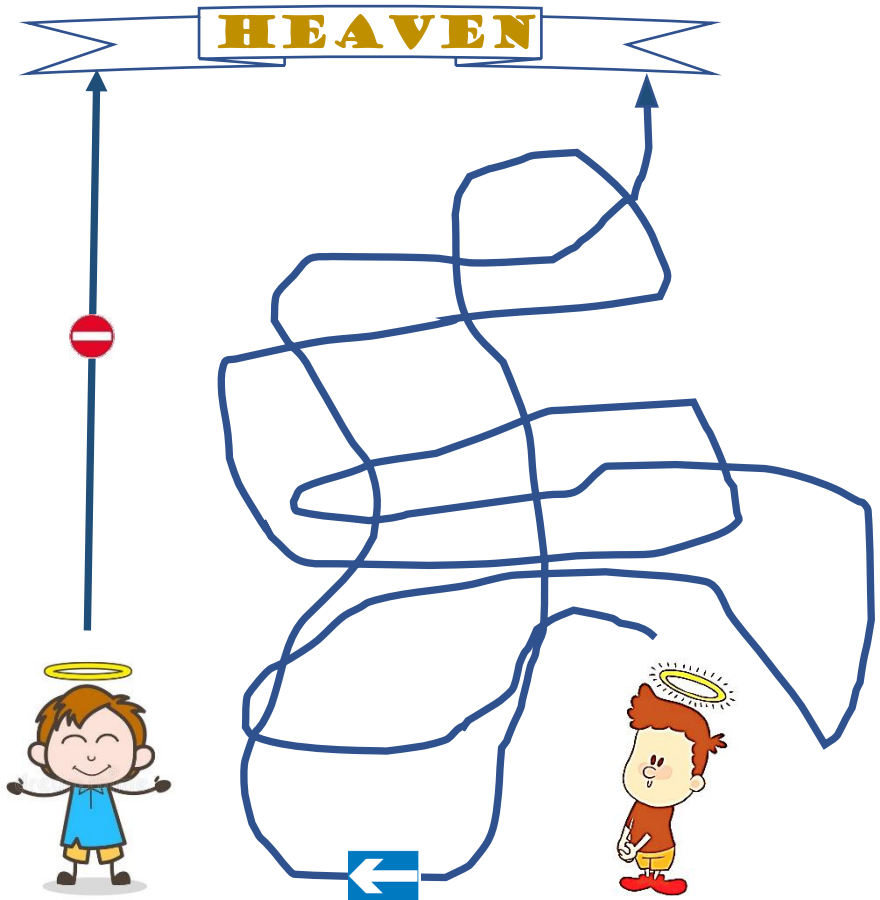


# 14<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Trinity

## ALL-AGE SERVICE



### *Welcome*

This month's All Age Service is exploring the theme of Faith in relation to Works.

Does faith alone take us to heaven, or is there more to it than that?

Geoffrey

## *Hymn – Fill your hearts with joy and gladness*

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9\\_mJ9G60f6w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_mJ9G60f6w)

Fill your hearts with joy and gladness,  
sing and praise your God and mine!  
Great the Lord in love and wisdom,  
might and majesty divine!  
He who framed the starry heavens  
knows and names them as they shine.

Praise the Lord, his people, praise him!  
Wounded souls his comfort know;  
those who fear him find his mercies,  
peace for pain and joy for woe;  
humble hearts are high exalted,  
human pride and power laid low.

Praise the Lord for times and seasons,  
cloud and sunshine, wind and rain;  
spring to melt the snows of winter  
till the waters flow again;  
grass upon the mountain pastures,  
golden valleys thick with grain.

Fill your hearts with joy and gladness,  
peace and plenty crown your days;  
love his laws, declare his judgements,  
walk in all his words and ways;  
he the Lord and we his children:  
praise the Lord, all people, praise!

