



ST. LAURENCE CHURCH
DIOCESE OF CANTERBURY
CHANGED LIVES - CHANGING LIVES
THE PARISH EUCHARIST
SERVICE CELEBRATED IN CELTIC
STYLE

THE SECOND SUNDAY BEFORE
ADVENT- YEAR A
19.11.2023



The Zoom details for this service are:

Meeting ID: 457 244 0784

Passcode: 5i1UCa

The sidemen today are: Ali Jones and Diana Ringer

Introit Hymn

All my hope on God is founded;
 he doth still my trust renew.
 Me through change and chance he
 guideth, only good and only true.

God unknown, he alone
 calls my heart to be his own.

Human pride and earthly glory,
 sword and crown betray his trust;
 what with care and toil he buildeth,
 tower and temple, fall to dust.

But God's power, hour by hour,
 is my temple and my tower.

God's great goodness aye
 endureth,
 deep his wisdom, passing thought:

splendour, light, and life attend him,
 beauty springeth out of naught.
 Evermore from his store
 new-born worlds rise and adore.

Daily doth th' Almighty giver
 bounteous gifts on us bestow;
 his desire our soul delighteth,
 pleasure leads us where we go.
 Love doth stand at his hand;
 joy doth wait on his command.

Still from earth to God eternal
 sacrifice of praise be done,
 high above all praises praising
 for the gift of Christ his Son.
 Christ doth call one and all:
 ye who follow shall not fall.

Welcome/The Gathering

Gather us in, the lost and the lonely,
 the broken and breaking, the tired
 and aching, who long for the
 nourishment found at your feast.

Gather us in

The done and the doubting, the
 wishing and wondering, the puzzled
 and pondering, who long for your
 company, found at your feast.

Gather us in

The proud and pretentious the sure
 and superior the never inferior who
 long for the levelling found at your
 feast.

Gather us in

The bright and the bustling, the
 stirrers, the shakers, the kind
 laughter makers who long for the
 deeper joys found at your feast.

Gather us in

From corner or limelight, from mansion or campsite, from fears and

obsession, from tears and depression, from untold excesses, from treasured successes; to meet, to eat, to be given a seat; be joined to the vine; be offered new wine; become like the least; be found at the feast.

Gather us in!

Confession

Create a clean heart within me, O God, so that it may become your chosen shelter and the resting place of the Holy Spirit. I take the cross upon me, over the tablet of my heart, and I beseech the living God of the universe, may the light of lights come to my dark hard heart so that I may live in the power of your love. Amen.

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

Collect

Heavenly Father, whose blessed Son was revealed to destroy the works of the devil and to make us the children of God and heirs of eternal life: grant that we, having this hope, may purify ourselves even as he is pure; that when he shall appear in power and great

glory we may be made like him in his eternal and glorious kingdom; where he is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

First Reading - 1 Thessalonians 5:1-6 read by Liz Hatcher

A reading from the first letter of St. Paul to the Thessalonians

Concerning times and seasons, brothers and sisters, you have no need for anything to be written to you. For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief at night. When people are saying, "Peace and security, "then sudden disaster comes upon them, like labour pains upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.

But you, brothers and sisters, are not in darkness, for that day to overtake you like a thief. For all of you are children of the light and children of the day. We are not of the night or of darkness. Therefore, let us not sleep as the rest do, but let us stay alert and sober.

This is the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Gradual Hymn:

In Christ there is no east or west,
in him no south or north,
but one great fellowship of love
throughout the whole wide earth.

In Christ shall true hearts
ev'rywhere
their high communion find.

His service is the golden cord
close binding humankind.

Join hands, then, people of the faith,
whate'er your race may be.

All children of the living God
are surely kin to me.

In Christ now meet both east and
west,

in him meet south and north.

All Christly souls are joined as one
throughout the whole wide earth.

Gospel Reading-Matthew 25:14-30

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia,

The kingdom of God is at hand.

Repent and believe in the Gospel.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia,

The Lord be with you

And also with you

A reading from the gospel according to
Matthew

Glory to Christ our Lord

“Again, it will be like a man going on
a journey, who called his servants
and entrusted his wealth to them. To
one he gave five bags of gold, to
another two bags, and to another
one bag,[a] each according to his
ability. Then he went on his journey.
The man who had received five
bags of gold went at once and put
his money to work and gained five
bags more. So also, the one with
two bags of gold gained two more.
But the man who had received one
bag went off, dug a hole in the
ground and hid his master’s money.

