

Ashburton and Moorland Team

TRINITY 4

10th July 2022



¶ The Gathering

In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Hymn – To God be the glory

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-15v9iworAU>

To God be the glory, great things he hath done:
so loved he the world that he gave us his son,
who yielded his life in atonement for sin,
and opened the life gate that all may go in.

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, let the earth hear his voice!

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, let the people rejoice!

*O come to the Father, through Jesus the Son,
and give him the glory, great things he hath done.*

O, perfect redemption, the purchase of blood,
to every believer the promise of God.
The vilest offender who truly believes,
that moment from Jesus a pardon receives.

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, let the earth hear his voice ...

Great things he hath taught us, great things he hath done,
and great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son,
but purer, and higher, and greater will be
our wonder, our rapture, when Jesus we see.

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, let the earth hear his voice...

Frances Jane van Alstyne
(1820-1915)

Prayer of Preparation

**Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Prayers of Penitence

The Summary of the Law

Our Lord Jesus Christ said:

The first commandment is this:

‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is the only Lord.
You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,
with all your soul, with all your mind,
and with all your strength.’

The second is this: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’

There is no other commandment greater than these.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Amen. Lord, have mercy.

Confession

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son Jesus Christ to save us from our sins, to be our advocate in heaven, and to bring us to eternal life.

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith, firmly resolved to keep God’s commandments and to live in love and peace with all.

**Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
we have sinned against you
and against our neighbour
in thought and word and deed,
through negligence, through weakness,
through our own deliberate fault.**

**We are truly sorry and repent of all our sins.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, who died for us,
forgive us all that is past
and grant that we may serve you in newness of life
to the glory of your name. Amen.**

Almighty God,
who forgives all who truly repent,
have mercy upon us,
pardon and deliver us from all our sins,
confirm and strengthen us in all goodness,
and keep us in life eternal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Gloria in Excelsis

**Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.**

**Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.**

**For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

The Collect

O God, the protector of all who trust in you,
without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy:
increase and multiply upon us your mercy;
that with you as our ruler and guide
we may so pass through things temporal
that we lose not our hold on things eternal;
grant this, heavenly Father,
for our Lord Jesus Christ's sake,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

¶ The Liturgy of the Word

Readings

Deuteronomy 30.9-14

Moses spoke to the people saying, The Lord your God will make you abundantly prosperous in all your undertakings, in the fruit of your body, in the fruit of your livestock, and in the fruit of your soil. For the Lord will again take delight in prospering you, just as he delighted in prospering your ancestors, when you obey the Lord your God by observing his commandments and decrees that are written in this book of the law, because you turn to the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

Surely, this commandment that I am commanding you today is not too hard for you, nor is it too far away. It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will go up to heaven for us, and get it for us so that we may hear it and observe it?' Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will cross to the other side of the sea for us, and get it for us so that we may hear it and observe it?' No, the word is very near to you; it is in your mouth and in your heart for you to observe.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Colossians 1.1-14

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,

To the saints and faithful brothers and sisters in Christ in Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

In our prayers for you we always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. You have heard of this hope before in the word of the truth, the gospel that has come to you. Just as it is bearing fruit and growing in the whole world, so it has been bearing fruit among yourselves from the day you heard it and truly comprehended the grace of God. This you learned from Epaphras, our beloved fellow-servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf, and he has made known to us your love in the Spirit.

For this reason, since the day we heard it, we have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you may lead lives worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, as you bear fruit in every good work and as you grow in the knowledge of God. 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.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn – He who would valiant be

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_SL-mHuSymA

He who would valiant be
'gainst all disaster,
let him in constancy
follow the Master.

There's no discouragement
shall make him once relent
his first avowed intent
to be a pilgrim.

Who so beset him round
with dismal stories
do but themselves confound
his strength the more is.
No foes shall stay his might;
though he with giants fight,
he will make good his right
to be a pilgrim.

Since, Lord, thou dost defend
us with thy Spirit,
We know we at the end,
shall life inherit.

Then fancies flee away!
I'll fear not what men say,
I'll labour night and day
to be a pilgrim.

