



Heacham Parish Church



Sunday 15th August 2021 – Trinity 11

*Opening music – Peter plays 'Intermezzo'
by Eric H Thiman*

Welcome to Heacham Parish Church on-line.
This is our Service of Worship for 11th Sunday
after Trinity. Although we join this at various
times, from various places, and in various ways
we come together as one body, the Church of
Jesus Christ.

God in Christ has revealed his glory.
Come let us worship.

From the rising of the sun to its setting
the Lord's name is greatly to be praised.

Give him praise, you servants of the Lord.
O praise the name of the Lord!

Loving God, we have come to worship you.
**Help us to pray to you in faith,
to sing your praise with gratitude,**

**and to listen to your word with eagerness;
through Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

God of our days and years,
we set this time apart for you.
Form us in the likeness of Christ
so that our lives may glorify you.
Amen.

Hymn – **Father, we love you.**

Father We Love You
We Worship and Adore You
Glorify Your Name in All The Earth
Glorify Your Name, Glorify Your Name
Glorify Your Name in All The Earth

Jesus We Love You
We Worship and Adore You
Glorify Your Name ...

Spirit We Love You
We Worship and Adore You
Glorify Your Name ...

Prayers of penitence -

Compassion and forgiveness belong to the Lord our God, though we have rebelled against him. Let us then renounce our wilfulness and ask his mercy by confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

Almighty God, long-suffering and of great goodness:

I confess to you, I confess with my whole heart my neglect and forgetfulness of your commandments,

my wrongdoing, thinking, and speaking; the hurts I have done to others, and the good I have left undone.

O God, forgive me, for I have sinned against you;

and raise me to newness of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who in his great mercy has promised forgiveness of sins to all those who with heartfelt repentance and true faith turn to him:
have mercy on you,

pardon and deliver you from all your sins,
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,
and bring you to everlasting life,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Bible reading – Ephesians Ch 3: 14-21,
read by Judith

A reflection – on these verses, by Pip

Let's pray: Father thank you that the boundary lines have fallen in pleasant places for us. Thank you for all your blessings, especially your Word. Help us to see something more of you today, for we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

We are heading towards the halfway point of Paul's letter to his church friends in Ephesus. If you need a reminder, Paul began with greetings, followed by the spiritual blessings we have in Christ. Then there were details of prayer and thanksgiving. Chapter two, in a nutshell, is the doctrine of salvation plus a reminder of what that means worked out. Chapter three begins with details of Paul's calling and credentials.

So, we reach today's reading. I don't know about you, but I really love these verses. It's like Paul stops to draw breath. He puts aside Paul, the teacher, apostle, church leader and planter; and we meet Paul the man of prayer with a deep relationship and understanding of Christ. Paul the man who trusts the Lord utterly and completely. Paul the man who knows how to intercede for everyone both at a corporate and a personal level.

Look how he prays. Firstly, his bodily position, a few words easily overlooked. He says, "For this reason I kneel before the Father". Paul the man who fills a significant proportion of the New Testament is a man who kneels in prayer. He knows his debt, his place, and dues to the master who called him into family and service.

Look at what he prays. He starts with asking that the Lord will strengthen with power, through the Holy Spirit, followers of Christ in their inner being. He prays for hearts in-dwelt with faith. Then he goes on to pray these fantastic words: "I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have the power

together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.”

Then as if that prayer didn't cover all the bases, he goes on to remind the church and us of God's infinite ability. He is “able to do immeasurably more than all we ask, or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us.” The verses conclude with a call to adulation. “To him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever. Amen.”

When Paul wrote these words I don't think he had the faintest idea of how many generations would be encouraged, helped, and comforted by them. To be honest I almost feel that there is really nothing to add to them today. However, we could maybe consider how we can apply them to our own lives.

I would like briefly to consider three things: -
Firstly how Paul prays, then what he prays, and why he prays. We have already paused to note

that Paul prays from a kneeling position. How do we pray? Have we ever given any thought to our own body language in prayer? Now I would never suggest for an instant that genuflection is the only right position from which to pray. Many of us pray in lots of different ways, sitting, standing, walking, driving, or from a prone position, to name a few. There is no right way from which to pray. However, what is important is that we pray in a way that is honouring and recognises whose presence we are in. So how do we pray?

Next let's examine briefly what Paul prays. We can all recognise that Paul is a prayer warrior of the first degree. He prays deeply, he prays for spiritual enlightenment, for knowledge of a loving God, and he puts no limits on what it is possible to ask the Lord for. What about us? When we are praying for family, friends, church, the world, and a myriad of other things, what do we pray for them? Sometimes it is a good practice to examine our prayer life and how, what, and why we pray. Why? because sometimes we can get stuck in a prayer rut, praying the same old things for the same old

people. If we are stuck in a rut then it's time to go back to the Word and look at what prayers others have offered in the past. It can kickstart a stale prayer time, it can deepen our knowledge of the Lord, and remind us what privileged people we are.

