



Chet Valley Churches

Holy Communion
Fourth Sunday of Trinity

5th July 2020

The Greeting and Welcome

We come from scattered lives to meet with God.

Let us recognise his presence with us as God's people we have gathered:

Let us worship God together.

Opening Prayers

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. **Amen.**

**Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord. Amen**

🎵 **Hymn: Alleluia Sing to Jesus**

**Alleluia! Sing to Jesus;
His the sceptre, His the throne.
Alleluia! His the triumph,
His the victory alone.
Hark! The songs of peaceful Zion
Thunder like a mighty flood;
"Jesus out of ev'ry nation
Has redeemed us by His blood."**

**Alleluia! Not as orphans
Are we left in sorrow now.
Alleluia! He is near us;
Faith believes, nor questions how.
Though the cloud from sight received Him
When the forty days were o'er,
Shall our hearts forget His promise,
"I am with you evermore"?**



**Alleluia! Bread of angels,
Thou on earth our food, our stay.
Alleluia! Here the sinful
Flee to Thee from day to day.
Intercessor, Friend of sinners,
Earth's Redeemer, hear our plea
Where the songs of all the sinless
Sweep across the crystal sea.**

**Alleluia, King eternal,
Thee the Lord of lords we own;
Alleluia, born of Mary,
Earth thy footstool, heaven thy throne:
Thou within the veil hast entered,
Robed in flesh, our great High Priest;
Thou on earth both Priest and Victim
In the Eucharistic feast.**

Confession

Let us seek God's forgiveness as we confess our sins.

God be gracious to us and bless us, and make your face shine upon us:
Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

May your ways be known on the earth,
your saving power among the nations:
Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

You, Lord, have made known your salvation,
and reveal your justice in the sight of the nations:
Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

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



Prayer for the Day

Gracious Father, by the obedience of Jesus you brought salvation to our wayward world: draw us into harmony with your will, that we may find all things restored in him, our Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Old Testament Reading: Zechariah 9: 9-12

Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem! Lo, your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

He will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the warhorse from Jerusalem; and the battle-bow shall be cut off, and he shall command peace to the nations; his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth. As for you also, because of the blood of my covenant with you, I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit. Return to your stronghold, O prisoners of hope; today I declare that I will restore to you double.

For the Word of the Lord, **Thanks be to God.**

Hymn: Father, Lord of All Creation

**Father, Lord of all Creation,
Ground of Being, Life and Love;
Height and depth beyond description
Only life in you can prove:**

**You are mortal life's dependence:
Thought, speech, sight are ours by grace;
Yours is every hour's existence,
Sovereign Lord of time and space.**

**Jesus Christ, the Man for others,
We, your people, make our prayer:
Give us grace to love as brothers
All whose burdens we can share.**

**Where your name binds us together
You, Lord Christ, will surely be;
Where no selfishness can sever
There your love may all men see.**



**Holy Spirit, rushing, burning
Wind and flame of Pentecost,
Fire our hearts afresh with yearning
To regain what we have lost.**

**May your love unite our action,
Nevermore to speak alone:
God, in us abolish faction,
God, through us your love make known.**

Gospel Reading: *Matthew 11: 16-19, 25-30*

To what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the market-places and calling to one another, “We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not mourn.”

For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, “He has a demon”; the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, “Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax-collectors and sinners!” Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds.’

At that time Jesus said, ‘I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.’

For the Word of the Lord, **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon [Rev David]

“I don’t want to play!” How many times I wonder have we heard that said. And whilst we might immediately think of it being said by a child, adults are just as frequently heard to say it—the only difference being that as one grows older we tend not to use those exact words. More often we’ll say something a lot more convoluted but actually it’ll mean the same.

Now let's think why it is that we don't want to play? If challenged, there will often be a multitude of reasons given. Those reasons, I believe, will boil down to one of the following three:

- I don't like the game.
- I'm no good at the game.
- I didn't choose the game.

On the face of it any of those could be seen as a valid reason. Who wants to play something when they dislike it? Who wants to join into something only to be embarrassed by one's lack of competence? Who wants to be caught up in someone else's choices?

