

A Benefice Service of Holy Communion for Sunday – August 9th 2020

Welcome and Introduction

Welcome to a benefice service of Holy Communion. Today we hear that Jesus is with us in the drama of our lives, but we are encouraged to seek him in peace and quietness. Our sermon is given by the Rt Revd Olivia Graham, Bishop of Reading and our hymns are led by the choir of St Martin-in-the Fields. Judy and Bryan read for us, Cate Whitehead plays for us between readings, and John and Rita lead us in our prayers of intercession. Thanks to them all. For the Communion you may like to have before you some bread and wine, or something else to eat and drink. This will be blessed in the service, that it might be for you the strength, love, presence and peace of Jesus. When I break the bread you may like to do that also. If you are sharing this moment with someone with you, you may like to serve each other. Whether you have prepared your table or not be assured that as members of Christ's family we are one body, and our communion is with God, who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Janet: Through Christ let us offer our sacrifice of praise to God.

All: **Let our lips proclaim his name.**

Janet: This is the day that the Lord has made.

All: **Let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

Hymn

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 judgments,
walk in all his words and ways;
he the Lord and we his children:
praise the Lord, all people, praise!

*Timothy Dudley-Smith (b.1926) from Psalm 147
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Greeting

Janet: The Lord be with you;
All: **and also with you.**

An invitation to confession

Janet:
The grace of God has dawned upon the world with healing for all.
Let us come to him, in sorrow for our sins, seeking healing and salvation.

A moment for reflection...

We confess our sins

Janet: Friend of sinners, you bring hope in our despair.
Lord, have mercy.
All: **Lord, have mercy**

Janet: Healer of the sick, you give strength in our weakness.
Christ, have mercy.
All: **Christ, have mercy.**

Janet: Destroyer of evil, you bring life in our dying.
Lord, have mercy.
All: **Lord, have mercy.**

We receive God's forgiveness

Janet:
May the God of all mercies cleanse you from your sins, and restore you in his image to the
praise and glory of his name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Collect

Let us pray:
**All: Almighty God, who sent your Holy Spirit to be the life and light of your Church: open
our hearts to the riches of your grace, that we may bring forth the fruit of the Spirit in
love and joy and peace; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord. Amen.**

⁹At that place he came to a cave and spent the night there.

Then the word of the LORD came to him, saying, 'What are you doing here, Elijah?' ¹⁰He answered, 'I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away.'

¹¹He said, 'Go out and stand on the mountain before the LORD, for the LORD is about to pass by.' Now there was a great wind, so strong that it was splitting mountains and breaking rocks in pieces before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake; ¹²and after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of sheer silence. ¹³When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave.

This is the word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Two songs of praise:

'Come now is the time to worship' and 'O Lord my God...How great thou art!'

Played by Cate Whitehead

The Gospel

Matthew 14.22-33

²²Immediately he made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. ²³And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, ²⁴but by this time the boat, battered by the waves, was far from the land, for the wind was against them. ²⁵And early in the morning he came walking towards them on the lake. ²⁶But when the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified, saying, 'It is a ghost!' And they cried out in fear. ²⁷But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, 'Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid.' ²⁸Peter answered him, 'Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.' ²⁹He said, 'Come.' So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came towards Jesus. ³⁰But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, 'Lord, save me!' ³¹Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, 'You of little faith, why did you doubt?' ³²When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. ³³And those in the boat worshipped him, saying, 'Truly you are the Son of God.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Prayers of Intercession

(At the end)

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

We share God's Peace

Janet:

God has called us to live in peace. The peace of the Lord be always with you.

All: and also with you.

Please share the peace with anyone with you. If joining in on Zoom you may like to hold your hands out with palms up to offer peace to other. God's peace be with you.

Hymn

I come with joy, a child of God,
forgiven, loved and free,
the life of Jesus to recall,
in love laid down for me.

I come with Christians far and near
to find, as all are fed,
the new community of love
in Christ's communion bread.

As Christ breaks bread, and bids us share,
each proud division ends.
The love that made us, makes us one,
and strangers now are friends.

The Spirit of the risen Christ,
unseen, but ever near,
is in such friendship better known,
alive among us here.

Together met, together bound
by all that God has done,
we'll go with joy, to give the world
the love that makes us one.

Janet: The Lord is here.

All: **His Spirit is with us.**

Janet: Lift up your hearts.

All: **We lift them to the Lord.**

Janet: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: **It is right to give thanks and praise.**

Janet:

And now we give you thanks because Jesus breathed upon his disciples the power of your Spirit to proclaim the good news to all peoples.

Father, you made the world and love your creation. You gave your Son Jesus Christ to be our Saviour. His dying and rising have set us free from sin and death. And so we gladly thank you, with saints and angels praising you, and saying:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

We praise and bless you, loving Father, through Jesus Christ, our Lord;
and as we obey his command, send your Holy Spirit,
that broken bread and wine outpoured
and the food and drink we have before us and prepared in our homes
may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son
and the means of his grace, love, strength and peace.

We read from the Letter to the Corinthians:

The Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said,
'This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'

In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying,
'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.'

Janet: Great is the mystery of faith.

All: **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread, and forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.

Janet: We break this bread to share in the Body of Christ.

All: **Though we are many, we are one body, because we all share in one bread.**

Janet: The free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

All: **By his mercy we present our whole lives to God as a living sacrifice.**

*We eat and drink what God has blessed before us and listen to –
'God be in my head and in my understanding' – Nicholson*

Janet: Holy Father, who gathered us here around the table of your Son to share this meal with the whole household of God: in that new world where you reveal the fullness of your peace, gather people of every race and language to share in the eternal banquet of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

All: **Father of all, we give you thanks and praise that when we were still far off you met us in your Son and brought us home. Dying and living, he declared your love, gave us grace, and opened the gate of glory. May we who share Christ's body live his risen life; we who drink his cup bring life to others; we whom the Spirit lights give light to the world. Keep us firm in the hope you have set before us, so we, and all your children shall be free, and the whole earth live to praise your name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

We affirm our faith and trust in God

Janet: Do you believe and trust in God the Father,
who made the world?

All: **We believe and trust in Him.**

Janet: Do you believe and trust in his Son, Jesus Christ,
who redeemed mankind?

All: **We believe and trust in him.**

Janet: Do you believe and trust in his Holy Spirit,
who gives life to the people of God?

All: **We believe and trust in him.**

Janet: This is the faith of the Church.

All: **This is our faith. We believe and trust in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

We are encouraged as we go forward into the week ahead

Hymn

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 fiery, 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 of praises, songs of praises,
I will ever give to thee,
I will ever give to thee.

William Williams (1717-1791), tr Peter Williams (1727-1796)

The Blessing

May God give you his comfort and his peace,
his light and his joy,
in this world and the next;
and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be with you all,
now and always. **Amen.**

Janet: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All: **In the name of Christ. Amen.**