



COMMUNITY WORSHIP HOLY COMMUNION

11th SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY, 23rd August 2020

During this service, after each hymn being announced, we will allow time for you to change the YouTube link if you choose. Also, after each passage of our Bible reading is announced we will allow time for you to look it up in your Bibles, or on your Bible Apps or Bible Gateway and follow the reading. We use the New International Version (UK).

✘ On the Second and Fourth Sundays of the month when we would have had a 9.30 service we include hymns that would have been sung then and use them to prepare our hearts for worship. Here they are:

- ✦ Firmly I believe and truly https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bSO5a0_Ycwo
- ✦ Take my life and let it be <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sss-g50Dw1Q>
- ✦ Lord, for the years <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MkTrFQLy6js>

HYMN OR SONG TO CALL US TO WORSHIP

- ✦ My Jesus My Saviour <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mqSQvoinDE4>

✘ **THE PSALM FOR THE DAY IS PSALM 124** A song of ascents. Of David.

¹ If the **LORD** had not been on our side – let Israel say – ² if the **LORD** had not been on our side when people attacked us, ³ they would have swallowed us alive when their anger flared against us; ⁴ the flood would have engulfed us, the torrent would have swept over us, ⁵ the raging waters would have swept us away. ⁶ Praise be to the **LORD**, who has not let us be torn by their teeth. ⁷ We have escaped like a bird from the fowler's snare; the snare has been broken, and we have escaped.

⁸ Our help is in the name of the **LORD**, the Maker of heaven and earth.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen

THE GREETING

We come together in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

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

Faithful one, whose word is life: come with saving power to free our praise, inspire our prayer and shape our lives for the kingdom of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

The St George's Prayer *Our Father, as individuals and as a community may we come to know and love you more and more, may we feel your love and care through each other, may we be witnesses to Christ wherever we are, and by the power of your Holy Spirit, may we be attentive to you, to our neighbour and to your world.*

SONGS OF CELEBRATION - Particularly for the Sunday School

- ✦ Jesus love is very wonderful https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CaMVjO_GruA

✘ CONFESSION

Christ the light of the world has come to chase away the darkness of our hearts. In his light let us examine ourselves and confess our sins.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, we have sinned against you and against our neighbour in thought and word and deed, through negligence, through weakness, through our own deliberate fault. We are truly sorry and repent of all our sins. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, who died for us, forgive us all that is past and grant that we may serve you in newness of life to the glory of your name. Amen.

ABSOLUTION

✠ May the God of love and power forgive *you* and free *you* from *your* sins, heal and strengthen *you* by his Spirit, and raise *you* to new life in Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

A SONGS OF THANKSGIVING is sung

✠ Purify my heart <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Y8zP34AhuU>

THE COLLECT

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.

THE WORD OF GOD

✠ OLD TESTAMENT READING Exodus 1.8 - 2.10

⁸Then a new king, to whom Joseph meant nothing, came to power in Egypt.

⁹'Look,' he said to his people, 'the Israelites have become far too numerous for us. ¹⁰Come, we must deal shrewdly with them or they will become even more numerous and, if war breaks out, will join our enemies, fight against us and leave the country.' **¹¹So they put slave masters over them to oppress them with forced labour, and they built Pithom and Rameses as store cities for Pharaoh. ¹²But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread; so the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites ¹³and worked them ruthlessly. ¹⁴They made their lives bitter with harsh labour in brick and mortar and with all kinds of work in the fields; in all their harsh labour, the Egyptians worked them ruthlessly. ¹⁵The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, whose names were Shiphrah and Puah, ¹⁶'When you are helping the Hebrew women during childbirth on the delivery stool, if you see that the baby is a boy, kill him; but if it is a girl, let her live.' ¹⁷The midwives, however, feared God and did not do what the king of Egypt had told them to do; they let the boys live. ¹⁸Then the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and asked them, 'Why have you done this? Why have you let the boys live?' ¹⁹The midwives answered Pharaoh, 'Hebrew women are not like Egyptian women; they are vigorous and give birth before the midwives arrive.' ²⁰So God was kind to the midwives and the people increased and became even more numerous. ²¹And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families of their own. ²²Then Pharaoh gave this order to all his people: 'Every Hebrew boy that is born you must throw into the Nile, but let every girl live.'**