Percy Dearmer (1867-1936)
after John Bunyan (1628-1688)

Gospel Reading

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke
Glory to you, O Lord.

Luke 10.25-37

A lawyer stood up to test Jesus. ‘Teacher,’ he said, ‘what must I do to inherit eternal life?’ He said to him, ‘What is written in the law? What do you read there?’ He answered, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself.’ And he said to him, ‘You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.’

But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, ‘And who is my neighbour?’ Jesus replied, ‘A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan while travelling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, “Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.” Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?’ He said, ‘The one who showed him mercy.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Go and do likewise.’

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

The Sermon

I must have read the parable of the Good Samaritan a hundred times, but when I read it again in preparation for today’s service, one phrase jumped out at me that I’d never really noticed before:

‘When he saw him, he was moved with pity.’

The Samaritan was moved with pity when he saw an injured man. And that’s what distinguished him from the others.

I guess everyone feels pity from time to time? I know I do.

It can be for small things, like when a young bird flies into our glass patio doors with a loud bang. I always hope to see them get up and fly away, and they normally do, though sometimes it can take a while before they stir and rather groggily get back on their feet.

If they are just lying there, I will go out and make sure they are safe and comfortable – if necessary moving them to a sheltered place to recover. And I'll make sure Bridey (our spaniel) is kept well away.

Feeling pity for the young bird moves me to take action if necessary; and then I then feel pleased when they have recovered after my action. Pity moves me. If I did nothing and took no action, I would feel I had let the bird down.

The Samaritan was moved by the pity he felt, and was moved to do something about it.

Pity can be on any scale – like the feeling I guess almost everyone got when first seeing the people of Ukraine being made homeless, so many women and children being forced to flee; or when reading about a particularly brutal mass shooting, such as in a school.

We feel for them, we feel pity. Though perhaps pity is sometimes too weak a word – a stronger word is to say we feel “compassion.” And feel it deep inside, an almost a physical feeling. Some people have told me that they find themselves crying when they see these distressing images on TV. They are indeed disturbing images.

And it's wonderful how many people have been moved to action in some of the recent crises, responding when they can see that there is something that they can do.

Sadly, there seems to be very little, apart from prayer, that we can do about the shootings in America. But lots of people are making a big difference to the Ukrainians – raising large sums of money, and taking in refugees. About 90,000 Ukrainian refugees are now in the UK – indeed I met a Ukrainian family being shown round Widcombe Church on Sunday.

In Jesus' story, the important thing was the Samaritan was moved to action. He was “moved” by pity, he wanted to do something for the injured man. He didn't just walk past and do nothing.

I wonder whether the Priest or the Levite felt any pity? Jesus doesn't spell this out, just commenting that they passed by on the other side. It may be they were moved in a different way, by an opposite feeling, of revulsion.

Just as pity drives us to want to become involved, so revulsion can make us withdraw. For example, if something is too gory the BBC quite properly warns people that they might find it upsetting. Sometimes we do have to overcome revulsion in order to allow pity to move us.

But I suspect the Priest and the Levite weren't driven away by revulsion, but were simply suppressing any feelings of pity. They had become hardened, training themselves not to be drawn into difficult situations. Excusing themselves by arguing they had an important meeting or a Synagogue service to lead. They discovered it's possible to suppress pity if you work at it. It might even be seen as a good, professional attitude.

For example, it used to be that hospital doctors and nurses were trained to be unemotional, to be professional and not be drawn in, not to show their feelings. But in recent years there's been a turnaround – and they are being encouraged to show support, to show they care, to be sympathetic.

I would argue that this is a great step forward, allowing themselves to be human, to respond naturally.

But even the kindest and most caring of people find that when, say, they are flooded with distressing images day after day, each time they will feel them less, with pity being blunted by constant repetition. It's called Compassion Fatigue.

Similar to when yet another Charity Appeal comes through the letterbox – we can't support them all. The advertisers are relying on stimulating our sense of pity, but in fact are only blunting it. We become de-sensitised, and react less.

