

The Order of Service for Home Worship

MATTHEW, APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST



Hymn: Ye Holy Angels Bright

1. Ye holy angels bright,
who wait at God's right hand,
Or through the realms of light
fly at your Lord's command,
Assist our song,
For else the theme too high doth seem for mortal tongue.
2. Ye blessed souls at rest,
Who ran this earthly race,
And now, from sin released,
Behold the Saviour's face,
God's praises sound,
As in his sight
With sweet delight ye do abound.
3. Ye saints, who toil below,
Adore your heavenly King,
And onward as ye go
Some joyful anthems sing;
Take what he gives
and praise him still,
through good or ill, who ever lives.
4. My soul, bear thou thy part,
Triumph in God above:
And with a well-tuned heart
Sing thou the songs of love;
Let all thy days
Till life shall end,
Whate'er he send, be filled with praise.

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: O Almighty God, whose blessed Son called Matthew the tax collector to be an apostle and evangelist: give us grace to forsake the selfish pursuit of gain and the possessive love of riches that we may follow in the way of your Son Jesus Christ, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

A reading from the book of Proverbs

3. 13-18

Happy are those who find wisdom, and those who get understanding, for her income is better than silver, and her revenue better than gold. She is more precious than jewels, and nothing you desire can compare with her. Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honour. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to those who lay hold of her; those who hold her fast are called happy.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 119. 65-72.

Response: Lead me, O lord in the path of your cross.

You have dealt well with your servant, O Lord,
according to your word.

Teach me good judgement and knowledge,
for I believe in your commandments.
Before I was humbled I went astray,
but now I keep your word. (R)

You are good and do good;
teach me your statutes.
The arrogant smear me with lies,
but with my whole heart I keep your precepts.
Their hearts are fat and gross,
but I delight in your law. (R)

It is good for me that I was humbled,
so that I might learn your statutes.
The law of your mouth is better to me
than thousands of gold and silver pieces. (R)

A reading from the second letter of S. Paul to the Corinthians. 4. 1-6

Therefore, since it is by God's mercy that we are engaged in this ministry, we do not lose heart. We have renounced the shameful things that one hides; we refuse to practise cunning or to falsify God's word; but by the open statement of the truth we commend ourselves to the conscience of everyone in the sight of God. And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake. For it is the God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness', who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

"I desire mercy, not sacrifice," says the Lord, "For I have come to call not the righteous but sinners."

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Listen to the Gospel of Christ according to St Matthew

9. 9-13

Glory to you, O Lord.

As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth; and he said to him, 'Follow me.' And he got up and followed him.

And as he sat at dinner in the house, many tax-collectors and sinners came and were sitting with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, 'Why does your teacher eat with tax-collectors and sinners?' But when he heard this, he said, 'Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. Go and learn what this means, "I desire mercy, not sacrifice." For I have come to call not the righteous but sinners.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Meditation: Today we give thanks for God for the life and witness of Saint Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist. Called Levi by Mark and Luke, Matthew was a tax-collector, a Jewish man who worked for the Romans, before he left his old life and his work at the call of Christ. From the very beginning of the Church he has been recognised as being the author of the first Gospel written in the second half of the first century. The account of the calling of Matthew tells us so much about Jesus and his mission to the world. Jesus, Matthew tells us, saw him sitting in a tax booth. He called him and together they went and shared a meal. The Pharisees, predictably were angered and questioned why Jesus would eat with tax-collectors and sinners. Jesus reply is so interesting and so important. He said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I desire mercy, not sacrifice, For I have come to call not the righteous but sinners. Go and learn what this means." Here Jesus has a lesson for us all. The Pharisees, who were proud that they kept all the religious laws, that they kept themselves ritually clean and were considered righteous before God. To them mixing with sinners would mean defiling themselves before God. To them there were two classes or people, the righteous and the unclean, those not worthy of help. Jesus turned all this on its head. Jesus said, "No," the love of God extends to everyone and I have come to those who are considered unclean and unworthy to restore them to God's family. This is such an important message to us as Christians living today. We live in an increasingly divided society, people becoming increasingly opinionated and defensive. Hatred is replacing love. There are many who, like the Pharisees, look down on those they consider unworthy of help or consideration. There are those who pride themselves on their own achievements, who tell themselves that they are good and righteous people but who, again like the Pharisees, harbour resentment against those they consider to be less than themselves. They dismiss the poor as lazy, refugees as frauds. These are the people Jesus is speaking too. Jesus

is telling the Pharisees and is telling us, that the righteous, do not need his help. For Jesus and for his followers who live in the love of God, they already have everything they need. They are called to put their own lives to one side to bring the love of God to those who do not yet know it, the poor, the sick, the outcast, the despised. Matthew understood this and from this first encounter with Jesus his life took on a wholly new and different direction. Matthew, is common with all the apostles except for John, is believed to have been martyred for his faith as he worked to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ. Some believe that he was killed working in Ethiopia others that he was killed further east in Persia or the area of the Persian Gulf. What is clear to us is that his first encounter with Jesus had a profound effect upon Matthew and as a result his life took on a completely new direction. He leaves us such a rich legacy, most obviously perhaps, in his writings, in the Gospel that he has bequeathed to the Church and to us. But also in the example of the way that he lived his life. He heard and responded when Jesus called to him. His whole life changed as he followed Jesus, learning from him. He found a purpose and meaning in life, he found that deep sense of peace and contentment which only Christ can give and which comes from living with Jesus and devoting our lives to following him and his ways. 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 they 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.**

God give you grace to follow his saints in faith and hope and love, and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ. Amen.

Hymn: Guide Me, O Thou Great Redeemer

1. 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.
2. Open now the crystal fountain,
Whence the healing stream doth flow;
Let the fire and cloudy pillar
Lead me all my journey through;
Strong deliverer, strong deliverer,
Be thou still my strength and shield.
3. 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.