

The Eleventh Sunday after Trinity

16th August 2026



In the name of the + Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

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

Prayer of Preparation

HYMN

1 O THOU not made with hands,
Not throned above the skies,
Nor walled with shining walls,
Nor framed with stones of price,
More bright than gold or gem,
God's own Jerusalem!

3 Thou art where'er the proud
In humbleness melts down;
Where self itself yields up;
Where martyrs win their crown;
Where faithful souls possess
Themselves in perfect peace;

2 Where'er the gentle heart
Finds courage from above;
Where'er the heart forsook
Warms with the breath of love;
Where faith bids fear depart,
City of God, thou art.

4 Where in life's common ways
With cheerful feet we go;
Where in his steps we tread,
Who trod the way of woe;
Where he is in the heart,
City of God, thou art.

5 Not throned above the skies,
Nor golden-walled afar,
But where Christ's two or three
In his name gathered are,
Be in the midst of them,
God's own Jerusalem.

Confession

God of mercy
Long-suffering, full of grace and truth,
You create us from nothing and give us life.
You give your faithful people new life in the water of baptism.
We confess that we have sinned
Against you and our neighbour.
We have wounded your love and marred your image in us.
Restore us for the sake of your Son,
And bring us to heavenly joy,
In Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Almighty God,
who in Jesus Christ has given us
a kingdom that cannot be destroyed,
forgive us our sins, +
open our eyes to God's truth,
strengthen us to do God's will
and give us the joy of his kingdom,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

O God, you declare your almighty power
most chiefly in showing mercy and pity:
mercifully grant to us such a measure of your grace,
that we, running the way of your commandments,
may receive your gracious promises,
and be made partakers of your heavenly treasure;
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

Salvation for Others

56 This is what the Lord says:

"Maintain justice
and do what is right,
for my salvation is close at hand
and my righteousness will soon be revealed.

6 And foreigners who bind themselves to the Lord
to minister to him,
to love the name of the Lord,
and to be his servants,
all who keep the Sabbath without desecrating it
and who hold fast to my covenant—

7 these I will bring to my holy mountain
and give them joy in my house of prayer.

Their burnt offerings and sacrifices
will be accepted on my altar;
for my house will be called
a house of prayer for all nations."

8 The Sovereign Lord declares—
he who gathers the exiles of Israel:
"I will gather still others to them
besides those already gathered."

This is the word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

May God be gracious to us and bless us
and make his face shine on us—
2 so that your ways may be known on earth,
your salvation among all nations.
3 May the peoples praise you, God;
may all the peoples praise you.
4 May the nations be glad and sing for joy,
for you rule the peoples with equity
and guide the nations of the earth.
5 May the peoples praise you, God;
may all the peoples praise you.
6 The land yields its harvest;
God, our God, blesses us.
7 May God bless us still,
so that all the ends of the earth will fear him.



A Reading from The New Testament
Romans 11. 1-2a, 29-32

11 I ask then: Did God reject his people? By no means! I am an Israelite myself, a descendant of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin. 2 God did not reject his people, whom he foreknew.

...29 for God's gifts and his call are irrevocable. 30 Just as you who were at one time disobedient to God have now received mercy as a result of their disobedience, 31 so they too have now become disobedient in order that they too may now receive mercy as a result of God's mercy to you. 32 For God has bound everyone over to disobedience so that he may have mercy on them all.

This is the word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

HYMN

Christ is the world's Light, he and no other;
born in our darkness, he became our brother.
If we have seen him, we have seen the Father:
glory to God on high.

Christ is the world's Peace, he and no other;
no man can serve him and despise his brother
who else unites us, one in God the Father?
Glory to God on high

Christ is the world's Life, he and no other;
sold once for silver, murdered here, our Brother -
he who redeems us, reigns with God the Father:
Glory to God on high

Give God the glory, God and no other;
give God the glory, Spirit, Son and Father;
give God the glory, God in man my brother:
glory to God on high

..Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia.
I am the light of the world, says the Lord
Whoever follows me shall not walk in darkness
but will have the light of life.
Alleluia.

The holy Gospel is written in the 15th Chapter of the Gospel according to Matthew beginning at the 10th verse.

Glory be to thee, O Lord

10 Jesus called the crowd to him and said, "Listen and understand. 11 What goes into someone's mouth does not defile them, but what comes out of their mouth, that is what defiles them."

12 Then the disciples came to him and asked, "Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this?"

13 He replied, "Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be pulled up by the roots. 14 Leave them; they are blind guides. If the blind lead the blind, both will fall into a pit."

15 Peter said, "Explain the parable to us."

16 "Are you still so dull?" Jesus asked them. 17 "Don't you see that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and then out of the body? 18 But the things that come out of a person's mouth come from the heart, and these defile them. 19 For out of the heart come evil thoughts—murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. 20 These are what defile a person; but eating with unwashed hands does not defile them."

21 Leaving that place, Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. 22 A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is demon-possessed and suffering terribly."

23 Jesus did not answer a word. So his disciples came to him and urged him, "Send her away, for she keeps crying out after us."

24 He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel."

25 The woman came and knelt before him. "Lord, help me!" she said.

26 He replied, "It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to the dogs."

27 "Yes it is, Lord," she said. "Even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table."

28 Then Jesus said to her, "Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted." And her daughter was healed at that moment.

This is the Gospel of the Lord

Praise be to thee, O Christ

Reflection

The reading from their prophet Isaiah expands his hearer's thinking. This special relationship in which they understand themselves is not exclusive. Any foreigners who choose to join them are to be welcomed and God will regard them as he regards those born into this relationship. Israel is to do what reflects the character of God for from them will come deliverance for all the world; they are to exemplify God's nature, God's kingdom.