2 Now a man of the tribe of Levi married a Levite woman, ² and she became pregnant and gave birth to a son. When she saw that he was a fine child, she hid him for three months. ³ But when she could hide him no longer, she got a papyrus basket^[a] for him and coated it with tar and pitch. **Then she placed the child in it and put it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile. ⁴ His sister stood at a distance to see what would happen to him. ⁵ Then Pharaoh's daughter went down to the Nile to bathe, and her attendants were walking along the river-bank. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her female slave to get it. ⁶ She opened it and saw the baby. He was crying, and she felt sorry for him. 'This is one of the Hebrew babies,' she said. ⁷ Then his sister asked Pharaoh's daughter, 'Shall I go and get one of the Hebrew women to nurse the baby for you?' ⁸ 'Yes, go,' she answered. So the girl went and got the baby's mother.**

⁹ Pharaoh's daughter said to her, 'Take this baby and nurse him for me, and I will pay you.' So the woman took the baby and nursed him. ¹⁰ When the child grew older, she took him to Pharaoh's daughter and he became her son. **She named him Moses,^[b] saying, 'I drew him out of the water.'**

This is the Word of the Lord, Thanks be to God

✠ NEW TESTAMENT READING Romans 12.1-8

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, **in view of God's mercy,** to offer your bodies **as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God – this is your true and proper worship. ² Do not conform to the**

pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – **his good, pleasing and perfect will.** ³ For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, **but rather think of yourself with sober judgment,** in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. ⁴ For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, ⁵ **so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.** ⁶ We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your^[a] faith; ⁷ if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; ⁸ if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead,^[b] do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

This is the Word of the Lord, Thanks be to God

HYMN, SONG or MUSIC to prepare to listen to the story of our Lord

✦ You are the King of glory https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MixfvEA_Ysg

✦ Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

✦ **THE GOSPEL** Matthew 16.13-20

**Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St Matthew ,
Glory to you O Lord**

¹³ **When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, 'Who do people say the Son of Man is?'** ¹⁴ **They replied,** 'Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.' ¹⁵ **'But what about you?' he asked. 'Who do you say I am?'** ¹⁶ **Simon Peter answered, 'You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.'** ¹⁷ **Jesus replied,** 'Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. ¹⁸ And I tell you that you are **Peter,**^[a] and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades^[b] will not overcome it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be^[c] bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be^[d] loosed in heaven.' ²⁰ **Then he ordered his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.**

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

✦ **SERMON** by Revd Deborah Chapman

God is My Mother

Exodus 1.8-2.10; Psalm 124; Romans 12.1-8; Matthew 16.13-20

Introduction

The great preacher, Dr. G. Campbell Morgan had four sons - all of whom grew up to become preachers. One day, a visitor arrived and found the whole family sitting around a table in the sitting room. The visitor decided to tease one of the boys named Howard. "Howard," he asked, "who is the greatest preacher in your family?" Howard, who had a great admiration for his father took a look at his father across the table and without a moment's hesitation answered, "Mother."

Often our image is of a God who is like a Father. But what is a Father like? And what is a mother like?

When I think, 'God is My Mother' my next thought is: 'It's all about LIFE!'

I wonder what you think or feel when I say something like 'God is my mother'?

But why do I say it?

In the story of Moses there are six women involved in saving **life**:

- Two midwives [**do you know what a midwife is?**] – Shiphrah and Puah, who lie to Pharaoh and say that, 'Hebrew women are not like Egyptian women; they are vigorous and give birth

before the midwives arrive.' **Is it OK to lie? [I would say that when someone's life is at stake, life often takes precedence]**

- Then there is Moses' mother [**with baby**] who in the end has to trust her baby to the elements.
- His sister, who watches from a hidden place, to see what is going to happen, comes next.
- Finally, Moses is found by Pharaoh's daughter, who asks her female slave to go get the basket that she sees in the reeds. She knows jolly well that the baby should be killed, but instead she colludes with Moses' sister (she must know it's his sister, and the wet nurse will be the natural mother, don't you think?).
- I imagine a seventh female – kindly overseeing the whole thing – God herself! Shocking, isn't it? But we forget sometimes that God is male **and** female – we are told that '*God made human beings in his own image – male and female he created them.*' Genesis 1.27 Without the women in this story, we would not be celebrating Easter the way we do – because Moses would not have been around to lead God's people out of slavery and towards the land that God had promised to give them. Jesus would not have been celebrating the Passover with his disciples the night before he was crucified. Everything in the whole world would be different.