Finally, why does Paul pray? Paul prays because he is in a deep relationship with the Lord. He loves the Lord; he knows the Lord will hear and answer him. Why do we pray? Do we pray only when we are desperate, lost, sad and alone? Or do we pray constantly because we are in relationship with Jesus and we know that communication is a vital part of keeping a relationship alive, growing, and enabling us to root and establish ourselves in the only place worth rooting and establishing ourselves in this crazy world that God loves so much?

So, as we close, I pray for everyone here that this week we will pray boldly, pray cheerfully, pray lovingly; able to grasp how wide, long, high, and deep is the love of Christ for us, for our families, for our friends, for our church, and for our world. Amen.

Affirmation of faith -

Do you believe and trust in God the Father,
source of all being and life,
the one for whom we exist?

We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Son,
who took our human nature,
died for us and rose again?

We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,
who gives life to the people of God
and makes Christ known in the world?

We believe and trust in him.

This is the faith of the Church.

This is our faith.

**We believe and trust in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**

Amen.

Hymn – **To God be the glory**

To God be the glory, great things He hath done,
So loved He the world that He gave us His Son,
Who yielded His life an atonement for sin,
And opened the life-gate that all may go in.

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,

Let the earth hear His voice;

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,

Let the people rejoice;

O come to the Father through Jesus the Son,

*And give Him the glory; great things He hath
done.*

O perfect redemption, the purchase of blood,
To every believer the promise of God;
The vilest offender who truly believes,
That moment from Jesus a pardon receives.

Praise the Lord ...

Great things He hath taught us,
great things He hath done,
And great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son;
But purer, and higher, and greater will be
Our wonder, our rapture when Jesus we see.

Praise the Lord ...

Prayers of Intercession – led by Sue Spencer

Great and loving God, we greet you this day with praise and wonder. We greet you as the creator of the ends of the earth, sovereign over space and time, greater than we ever imagine. We greet you this day with joy and thanksgiving. We greet you as our Lord, our friend, and our saviour.

We greet this day, and we praise you that you are here to greet us and everyone, today and every day, here and everywhere. Help us to meet with you and grow closer to you. Help us to glimpse your glory and make it known through all we say and do, to the glory of your name.

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.

Lord in your Mercy, Hear our prayer.

Let us pray to the Lord, who is our refuge and stronghold. We pray for those who are guiding

our nation at this time, and shaping national policies, that they may make wise decisions. We pray for our Queen especially at this time of grief for her, we thank you for her long & wise reign and for her faith in you.

Lord in your Mercy, Hear our prayer.

Lord, we pray for your church and ask that it might always provide a solid foundation upon which we can anchor our lives. We especially pray for Christians who pay a heavy price for their faith, who daily experience hostility from their governments, employers, and neighbours, as a result of their identification with Christ.

We pray for those Christians around the world who are being persecuted yet continue to serve.

We pray for those here Lord for whom persecution may not be life threatening but who, by declaring their faith in you, add complications and pressure on relationships and can make lives uncomfortable.

We pray for your presence into these situations, knowing that your love, grace, and mercy will overcome all.

Lord in your Mercy, Hear our prayer.

Lord we pray for the health and well-being of our nation, that all who are fearful and anxious may be at peace and free from worry. We pray especially for Veronica and Kaitlyn; we ask Lord that they may find some peace and that you will give them the strength that they need at this difficult time in their lives. We pray for Simon and ask that he may feel your presence, your comfort and peace. We thank you for all the doctors and nurses that, through their skill and insights, many people will be restored to health. We also pray for those that are known to us who are ill and for those who are grieving at this time. Let us take a few moments of quiet to bring them to you.

Lord in your Mercy, Hear our prayer.

God beyond us,

God with us, God inside us, we worship you.

God outside us,

God among us, God within us, we praise you.

God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, we honour you.

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

The Lord's prayer

Collect for today

O God, you declare your almighty power most chiefly in showing mercy and pity: mercifully grant to us such a measure of your grace, that we, running the way of your commandments, may receive your gracious promises, and be made partakers of your heavenly treasure; 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 for ever.

Closing prayers -

Let us give thanks to the God of our Lord Jesus Christ,

who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing.

Before the world was made, God chose us in Christ,

that we might be holy and blameless before him.

Let us praise God for the glory of his grace,
for the free gift he gave us in his dear Son.

To Father, Son and Holy Spirit
give praise and dominion, honour and might, for ever and ever. Amen.

Now that we have been put right with God through faith,
we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

He has brought us by faith into the grace of God.

We rejoice in the hope of sharing God's glory.

This hope does not deceive us:

God has poured his love into our hearts by the gift of his Spirit.

Draw your Church together, O God,
into one great company of disciples,
together following our Lord Jesus Christ
into every walk of life,
together serving him in his mission to the world,
and together witnessing to his love
on every continent and island.

Glory to God,
**whose power, at work among us,
can do infinitely more
than all we can ask or conceive;
to him be glory in the Church
and in Christ Jesus,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Closing music – Peter plays 'Festive Trumpet
Tune' by David German.