The psalmist continues this theme; all peoples and all nations will come to know and praise God. This kingdom is very porous. Like a cracked water pot, it leaks everywhere on the earth to all people and all who are touched by this living water find life.

Paul, writing to the gentile (non-Jewish) Christians, comments on the seeming rejection by the Jews of Jesus. This is meant for this time, he says, in order that the message of the love of God in Jesus may 'leak' out, may spread throughout the world and not be contained within one group of people. But they are not 'passed over' for God's promises cannot be recalled. They are also in this Kingdom.

This idea of God's Kingdom spreading throughout creation finds concrete expression in Jesus. His first recorded words are "Stop and listen, change your way of thinking for the Kingdom of God is here"! He is the living presence of the Kingdom and from him it will not leak but gush out. "If anyone thirsts let him come to me and drink and out of his innermost being will flow rivers of living water"!

But having a Kingdom in your midst can be a disturbing thing and those who liked to keep a tight control on who is in and who is out, were ever looking to find fault with the inclusive freedom that Jesus brought wherever he went.

They fussed about rules and regulations and criticised his actions. But Jesus plays them at their own game. "You fuss about outward things, and you go overboard in obeying them, but in so doing you use them to serve your own ends – you are hypocrites (lit. actors)."

Jesus is not calling into question the assumed biblical regulations about foods and purity. He is stating the higher priority of purity of heart and mind. It should be a word that strikes to our heart too. We can do a lot to appear right, but what are we inside – what is our heart attitude?

In the account of the healing of the Syro-Phoenician girl we see the inclusiveness of this Kingdom outworked.

Jesus seeks a time of quiet before the turmoil of the end which he knew was close. He has journeyed away from Jewish towns and is in gentile country where no Jew would be likely to follow him. The girl's mother, a gentile, must have heard something about him as she follows, crying desperately for help. It is a strange story for Jesus seems reluctant to help. But look again and what we see is Jesus wanting her to make a move in her thinking from the idea that he is just some wonder-worker to exercising faith in God.

She follows, she calls, she comes, she kneels, and she entreats. Jesus' words are not harsh but to bring her to an understanding that it is the God of Israel who is her source. The interplay of words between them are said with affection and a ready wit in which Jesus sees the growth of her indomitable faith. The Greek suggests an exclamation from Jesus 'Oh dear lady! You have great faith...'

Spending time with these texts reminds us of the inclusivity of the Kingdom of God. Jesus words challenge us to examine what comes out of our mouths as being a reflection of what is in our hearts.

Significant is the picture of Jesus always crossing barriers in this inclusive Kingdom. He always brings the healing water of the Kingdom. He illustrates Isaiah's justice, equity, and mercy and the psalmist's love of God for all nations.

I am reminded of a watery illustration. Stand some pond water in a glass jar and it will settle with water at the top which looks clear and clean and the debris at the bottom – but give it a nudge and the debris will soon show itself. If we want a topical and practical example to nudge us – what sort of xenophobic debris is stirred up by stories of people risking their lives in the hope of finding a better one here?

The Creed

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is,

seen and unseen.
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.
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.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come.
Amen.

Intercessions

Almighty God
you have called us to be one to live in unity and harmony
and yet we are divided.
race from race,
faith from faith,
rich from poor,
old from young,
neighbour from neighbour.
O Lord by whose cross all enmity is brought to an end
break down the walls that separate us,
tear down the fences of indifference and hatred,
free us from pride and self-seeking.
Overcome our prejudices and fears,
give us courage to open ourselves to others.
by the power of your spirit make us one.

Lord God the story of your love for us makes us realise that there are many others
as well as ourselves who need your help.
So we bring prayers to you:

for those who suffer pain.

those whose minds are disturbed, or have never matured,

for those who have not had the opportunity to realise their potential

for those who are satisfied with something less than the life for which they were made

for those who know their guilt, their shallowness, their need, but who do not know of Jesus.

for those who know that they must shortly die

for those who cannot wait to die.

Lord God your son has taken all our sufferings upon himself and has transformed them.

Help us to offer these prayers, to take the sufferings of others upon ourselves and so by your grace become the agents of your transforming love.

We pray for those we have known and loved but see no more.

We give thanks for their lives and all they gave to us.

May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

As we ask for your merciful aid, we also give thanks.

- for human skill and creativity
and all that reveals your loveliness.
- for all that enriches our daily lives.
for human love and friendship
for all that is gracious in the lives of men,
women and children.
- For the gift of your word,
the grace of the sacraments
and the fellowship of your people.

Let us commend ourselves, and all for whom we pray,
to the mercy and protection of God.

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

Being made one by the power of the Spirit,
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.

Forgive us our sins

as we forgive those who sin against us.

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.

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.
Amen

And the peace of God,
Which passes all understanding,
Keep your 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 with you, and remain with you always
Amen

HYMN

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord!
Unnumbered blessings give my spirit voice;
Tender to me the promise of His Word;
In God my Saviour shall my heart rejoice.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of His name!
Make known His might, the deeds His arm has
done;
His mercy sure, from age to age the same;
His holy Name, the Lord, the mighty One.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of His might!
Powers and dominions lay their glory by;
Proud hearts and stubborn wills are put to flight;
The hungry fed, the humble lifted high

Tell out, my soul, the glories of His Word!
Firm is His promise, and His mercy sure.
Tell out my soul, the greatness of the Lord
To children's children and forevermore!