But dig deeper and what might one find but that these reasons have become excuses. In the Gospel reading from Matthew, appointed for this day we pick up something of this in Jesus's remarks. At the beginning of the chapter Jesus has received a delegation of John's disciples. John is in prison and has had a bit of a wobble. Is this Jesus, his cousin, really the anointed one or has he got it wrong? So John sends his disciples to ask him directly. Jesus, true to how he responds to many questions he's asked, doesn't answer directly but says look: What do you see me doing—the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised and the poor receive the Good News of the Kingdom. Then, once those disciples have gone, Jesus turns to the crowds and gives John a wonderful testimonial which in turn leads on to the passage we have just heard.

Jesus doesn't pull his punches. He tells those listening that despite what they thought of John and what he had preached by the Jordan they didn't want to play his game, but neither did they want to play the game that Jesus offered. Of course, it was more than a game but by using this picture language Jesus makes it clear that he was talking at a much deeper level. In fact so deep that he uses quite stark words about the reaction to his own teaching and life. By using the expression that he is "a glutton and a drunkard" Jesus is using words used in the book of Deuteronomy to describe a rebellious son whose punishment, as given in that book, is to be executed! Stark condemnation indeed of that generation. Or a prefiguring of what will happen in a few short years!

So where does that leave us—as of now, we have the mantle of ‘this generation’? How do we follow Jesus today? His message is still as stark as it was then.

What better place to start than by us revisiting those three reasons (excuses) which are given to The Game. The game of life perhaps.

I don't want to play because I don't like the game...

Many of us might well have said that during these past few months. Our world has been turned on its head and the rhythms we'd become used to have been put on hold. Some of the things we'd relied upon, taken for granted, have been taken away. Stop the world I want to get off may well have been our reaction. But that's not the way. And within this game of life there is One able to sustain us. one who says that His yoke is bearable not because we can do it in our own strength but rather by allowing the One to share it with us.

I don't want to play because I'm no good at the game...

How true that might feel. We've been called to look at things in a new way. Been challenged to think how life might need to be altered so as to reflect true worth and not just its material worth. Called to re-appraise our own strengths and perhaps even learn that others have the skills and attributes to help us through.

I don't want to play because I didn't choose the game....

Now this response is so true. Isn't it? We didn't choose to be born. There's the old saying: You can choose your friends but not your family. Yet Life is what we have... and Jesus came that we might have life in all its fullness.

That is the greatest choice of all. Choosing to follow the One who brought us God's love in human form. Let's not make excuses; let's be prepared to follow the King who showed His worth by coming into Jerusalem on a donkey, yes on the foal of a donkey. Jesus Christ the Anointed One. John the Baptist hadn't got it wrong. And neither should we.

Affirmation of Faith

Let us declare our faith in God.

**We believe in God the Father,
from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son,
who lives in our hearts through faith and fills us with his love.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens us with power from on high.**

We believe in one God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen

Intercessions

For our prayers let us focus on the game of life.

“I don’t like the game.” Lord, we none of us like the mess the world is in. The virus has been horrible for people worldwide, and it’s going to have long-term consequences. We pray for individuals, organisations and businesses who now have to rebuild towards normality.

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

“I’m no good at the game.” It’s easy to do nothing in the face of huge issues. Health, finance, environment, community—they’re all very big issues, yet we can all do something. Lord, show us what we can do to be part of the solution and not part of the problem.

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

“It wasn’t my choice—I didn’t choose the game.” We rarely choose to embrace changes we haven’t instigated. We certainly didn’t choose lockdown! But we can choose our responses to the changes in our current situation. So help us Lord to be open to your leading, your care and your love.

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

Finally, Lord we pray—a prayer for our time:

Stand by us Lord, and give us courage and bright hopes,
this day, and all our days. **Amen.**

The Lord’s Prayer

We pray for the coming of the kingdom in the words our Saviour taught us:

**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**

♪ Hymn: Father, Lord of All Creation

**I, the Lord of sea and sky,
I have heard My people cry.
All who dwell in dark and sin,
My hand will save.
I who made the stars of night,
I will make their darkness bright.
Who will bear My light to them?
Whom shall I send?**

*Here I am Lord, Is it I Lord?
I have heard You calling in the night.
I will go Lord, if You lead me.
I will hold Your people in my heart.*

**I, the Lord of snow and rain,
I have born my peoples pain.
I have wept for love of them,
They turn away.
I will break their hearts of stone,
Give them hearts for love alone.
I will speak My word to them,
Whom shall I send?**

Here I am Lord...