This could have happened to the Good Samaritan. What if he had come across another injured person a mile further on, and then another? Would he have been able to deal with them all?

I'm afraid it's all a bit messy, like the real world, and we have to make our own decisions about doing what we can, when we can.

But being "moved to pity" was all that mattered in Jesus' story, the perfect example of how everyone should be.

What the Samaritan believed was irrelevant. Where he came from (a despised people) was irrelevant. Living a holy life was irrelevant. Being important was irrelevant.

What mattered was what he felt, and how he then acted.

Sometimes I feel that some Christians get this back-to-front, focussing on what to believe rather than how to act.

But we learn from Jesus in this story that everyone is our neighbour, and that showing empathy, care and pity for our neighbours is to be a true Christian.

May we all allow ourselves to be moved by pity more often...

Amen.

The Nicene Creed

***I / We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.***

***I / We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.***

***For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and was made man.***

***For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.***

**On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**I / We believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

I / We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

I / We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

**I / We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come.**

Amen.

The Peace

We are the body of Christ.

In the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body.

Let us then pursue all that makes for peace
and builds up our common life.

The peace of the Lord be always with us.

Hymn – When I needed a neighbour

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fExR7eOhJO0>

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.

Sidney Carter
(1913- 2004)

Prayers of Intercession

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

Lord, in your mercy
hear our prayer.

Lord God, as we thank you for your love,
we bring before you the needs of others and of ourselves.
Help us now to bring to mind all the concerns on our hearts
and to lay them before you,

Lord in your mercy
Hear our prayer.

Lord, in days of uncertainty, make us quiet and prayerful;
in days of challenge, make us stronger in you;
in days of emptiness, take possession of us;
in days of waiting, open our hearts to the mystery of your cross.

Lord, in your mercy
hear our prayer.

Lord God, we pray for the leaders of nations
as they decide on strategies for tackling waves of Covid,
and as they balance the need
for future prosperity against current caution,

Lord, in your mercy
hear our prayer.

Lord Jesus Christ,
you taught us to love our neighbour,
and to care for those in need as if we were caring for you.
In this time of anxiety, give us strength
to comfort the fearful, the lonely, the exhausted,
and to assure them isolated of our love and of your love,
for your name's sake.

Lord, in your mercy
hear our prayer.

Gracious God,
give skill, sympathy, strength and resilience
to all who are caring for the sick.
We pray for those who are distressed and exhausted.
Strengthen them with your Spirit,
that through their work many will be restored to health.

Lord, in your mercy
hear our prayer.

God of compassion,
be close to those who are ill or afraid,
and especially the people we know
who are suffering from anxiety or stress
In their loneliness, be their consolation;
in their anxiety, be their hope;
in their darkness, be their light;

Lord, in your mercy
hear our prayer.

Heavenly Father

We thank you for the lives of those we love but see no longer,
who now rest in your heavenly kingdom.

We pray for those mourning the loss of loved ones
that you may bring them comfort and peace.

Lord, in your mercy
hear our prayer.

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

The Lord's Prayer

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.
Silence is kept.

Hymn – The Servant King

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

From heaven you came, helpless babe,
Entered our world, your glory veiled;
Not to be served but to serve,
And give your life that we might live.

*This is our God, the Servant King,
He calls us now to follow him,
To bring our lives as a daily offering
Of worship to the Servant King.*

There in the garden of tears,
My heavy load he chose to bear;
His heart with sorrow was torn,
'Yet not my will but yours,' he said.

This is our God, the Servant King,

Come, see his hands and his feet,
The scars that speak of sacrifice,
Hands that flung stars into space
To cruel nails surrendered.

This is our God, the Servant King,

So let us learn how to serve,
And in our lives enthrone him;
Each other's needs to prefer,
For it is Christ we're serving.

This is our God, the Servant King,

Graham Kendrick

© 1983 Kingsway Thankyou Music

¶ Ending

Eternal God,
comfort of the afflicted and healer of the broken,
teach us the ways of gentleness and peace,
that all the world may acknowledge
the kingdom of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

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.