“After a long time the master of
those servants returned and settled

accounts with them. The man who
had received five bags of gold
brought the other five. ‘Master,’ he
said, ‘you entrusted me with five
bags of gold. See, I have gained five
more.’

“His master replied, ‘Well done,
good and faithful servant! You have
been faithful with a few things; I will
put you in charge of many things.
Come and share your master’s ^{happiness!}’

“The man with two bags of gold also
came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you
entrusted me with two bags of gold;
see, I have gained two more.’

“His master replied, ‘Well done,
good and faithful servant! You have
been faithful with a few things; I will
put you in charge of many things.
Come and share your master’s
happiness!’

“Then the man who had received
one bag of gold came. ‘Master,’ he
said, ‘I knew that you are a hard
man, harvesting where you have not
sown and gathering where you have
not scattered seed. So I was afraid
and went out and hid your gold in the
ground. See, here is what belongs
to you.’

“His master replied, ‘You wicked,
lazy servant! So you knew that I
harvest where I have not sown and
gather where I have not scattered
seed? Well then, you should have
put my money on deposit with the
bankers, so that when I returned I
would have received it back with
interest.’

“So take the bag of gold from him and give it to the one who has ten bags. For whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

This is the Gospel of the Lord,
Praise to you, O Christ.

Reflection

Affirmation of Faith

There is no other God, there never was and there never will be, than God the Father, unbegotten and without beginning, the Lord of the universe, as we have been taught.

And His son Jesus Christ, whom we declare to have always been with the Father in a way that baffles description. He was made man, defeated death and received into heaven by the Father and given power over all names, in heaven, on earth and under the earth.

We believe in Him and look for His coming soon as a judge of all, treating everyone according to their faith and deeds. He has poured out His Spirit on us in abundance, the gift and guarantee of eternal life. We acknowledge and adore Him as one God in the Trinity of the Holy Name. Amen.

The Prayers of the Church led by Peter Wyllie

Loving God, we offer our prayers now for all people and their situations; for lives that are going through upheaval or distress; for circumstances which only you can change.

Lord in your mercy: **Hear our prayer.**

We pray for the Church throughout the world, remembering those Christians in countries where their beliefs make them vulnerable and in danger. Uphold and strengthen all who are persecuted for their faith. We pray for hostages and their families and loved ones from whom they are separated.

We give thanks for this church and parish. May we point the way to God’s Kingdom in our community and welcome all who are seeking through our doors.

Lord in your mercy: **Hear our prayer.**

Creator God, we pray for peace in the world, for understanding between nations, religions and factions and for an end to old scores which remain unsettled. We especially pray for the peoples of the Middle East as the conflict continues and for Christian, Muslim

and Jew, that they may live alongside one another in mutual respect and harmony. We pray too for fair shares and fair trade and that the talents of the workers of the world are fairly rewarded.

Lord in your mercy: **Hear our prayer.**

Father God, we thank you for the gifts, talents and abilities you have given each of us praying that a deeper understanding of those talents can be used and shared within our church and community. Set us free from the fear that makes us inward looking. Give us a renewed generosity with our time, our talents and our treasure. Give us a renewed concern for those who are struggling in our congregations and our communities. Give us a renewed vision of what it is for us to be your church, in this place, at this time.

Lord in your mercy: **Hear our prayer.**

Forgiving God, send your healing forgiveness to all who are suffering feelings of guilt, shame or regret. Help to mend broken relationships. Be with all who feel that, through advancing years or failing health, they cannot enjoy life as it used to be.

Lord in your mercy: **Hear our prayer.**

May those who are learning to live a new pattern of life feel that you are walking beside them. We especially pray for the sick and suffering and give you thanks for those who are on the road to recovery. We pray for Robbie Robinson, Eleanor Ash, David Winston, Christian Jarvis-Read, Jan Edwards, Jill Fitzpatrick, Nigel Lemon, Ray Wicks, Hilary Deller, Georgie Whitaker, Helen Whitaker.