**I, the Lord of wind and flame,
I will tend the poor and lame.
I will set a feast for them,
My hand will save.
Finest bread I will provide,
Till their hearts be satisfied.
I will give My life to them,
Whom shall I send?**

Here I am Lord...



Invitation

Here is a table, not of the Church, but of the Lord. It is to be made ready for those who love him and who want to love him more.

So, come, you who have much faith and sometimes doubt a little; you who have been to his table often, but in many different places.

Come, not because I invite you:

It is Jesus, it is his will that those who want him should meet him.

Lord, gratitude and praise, hearts lifted high, voices full and joyful: These you deserve.

For when we were nothing, you made us something; When we had no name and no faith and no future, you called us your children; when we lost our way or turned away, you did not abandon us; when we came back to you, your arms opened wide in welcome.

And, look, you prepared a table for us offering not just bread, not just wine, but your very self so that we may be filled, forgiven, healed, blessed, and made new again. You are worthy of all our pain and all our praise.

So we join our voices to those of the Church on earth and in heaven:

**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.**

Lord God, as we share the richness of your table, we cannot forget the rawness of the earth. We cannot take bread and forget those who are hungry. Your world is one world and we are stewards of its nourishment.

Lord put our prosperity at the service of the poor.

We cannot take wine and forget those who are thirsty. The ground and the rootless, the earth and its weary people cry out for justice.

Lord put our fullness at the service of the empty.

We cannot hear your words of peace and forget the world at war or, if not at war, then preparing for it.

Show us yet again Lord how to turn weapons into welcome signs

And the lust for power into a desire for peace.

We cannot recall the feast of your family and forget our divisions. We are one in the spirit, but not in fact. History and hurt still dismember us.

Lord, heal your church in every brokenness.

Lord Jesus Christ, present with us now, for all that you have done and all that you have promised. What have we to offer? Our hands are empty, our hearts are sometimes full of wrong things. We are not fit to gather up the crumbs from under your table. But with you is mercy and the power to change us.

So as we recall what you did in an upstairs room, send down your Holy Spirit on us and on these gifts of bread and wine. Healing, forgiving and making us whole; and that we may become, for you, your body, loving and caring in the world until your kingdom comes. Among friends, gathered round a table, Jesus took bread and said, 'This is my body, it's broken—for you'. And later he took the cup of wine and said, 'This is the new relationship with God made possible because of my death. Take this—all of you'.

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

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

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

Our Lord comes to us in bread and wine. They are gifts of God for the people of God. So let us join with all who receive of him this day.

♪ Hymn: *Ubi Caritas*

Ubi caritas et amor, Ubi caritas Deus ibi est.

(Where charity and love are, where charity is, there is God.)

Post-communion Prayer

**Lord Jesus Christ, you have put your life in our hands,
Now we put our lives in yours. Take us. Shake us. Remake us.
No longer is what we have been important.
It is what, with you, we can be. Starting now. Amen.**

♪ Hymn: Love Divine All Loves Excelling

Love divine, all loves excelling,
Joy of heav'n to earth come down:
Fix in us thy humble dwelling,
All thy faithful mercies crown:
Jesus, thou art all compassion,
Pure, unbounded love thou art;
Visit us with thy salvation,
Enter ev'ry trembling heart.



Come, Almighty to deliver,
Let us all thy life receive;
Suddenly return, and never,
Nevermore thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing,
Serve thee as thy hosts above,
Pray and praise thee without ceasing,
Glory in thy perfect love.

Finish, then, thy new creation;
Pure and spotless let us be:
Let us see thy great salvation
Perfectly restored in thee;
Changed from glory into glory,
'Til in heav'n we take our place,
'Til we cast our crowns before thee,
Lost in wonder, love, and praise.

Blessing & Dismissal

You are called and loved by God the Father and kept safe by Jesus Christ. Mercy, peace and love be yours in abundance from God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Go into the world, walk in God's light.
rejoice in God's love and reflect God's glory. **Amen.**