Pharaoh wanted all the boy babies to die – then there would be no way for the descendants of Abraham to continue – the women would have had to accept Egyptian husbands! But the women valued LIFE – and God is the **God** of LIFE and looked kindly on what they got up to...it must have been very exciting...very subversive...going against the law of the land to enable not just justice, but LIFE to prevail...sneaking around behind Pharaoh's back, and right under his nose all the time! Adopting Moses as a royal son in the household that decreed that all Hebrew babies should die! What an adventure!! We'd be too scared, wouldn't we? Jesus said that He came to give us **life** – life to the full! **[John 10.10]** And these women ALL knew it already!! And they feared God rather than people – and THAT set them FREE!! That's what ALWAYS sets us free to live!

And so we can say: God is my mother – she sets me free, because she gives me LIFE – life to the full.

There are other feminine pictures of God in the Bible:

- Isaiah 49: 15 - Can a **mother** forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has borne? Though she may forget, I will not forget you!
- Isaiah 66: 13 - As a **mother** comforts her child, so will I comfort you...
- Matthew 23: 37 - ...how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a **hen** gathers her chicks under her wings...

And what about Jesus – God incarnate – God in the flesh? Are both men and women made in His image, too?

I like to think that Jesus was in touch with His own 'feminine side'. But I also KNOW that He gave great honour to women, constantly challenging the patriarchal attitudes of His own time on earth.

Jesus was very fortunate. He had a loving earthly family, where his father Joseph loved his mother so much that he was unwilling to follow the conventions of the day and have her put away for being pregnant – rather, he took her as his wife, and loved Jesus as his own child. What a model! Many people say, 'Poor Jesus! He was born among the poor and lived a simple hardworking life – he didn't have any benefits or privileges.' I always think – what an upside-down view of **life**! God loved his own son so much that he put him in the most loving family he could ever have. As the Proverbs says, '*Better a little with the fear of the Lord than great wealth with turmoil. Better a meal of vegetables where there is love than a fattened calf with hatred.*' Proverbs 15.16-17 Jesus the man learned from his **mother** to always say to God, 'Your will be done.' She said to the angel about her conception of Jesus by the Holy Spirit, '*May it be done to me as you have said.*' Luke 1.38 And Jesus used those

words when He accepted God's will for Him to die that we might LIVE! *'Not my will but yours be done...'* Matthew 26.39; Mark 14.36; Luke 22.42; John 6.38

On our second visit to Israel, we felt particularly blessed because **Station IV on the Way of the Cross**, where Jesus meets his mother, had just opened the day before! It is the point at which one becomes most aware of Mary's own suffering. But Mary still said, 'Your will be done, Lord!' Even while she stood by and watched him suffer, Mary never railed at God – she released Jesus to be everything that God had created him to be – Our Lord and Saviour! Mary did not get in God's way with her child.

Do those of us who are mothers dare to let our children go so that they can be everything **God** created them to be – or do we hold on because we are afraid of the potential pain?

Let me read you what we read together at that station:

[Jesus' path takes him to a powerful source of his strength to continue. All his life, his mother had taught him the meaning of the words, 'Behold, the handmaid of the Lord.' Now they look into each other's eyes. How pierced-through her heart must be! How pained he must be to see her tears! Now, her grace-filled smile blesses his mission and stirs his heart to its depth. Love and trust in God bind them together...]

As I watch them in this place along the way, I contemplate the mystery of love's power to give strength. She knows the sorrow in every mother's heart, who has lost a child to tragedy or violence. I look at the two of them very carefully, and long for such love and such peace. This is for me. Such incredible freedom. The availability of a servant.]

What does Mary's example have to do with us today? What lessons can we learn?