### *Opening*

**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
and the love of God,  
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit  
be with us all.**

**Lord, direct our thoughts,  
teach us to pray,  
lift up our hearts to worship you  
in Spirit and in truth,  
through Jesus Christ. Amen**

## *Confession*

**Lord God, our maker and our redeemer,  
this is your world and we are your people:  
come among us and save us.**

**We have wilfully misused your  
gifts of creation;**

**Lord be merciful: forgive us our sin.**

**We have seen the ill-treatment of others  
and have not gone to their aid;**

**Lord be merciful: forgive us our sin.**

**We have ignored evil and dishonesty  
and failed to strive for justice;**

**Lord be merciful: forgive us our sin.**

**We have heard the good news of Christ,  
but have failed to share it with others;**

**Lord be merciful: forgive us our sin.**

**We have not loved you with all our heart,  
nor our neighbours as ourselves;**

**Lord be merciful: forgive us our sin.**

## *Absolution*

God who is both power and love,  
forgive us and free us from our sins,  
heal and strengthen us by his Spirit,  
and raise us to new life in Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

## *Jubilate*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8qS-7gh9tz0>

Jubilate, ev'rybody.

Serve the Lord in all your ways,  
And come before His presence singing,  
Enter now His courts with praise.

For the Lord our God is gracious,  
And His mercy's everlasting.

Jubilate, Jubilate,

Jubilate Deo! *(repeat a few times!)*

## *Scripture Reading*

*James 2:1-10, 14-17*

My brothers and sisters, do you with your acts of favouritism really believe in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ? For if a person with gold rings and in fine clothes comes into your assembly, and if a poor person in dirty clothes also comes in, and if you take notice of the one wearing the fine clothes and say, 'Have a seat here, please', while to the one who is poor you say, 'Stand there', or, 'Sit at my feet', have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?

Listen, my beloved brothers and sisters. Has not God chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom that he has promised to those who love him? But you have dishonoured the poor.

Is it not the rich who oppress you? Is it not they who drag you into court? Is it not they who blaspheme the excellent name that was invoked over you?

You do well if you really fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' But if you show partiality, you commit sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it.

What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill', and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*Hymn – When I needed a neighbour*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fExR7eOhJ00>

When I needed a neighbour  
Were you there, were you there?  
When I needed a neighbour, were you there?  
And the creed and the colour  
And the name won't matter  
Were you there?

I was hungry and thirsty  
Were you there, were you there?  
I was hungry and thirsty, were you there?  
And the creed and the colour  
And the name won't matter  
Were you there?

When I needed a shelter  
Were you there, were you there?  
When I needed a shelter were you there?  
And the creed and the colour  
And the name won't matter  
Were you there?

Wherever you travel  
I'll be there, I'll be there  
Wherever you travel, I'll be there  
And the creed and the colour  
And the name won't matter  
I'll be there.

## *Talk*

The letter that James wrote is scarily direct in describing a church where Jesus' values are being completely ignored! It's a timeless story.....

Once upon a time – our time, any time – there was a church community that had just been told it must raise some extra money. The roof has been leaking for a while, with some buckets in place to catch most of the drips.

People had got used to this, and weren't too worried, but the church architect has now insisted that urgent repair work must be done before it gets any worse.

The work will cost more than there is in the bank. It's a rainy day!

Then on the very next Sunday two new people come to the church for the first time, one dirty and poor, the other rich and sophisticated.

One is hardly noticed, the other is greeted warmly.

Which of the new arrivals received the warm welcome?

That depends, doesn't it?

James is clearly writing to a church that singled out the rich man. They welcomed him enthusiastically. He loved the deference he was paid as he was led to the best pew, and he was ever so friendly in return. After the service they gave him an extra chocolate biscuit, and started enquiring how he made his money.

People were thinking "Isn't this wonderful – he's the answer to prayer. Isn't God's timing good! It feels as if he's been sent to us at our time of need. Let's be really nice to him and then he'll give us all the money needed for our roof."

But the poor man was ignored.

Would it have been better if the dirty, poor man was welcomed warmly and rich man ignored?

I don't think so. James tells us not to be partial, not to make assumptions, not to judge by appearances.

Riches or poverty are outwards signs that tell us very little about the inner person. How can someone's appearance tell us if they are generous or mean?

A poor person might be really generous, sharing what little he has, not bothering with possessions. Or he might be really lazy and mean, demanding charity and leading an idle, selfish life.

A rich person might be greedy and selfish, making his money by paying low wages and charging high interest, or he might have worked all his life to build an enterprise that is wonderful to work for and far exceeds any social obligations.

Let's start again.

A rich man and a poor man came to church and they were both made very welcome. They were each asked where they would like to sit, someone gave them a service booklet and explained how the service would go.