Lord in your mercy: **Hear our prayer.**

Merciful God, we remember those who have died and for those who are bereaved. May the light of Christ which eternally shines bring hope to their dark places. We especially pray for those whose anniversary falls at this time.

We pray for those recently departed: Ken Davis, Sophie Ford

And all those whose years' mind occur this month: Camillus Travers, Frederick Wood, Freda Ross-Thomson, Audrey Warren, Elsie Williams, Alan Vaughan, Joyce Fawcett, Paddy Turner, Niko Vaughan, John Mitham, Lynne Wood, Audrey Buss, Eddie Mole, Muriel Roberts, Elinor Michalski Leon Michalski

Gracious God, forgive us when we only turn to you when things trouble us and when we forget to thank you

for your blessings and bounty. Help us to recognise all the wonderful things in your world for which we should be grateful and send us out into the coming week ready to show our gratitude in all that we do and say.

Faithful God, at the start of this new week and recognising your trust in us to live and preach the Gospel make us always more ready to please you rather than to seek the praise of the secular world

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

So, in the presence of the Bread of Life who refused food for himself in order to nourish others, we deepen our devotion by praying His words:

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

Offertory Hymn

Praise To the Holiest in the height,
And in the depth be praise:
In all His words most wonderful,
Most sure in all His ways.

O loving wisdom of our God!
When all was sin and shame,
A second Adam to the fight,
And to the rescue came.

O wisest love! that flesh and blood
Which did in Adam fail,
Should strive afresh against the foe,
Should strive and should prevail.

And that a higher gift than grace
Should flesh and blood refine,
God's presence, and His very self
And essence all-divine.

O generous love! that He, who
smote

In man for man the foe,
The double agony in man
For man should undergo.

And in the garden secretly,
And on the Cross on high,
Should teach his brethren, and
inspire
To suffer and to die.

Praise to the Holiest in the height,
And in the depth be praise:
In ail His words most wonderful,
Most sure in all His ways.

Prayer of Adoration

Heaven is here, and earth and the
space between them is thin.
Distance may divide, but Christ's
promise unites those bounded by
time, those blessed by eternity.

Let heaven be glad;

Let the whole earth cry GLORY!

Heaven is here, and earth, and the
Church above and below is one.
Peter is here, and Paul, Martha and
all the Mary's, the saints from far

back and those who left us not long ago. And only sight prevents us from seeing them, one with us on the other side.

Let heaven be glad

Let the whole earth cry GLORY!

Heaven is here, and earth, and the God who made them is present. The lamb, glorious on the throne, sits beside us; the Spirit of God, the Dove makes her resting place among us. God inhales the breath of our prayers and spreads a table for our satisfaction.

Let heaven be glad.

Let the whole earth cry GLORY!

Blessing and honour and glory and power be to our God for ever and ever. **Amen!**

The Invitation

He was always the guest. In the homes of Peter and Jairus, Martha and Mary, Joanna and Susanna. At the meal tables of the wealthy where he pleaded the case of the poor, he was always the guest. Upsetting polite company, befriending isolated people; welcoming the stranger, he was always the guest. But here, at this table, He is the host. Those who wish to serve Him must first be served by Him, those who wish to follow Him, must first be fed by Him, those who would wash His feet, must first let Him make them clean. For this is the table where God intends us to be nourished. This is the time when God can make us new. So come, you who hunger and

thirst for a deeper faith, a better life, a fairer world. Jesus Christ who has sat at our tables, now invites us to be guests at His.

The Story

What we do here, we do in imitation of what Christ first did. To his followers in every age, Jesus gave an example and command rooted in the experience he shared with his disciples in an upstairs room in Jerusalem. On the night when he was betrayed, as they were sitting at a meal, Jesus took a piece of bread and broke it, he gave it to the disciples saying 'This is my body. It is broken for you. Do this to remember me.'

Later after they had eaten, he took a cup of wine and said 'This cup is the new relationship with God made possible because of my death. Drink this all of you, to remember me.'

So now, we do as Jesus did. We take this bread and this wine, the produce of the earth and fruit of human labour. In these Jesus has promised to be present; through these, Christ can make us whole.