- 1. That we need to see the 'big picture'** and be more **ambitious**. What Mary did when she said 'Your will be done, Lord!' has had eternal consequences for all of creation. Do we believe that God can do great things through us if we obey Him, even if we don't see them fully in our own lifetimes? *'Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.'* Romans 12.2
- 2. That we mustn't despair of young people!** Mary was probably quite young. **[show painting called 'Mary had a baby...']** God used a trusting young woman to be His vessel for becoming a human being! In II Timothy 4.12, the apostle Paul tells the young Timothy, *'Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young.'* Young people are often idealistic. Let's not squash that in them, but rather encourage that openness, and trust God for their futures.
- 3. And finally... That it's OK to suffer.** Psalm 34 tells us, *'The Lord is close to the broken hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.'* Life **isn't** all about happiness – there is a new heaven and a new earth waiting for us beyond the grave that are much more real than this heaven and this earth – and **that's** where we'll be truly happy...Because that's the kind of heaven and earth that we were created for in the first place! In the meantime, we know that *'Our help is in the name of the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth.'* Psalm 124.8 **AMEN.**

Let me give you a few moments in silence to ponder those three lessons (repeat them) ...and say, 'Your will be done' to God.

THE APOSTLES' CREED –

This is what we believe.

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF GOD'S PEOPLE Lord, in your mercy **hear our prayer**

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

Minister Almighty and everlasting God,
the comfort of the sad, the strength of those who suffer:
hear the prayers of your children who cry out of any trouble,
and to every distressed soul grant mercy, relief and refreshment,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

HOLY COMMUNION

THE PEACE

✠ Peace to you from God who is our Father.
Peace from Jesus Christ who is our peace.
Peace from the Holy Spirit who gives us life.
The peace of the triune God be always with you.

The peace of the Lord be always with you **and also with you.**

Let us offer one another a sign of peace. *All may exchange a sign of peace*

OFFERTORY HYMN - the gifts of the people may be gathered and presented

✠ Brother, sister let me serve you https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G_ufwqwquqY

✠ With this bread that we bring we shall remember Jesus.
With this wine that we bring we shall remember Jesus.

Bread for his body, wine for his blood,
gifts from God to his table we bring. Blessed be God for ever.

God of all goodness and grace, receive the gifts we offer; and grant that our whole life may give you glory and praise; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER – *The great prayer of praise and thanksgiving.*

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 thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy that we should always sing of your glory, holy Father, almighty and eternal God, through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.

For you are the hope of the nations, the builder of the city that is to come. Your love made visible in Jesus Christ brings home the lost, restores the sinner and gives dignity to the despised.

In his face your light shines out, flooding lives with goodness and truth, gathering into one in your kingdom a divided and broken humanity.

Therefore with all who can give voice in your creation we glorify your name, for ever 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 you, loving Father, through Jesus Christ, our Lord; and as we obey his command, send your Holy Spirit, that broken bread and wine outpoured may be to us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his friends and, taking bread, he praised you. He broke the bread, gave it to them and said: Take, eat, this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me. When supper was ended he took the cup of wine. Again he praised you, gave it to them and said: Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did, in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice made once for all upon the cross. Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation, we proclaim his death and resurrection until he comes in glory.

Great is the mystery of faith:

Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

Lord of all life, help us to work together for that day when your kingdom comes and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth. Look with favour on your people, gather us in your loving arms and bring us with all the saints to feast at your table in heaven.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

THE COMMUNION

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

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

The Agnus Dei may be said or sung

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, grant us peace.

GIVING OF COMMUNION

Draw near with faith. Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ which he gave for you, and his blood which he shed for you. Eat and drink in remembrance that he died for you, and feed on him in your heart by faith with thanksgiving.

Jesus is the Lamb of God

who takes away the sin of the world,

blessed are those who are called to his supper.

**Lord, I am not worthy to receive you,
but only say the word, and I shall be healed.**

The body of Christ broken for you; the blood of Christ shed for you

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Lord of all mercy, we your faithful people have celebrated that one true sacrifice which takes away our sins and brings pardon and peace:
by our communion keep us firm on the foundation of the gospel
and preserve us from all sin; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Almighty God, we thank you for feeding us with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ. Through him we offer you our souls and bodies to be a living sacrifice. Send us out in the power of your Spirit to live and work to your praise and glory. Amen.

The Dismissal – The Lord sends us out

HYMN or SONG to send us out to serve Christ

Father of kindness (Yes and Amen) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ITQnbOihe3Y>

Closing

✠ We thank you, Lord, that you have fed us, united us with Christ,
and given us a taste of the heavenly feast which you have prepared for peoples of all nations. **Amen.**

Blessing

✠ The love of the Lord Jesus draw *you*, the power of the Lord Jesus strengthen *you*,
the joy of the Lord Jesus fill *you*;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

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