They both joined in the act of worship and praise, thanksgiving and prayer, singing and silence, and both found a spiritual peace...

They'd found a community that valued them for who they were. It turned out that the poor man had been having a hard time, but was a skilled builder who turned his hand to sorting the roof.

The rich man enjoyed labouring up and down the scaffolding carrying the new tiles – they loved working together. All the able bodied in the church community joined in to help, within the constraints of health and safety, of course!

And soon the roof was fixed.

They'd enjoyed it so much that they wondered what they could do next?

They all agreed that there were many things they could do in the village around them. Doing odd jobs. Seeking out the hungry, the lonely, the sick, the miserable. Helping people connect with their neighbours and making them feel loved. It was as if God's love was flowing out of the church into all the area around.

And the illustration on the cover? What is that about? What do you think?

May we all find a way of expressing our faith through bringing more love to those around us, and sharing in the "good works" needed here in our community, helping to bring in God's Kingdom....

Amen.

### *Affirmation of faith*

**We believe in God the Father,  
from whom every family  
in heaven and on earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son,  
who lives in our hearts through faith,  
and fills us with his love.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit,  
who strengthens us  
with power from on high.**

**We believe in one God,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

## *The Peace*

Jesus says to his disciples,  
'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you.  
Not as the world gives do I give to you.  
Let not your hearts be troubled or afraid.'

**The peace of the Lord be always with us.**

*Hymn – Brother, sister, let me serve you*

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G\\_ufwqwquqY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G_ufwqwquqY)

Brother, sister, let me serve you,  
let me be as Christ to you;  
pray that I may have the grace to  
let you be my servant too.

We are pilgrims on a journey,  
and companions on the road;  
we are here to help each other  
walk the mile and bear the load.

I will hold the Christ-light for you  
in the night-time of your fear;  
I will hold my hand out to you,  
speak the peace you long to hear.

I will weep when you are weeping;  
when you laugh I'll laugh with you;  
I will share your joy and sorrow  
till we've seen this journey through.

When we sing to God in heaven  
we shall find such harmony,  
born of all we've known together  
of Christ's love and agony.



## *Prayers*

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

You sent your Son to bring  
good news to the poor,  
sight to the blind,  
freedom to captives  
and salvation to your people:  
anoint us with your Spirit;  
rouse us to work in his name.

Father, by your Spirit  
**bring in your kingdom.**

Send us out to encounter those in need,  
and work with them

Father, by your Spirit  
**bring in your kingdom.**

Send us to tell the world  
the good news of your healing love.

Father, by your Spirit  
**bring in your kingdom.**

Send us to comfort  
the sick, the lonely, the depressed.

Father, by your Spirit  
**bring in your kingdom.**

Send us to those who mourn,  
to bring sympathy and understanding where there is grief.

Father, by your Spirit  
**bring in your kingdom.**

**Merciful Father,  
accept these prayers  
for the sake of your Son,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ.  
Amen.**

Gathering our prayers and praises into one,  
as our Saviour has taught us, so we pray:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;  
thy kingdom come;  
thy will be done;  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who 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.**

### ***Collect***

Almighty God,  
whose only Son has opened for us  
a new and living way into your presence:  
give us pure hearts and steadfast wills  
to worship you in spirit and in truth;  
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**

## *Hymn – Give thanks with a grateful heart*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FMryBwOk2jk>

Give thanks with a grateful heart,  
give thanks to the Holy One,  
give thanks because He's given Jesus Christ, His Son.  
Give thanks with a grateful heart,  
give thanks to the Holy One,  
give thanks because He's given Jesus Christ, His Son.  
And now let the weak say, "I am strong",  
let the poor say, "I am rich  
because of what the Lord has done for us"  
And now let the weak say, "I am strong",  
Let the poor say, "I am rich  
because of what the Lord has done for us."  
*Repeat*

## *Closing Responses*

The Lord God almighty is our Father:  
**he loves us and tenderly cares for us.**

The Lord Jesus Christ is our Saviour:  
**he has redeemed us and will defend us to the end**

The Lord, the Holy Spirit is among us:  
**he will lead us in God's holy way.**

To God almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
**be praise and glory today and for ever. Amen.**

## *The Blessing*

The peace of God,  
which passes all understanding,  
keep our 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 us and remain with us always. **Amen.**