**All that I am, all that I do,
all that I'll ever have, I offer now
to you.**

**Take and sanctify these gifts
for your honour, Lord.**

**Knowing that I love and serve you
is enough reward.**

**All that I am, all that I do, all that
I'll ever have I offer now to you.**

The Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord is here.

His Spirit is with us.

Lift up your hearts

We lift them to the Lord

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

It is right to give our thanks and praise

It is indeed right for you made us, and before you made us you made the world we inhabit, and before the world you made the eternal home in which, through Christ we have a place.

All that is spectacular, all that is plain have their origin in you; all that is lovely, all who are loving point to you as their fulfilment. And grateful as we are for the world we know and the universe beyond our ken, we particularly praise you, whom eternity cannot contain, for coming to earth and entering time in Jesus. For his life which informs our living, for his compassion which changes our hearts, for his clear speaking which contradicts our harmless generalities, for his disturbing presence, his innocent suffering, his fearless dying, his rising to life breathing forgiveness, we praise you and worship him. Here too our gratitude rises for the promise of the Holy Spirit, who even yet, even now, confronts us with your claims and attracts us to your goodness. Therefore we gladly join our voices

to the song of the Church on earth and in heaven:

Holy, holy, holy, holy.

Holy, holy, Lord God almighty!

And we lift our hearts before you as a token of our love:

holy, holy, holy, holy.

Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit, come and fill our hearts anew, Holy Spirit.

And we lift our voice before you as a token of our love, Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit.

And now, lest we believe that our praise alone fulfils your purpose, we fall silent and remember him who came because words weren't enough. Setting our wisdom, our will, our words aside, emptying our hearts and bringing nothing in our hands, we yearn for the healing, the holding, the accepting, the forgiving which Christ alone can offer...

Merciful God, send now in kindness, your Holy Spirit to settle on this bread and wine and fill them with the fullness of Jesus. And let that same Spirit rest on us, converting us from the patterns of this passing world, until we conform to the shape of Him whose food we now share. **Amen.**

Among friends, gathered round a table, Jesus took bread and broke it, and said, 'This is my body—broken for you'. Later he took a cup of wine and said 'This is the new relationship with God made possible because of my death. Take it, all of

you, to remember me.' He whom the universe could not contain, is present to us in this bread. He who redeemed us and called us by name now meets us in this cup. So take this bread and this wine. In them God comes to us so that we may come to God.

**Holy, holy, holy, holy.
Holy, holy, Lord God almighty!
And we lift our hearts before you
as a token of our love:
holy, holy, holy, holy.**

Prayer of Humble Access

We do not presume to come to this your table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in your abundant and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table; but you are the same Lord whose nature is always to have mercy. Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body, and our souls washed through his most precious blood, and that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

A Prayer as we join with those watching and worshipping with us on Zoom

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the most Blessed Sacrament. I love You above `all

things and I desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there, and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

The Distribution of Communion

The Chalice Bearers today are:
Stephen Ringer and Rachael Ringer

Communion Hymn

Just as I am, without one plea,
but that thy blood was shed for me,
and that thou bidd'st me come to thee,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, and waiting not
to rid my soul of one dark blot,
to thee, whose blood can cleanse
each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, though tossed about
with many a conflict, many a doubt,
fightings and fears within, without,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, thou wilt receive,
wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse,
relieve;
because thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Post Communion Collect

Give thanks to the Lord for God is gracious
God's mercy endures for ever.

Gracious Lord, in this holy sacrament you give substance to our hope: bring us at the last to that fullness of life for which we long; through Jesus Christ our Saviour.
Amen

The Peace

Christ who has nourished us, is our peace. Strangers and friends, male and female, old and young. He has broken down the barriers to bind us to him and to each other. Having tasted His goodness, let us share his peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

The Peace is shared.

In gratitude, in deep gratitude for this moment, this meal, these people, we give ourselves to you. Take us out to live as changed people because we have shared the Living Bread and cannot remain the same. Ask much of us, expect much from us, enable much by us and encourage many by us. So Lord may we live to your glory, both as inhabitants of earth and citizens of the commonwealth of heaven. Amen.

Benediction

On our heads and our homes

The blessing of God

In our coming and going

The Peace of God

In our life and believing

The Love of God

Be with us all

Today until the end of time. Amen.

The Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you,
The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you.
The Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you and give you his peace; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Notices

Hymn

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!

O my soul, praise him, for he is your health and salvation!

Come, all who hear; now to his temple draw near,
join me in glad adoration.

Praise to the Lord, above all things so wondrously reigning;
sheltering you under his wings, and so gently sustaining!

Have you not seen all that is needful has been sent by his gracious ordaining?

Praise to the Lord, who will prosper your work and defend you;
surely his goodness and mercy shall daily attend you.

Ponder anew what the Almighty can do,
if with his love he befriends you.

Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in

me adore him!
All that has life and breath, come
now with praises before him.
Let the Amen sound from his people
again;
gladly forever adore him.

The Lord be with you
And also with you.

Let us bless the Lord
Thanks be to God

May the divine assistance remain
with us always.

**And with all our brothers and
sisters in Christ.**

May the souls of the faithful
departed through the mercy of God,
rest in peace. **And rise in glory.
Amen.**

We listen to the Organ Voluntary

Postlude on Miles Lane - Willan

The week ahead:

19 Hilda, Abbess of Whitby, 680
19 Mechtild, Béguine of
Magdeburg, Mystic, 1280
20 Edmund, King of the East
Angles, Martyr, 870
20 Priscilla Lydia Sellon, a
Restorer of the Religious Life in the
Church of England, 1876
22 Cecilia, Martyr at Rome, c.230
23 Clement, Bishop of Rome,
Martyr, c.100
25 Catherine of Alexandria,
Martyr, 4th century

25 Isaac Watts, Hymn Writer,
1748

NOTICES

Christmas Tree Festival – 8th – 10th December 2023.

From next weekend Sunday 26th
November, The Social Committee
will be asking for donations to help
this bi-annual event to be a
success.

Lists will be on the table at the side
of the church for people to pledge
items towards the **refreshment
stall.**

These will include: -

A: - Brownies, Mince Pies,
Sausage Rolls, Scones etc. for all 3
days.

B: - Donations of soup for Saturday
and Sunday.

There will be a list for people to
sign up if they are willing to help
serve the refreshments, these will
be in 1 – 1.5 hour slots.

We will also be asking for **Front of
House Stewards** to greet people,
hand out lists of tree participants
and encourage them to vote for
their favourite tree.

The Hamper Raffle: - We are also
hoping that people will be able to
donate non-perishable Christmas
food items to make up into the
raffle hampers. Items such as
Mince Pies, Stollen, Christmas

Cakes, Puddings, Chocolates etc. as well as maybe Christmas Napkins and crackers will all be gratefully received. A box will be at the side of the church for these donations for the next three Sundays and things can also be dropped in at the church during Babyccino on a Thursday morning.

With Many Thanks.

The Social Committee.

Nativity Play/Crib Service

All children welcome to join in....
Rehearsals will be on 21st Dec
from 10 - 11.30

22nd Dec from 10 - 11.30

Saturday 23rd - Dress Rehearsal
from 2.30 - 4.00

Nativity Play - 5.00 - 6.00 on
24th December.

Adults and children welcome to join
in.

Wednesday Eucharist at Bowles
Lodge ~ 10.00a.m. Please do join
us.

Parish giving scheme (PGS)

– Information packs are available at
the side of the church. Your
participation in the new scheme is
very much encouraged. Please
speak to Mr Julian van Kan for
further information.

The human journey - a new small
group course in the parish of St.
Laurence, Hawkhurst. Please speak
to Fr. Rodney for more details.

Parish lunch - on Sunday
November 26th Diana and Stephen
Ringer will be cooking a delicious
lunch which will be served in the
church:

Hot meal with Vegan Option and
wine. Start time at 12:30.

Please bring own cutlery and plates.
£10 each, Under 12's £5, Under 5's
free, families by negotiation.
Donations of desserts welcome,
please check with Diana (so we do
not get, for example, 17 apple
crumbles!). Sign -up sheet at side of
church.

AT YOUR SERVICE

Vicar: Fr. Rodney Dreyer
01580 754459

Churchwardens:
Miss Alison Jones
01580 755705
Mrs. Liz Hatcher
01580 712099

Organist:
Dr. Charlotte O' Neill
01580 753817

Safeguarding:
Mrs Jane Cooper

07825044877