

The Order of Service for Home Worship

THE EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY after TRINITY



Hymn: We have a gospel to proclaim.

1. We have a gospel to proclaim,
good news for men in all the earth;
the gospel of a Saviour's name:
we sing his glory, tell his worth.
2. Tell of his birth at Bethlehem,
not in a royal house or hall,
but in a stable dark and dim,
the Word made flesh, a light for all.
3. Tell of his death at Calvary,
hated by those he came to save;
in lonely suff'ring on the cross:
for all he loved, his life he gave.
4. Tell of that glorious Easter morn,
empty the tomb, for he was free;
He broke the pow'r of death and hell
that we might share his victory.
5. Tell of his reign at God's right hand,
by all creation glorified.
He sends his Spirit on his Church
to live for him, the Lamb who died.
6. Now we rejoice to name him King:
Jesus is Lord of all the earth.
This gospel-message we proclaim:
we sing his glory, tell his worth

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**
Grace and peace be with you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Father of glory, holy and eternal, look upon us now in power and mercy. May your strength overcome our weakness, your radiance transform our blindness, and your Spirit draw us to that love shown and offered to us by your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

As we come into the presence of our heavenly Father let us seek his forgiveness of our sins that we may know his peace in our hearts.

Lord Jesus, you have shown us the way to the Father. **Lord, have mercy.**
Lord Jesus, you have given us knowledge of your truth. **Christ, have mercy.**
Lord Jesus, you are the Good Shepherd leading us to life. **Lord, have mercy.**

May almighty God have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

**Alleluia, alleluia, glory be to God on high;
Alleluia, to the Saviour who has gained the victory;
Alleluia to the Spirit, fount of love and sanctity;
Alleluia, Alleluia, to the Triune Majesty.**

Collect: Almighty and everlasting God, increase in us your gift of faith that, forsaking what lies behind and reaching out to that which is before, we may run the way of your commandments and win the crown of everlasting joy; 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 forever. **Amen.**

A reading from the book of Genesis

32. 22-31

The same night he got up and took his two wives, his two maids, and his eleven children, and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. He took them and sent them across the stream, and likewise everything that he had. Jacob was left alone; and a man wrestled with him until daybreak. When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he struck him on the hip socket; and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. Then he said, 'Let me go, for the day is breaking.' But Jacob said, 'I will not let you go, unless you bless me.' So he said to him, 'What is your name?' And he said, 'Jacob.' Then the man said, 'You shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with humans, and have prevailed.' Then

Jacob asked him, 'Please tell me your name.' But he said, 'Why is it that you ask my name?' And there he blessed him. So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, 'For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life is preserved.' The sun rose upon him as he passed Peniel, limping because of his hip. before him and said, 'Now I know that there is no God in all the earth except in Israel.

'This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 121

Response: My help comes from the Lord who made heav'n and earth.

I lift my eyes to the hills-
from where will my help come?
My help comes from the Lord,
who made heaven and earth. **(R)**

He will not let your foot be moved;
he who keeps you will not slumber.
He who keeps Israel
will nether slumber not sleep. **(R)**

The Lord is your keeper;
the Lord is your shade at your right hand.
The sun shall not strike you by day
nor the moon by night. **(R)**

The Lord will keep you from evil;
He will keep your life.
The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in
from this time on and for ever more. **(R)**

A reading from Paul's second letter to Timothy.

3.14 - 4.5

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it, and how from childhood you have known the sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work. In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I solemnly urge

you: proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favourable or unfavourable; convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching. For the time is coming when people will not put up with sound doctrine, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own desires, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander away to myths. As for you, always be sober, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, carry out your ministry fully.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

And yet, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Listen to the Gospel of Christ according to St. Luke

18. 1-8

Glory to you, O Lord.

Then Jesus told them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart. He said, 'In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor had respect for people. In that city there was a widow who kept coming to him and saying, "Grant me justice against my opponent." For a while he refused; but later he said to himself, "Though I have no fear of God and no respect for anyone, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that she may not wear me out by continually coming." ' And the Lord said, 'Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long in helping them? I tell you, he will quickly grant justice to them. And yet, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Meditation:

As we read our Bible, we may notice that often images are used of the weakness of widows to signify loneliness and dependency of the Lord. In chapter 11 of Luke, Jesus taught about persistence using the example of a man pestering his neighbour now in chapter 18, to emphasize his point, Jesus made the protagonist a widow which was the classic example of vulnerability in society at that time with this widow being

harassed by an opponent. With the odds stacked against her, she became desperate and even today there are poor people around the world who take on opponents such as corrupt sweatshop owners or multinationals which are deforesting the Amazon basin. The character of the unjust judge seems to be painted darkly for us but this is to highlight the contrast between him and our righteous judge. We are encouraged to consider how much our loving God will judge justly and will act for those persistent prayers of faithful believers. This parable is a lesson for those struggling to survive in difficult times, whether individuals or communities but God will not abandon them and they must remain faithful, continuing in prayer until God answers. It is the faithfulness to God that provides the power of our prayers. People may ask why pray? Today, Luke tells us about the need to never to lose heart. Irrespective of how God chooses to answer our prayers, prayer has the power to both change and move us. When we pray, we have a relationship with God, we speak to God and we need to both listen to and listen for God as this is communication with God. Sometimes when we pray, we may think God has not answered but perhaps we did not notice God speaking to us. When we pray, we open ourselves up to seeing the world through God's eyes and from God's perspective which makes it impossible for us to pray for peace and justice without acting to bring these things to fruition, and similarly we cannot pray with integrity for someone to get well and then ignore their practical needs. Often God's response to prayer is quite simply to motivate all who pray, to act. In recent years, the methods of communication used have become more varied, not only through the media but through the use of social networking sites with both keeping us in touch with not only the pleasures in life but also the tragedies and disasters of all kinds. Each day, we have many reasons for prayer, for injustice of all kinds - personally, locally, nationally and globally. Each day we are required to remember who God is, to hold on to what we know from experience and the unchanging character of our all loving, embracing God, and to keep praying for justice as the world needs our prayers and we need to be faithful disciples, bringing our never ending prayers before our God who never fails to listen and who always responds so graciously. Prayer always takes place in the context of a lived relationship with God. God is not like the unjust judge who grudgingly deals with the widow, rather God is committed and involved with creation and with us, his people, in all that life brings but it is by our persistent prayer that we show our trust and participation in God's activity in our world and our lives. When we pray, we always do so, knowing that God wants only what is good for us. If we pray and truly believe however that God's will and God's will alone, will bring us happiness then we will never lose heart in our prayer and never lose heart in our relationship with God, irrespective of the outcome of our prayer. Amen

Intercessions:

In the power of the Holy Spirit and in union with Christ let us bring our prayers for the Church and for the world to our heavenly Father.

We pray for the Church throughout the world, for the leaders of the Church among them Mary our Bishop. We pray for the clergy and people of our diocese and for our own ministry area; May the follow the example of Matthew in bringing the Good News of Christ to all the world.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the people of the world, for the victims of violence and oppression among them the people of the Ukraine, Gaza and Israel, for all suffering the effects of natural disaster and for those suffering from famine or drought; May the leaders of the nations be led by the Spirit to bring peace and hope where there is conflict and despair.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for our own community, for our families, friends and neighbours. We give thanks for all who serve the needs of the vulnerable; following the example to Matthew may we bring the love of God to all in need among whom we live.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who are in need, for those who are sick, for those who are bereaved, for the lonely and isolated and for all in any kind of need. We hold in our hearts before God those known to us who are in need at this time and all whose names are recorded in our intercession books; relieve them according to their need, strengthen them with your Holy Spirit and console them with the love of Christ.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who have died. We remember before God our own departed loved ones and we pray for the recently departed and those whose anniversary of death falls at this time; welcome them and all the departed into the eternal joy and peace of your heavenly kingdom.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We bring all our prayers to our heavenly Father as we pray together:

**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.

The Peace:

We are all citizens with the saints and belong to the family of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord who came and preached peace to those who were far away and to those who were near.

The peace of the Lord be with you and with all those whom you love.

And also with you.

Let us pray:

God of our pilgrimage, you have led us to the living water; refresh and sustain us as we go forward on our journey in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Blessing:

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

The peace of God which is beyond all understanding guard your hearts in the knowledge and love of God and of his Son Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

In the name of Christ. Amen.

Hymn : Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us

1. **Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us
o'er the world's tempestuous sea;
guard us, guide us, keep us, feed us,
for we have no help but thee;
yet possessing every blessing,
if our God our Father be.**
2. **Saviour, breathe forgiveness o'er us:
all our weakness thou dost know;
thou didst tread this earth before us,
thou didst feel its keenest woe;
lone and dreary, faint and weary,
through the desert thou didst go.**
3. **Spirit of our God, descending,
fill our hearts with heavenly joy,
love with every passion blending,
pleasure that can never cloy:
thus provided, pardoned, guided,
nothing can our peace destroy.**