thee most mercifully to receive these our prayers, which we offer unto thy divine majesty; beseeching thee to inspire continually the universal Church with the spirit of truth, unity and concord; and grant that all they that do confess thy holy name may agree in the truth of thy holy word, and live in unity and godly love.

We beseech thee also to lead all nations in the way of righteousness and peace; and so to direct all kings and rulers, that under them thy people may be godly and quietly governed. And grant unto thy servant Elizabeth our Queen, and to all that are put in authority under her that they may truly and indifferently administer justice, to the maintenance of thy true religion, and virtue.

Give grace, O heavenly Father, to all bishops, priests and deacons, especially to thy servant Robert our bishop, that they may both by their life and doctrine set forth thy true and lively word, and rightly and duly administer thy holy sacraments.

Guide and prosper, we pray thee, those who are labouring for the spread of thy gospel among the nations, and enlighten with thy Spirit all places of education and learning; that the whole world may be filled with the knowledge of thy truth.

And to all thy people give thy heavenly grace; and specially to this congregation here present, that, with meek heart and due reverence, they may hear and receive thy holy word, truly serving thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of their life.

And we most humbly beseech thee of thy goodness, O Lord, to comfort and succour all them who in this transitory life are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity.

And we commend to thy gracious keeping, O Lord, all thy servants departed this life in thy faith and fear, beseeching thee, according to thy promises, to grant them refreshment, light and peace.

And here we give thee most high praise and hearty thanks for all thy saints, who have been the chosen vessels of thy grace, and lights of the world in their several generations; and we pray that, rejoicing in their fellowship and following their good examples, we may be partakers with them of thy heavenly kingdom.

Grant this, O Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our only mediator and advocate. **Amen.**

A prayer for all those affected by Coronavirus

Keep us, good Lord,
under the shadow of thy mercy.
Sustain and support the anxious,
be with those who care for the sick,
and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may find comfort
knowing that nothing can separate us from thy love
in Christ Jesus our Lord. **Amen.**

Silence

(You may like to add your own prayer(s) at this point, perhaps focusing on those you are most concerned about.)

Hymn – Lord enthroned in heavenly splendour

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i9aKk_gHnpA

Lord, enthroned in heavenly splendour,
first-begotten from the dead.
Thou alone, our strong defender,
liftest up thy people's head.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Jesu, true and living bread!

Here our humblest homage pay we,
here in loving reverence bow;
here for faith's discernment pray we,
lest we fail to know thee now.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Thou art here, we ask not how.

Though the lowliest form doth veil thee
as of old in Bethlehem,
here as there thine angels hail thee,
branch and flower of Jesse's stem.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
We in worship join with them.

Paschal Lamb, thine offering, finished
once for all when thou was slain,
in its fullness undiminished
shall for evermore remain.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Cleansing souls from every stain.

Life-imparting heavenly Manna,
stricken Rock with streaming side,
heaven and earth with loud hosanna
worship thee, the Lamb who died.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Risen, ascended, glorified!

Ending

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost,
be with us all evermore. Amen.