

Worshipping God Together

Let us worship God by our:

Call to worship as printed in the order of service:

Minister: Great are the works of the Lord; they are
pondered by all who delight in them.

**All: Glorious and majestic are his deeds, and his
righteousness endures forever.**

Minister: He provides food for those who fear him; he
remembers his covenant forever.

MSP 582

Rock of ages

Opening prayer and The Lord's Prayer

Jesus once said: "I am the resurrection and the life, Whoever believes in me, will live even though he dies". Let us pray:

God our provider, you feed us with the bread of life and lift for us the cup of salvation, on this night Jesus gave us this holy feast: may all who gather at your table receive a foretaste of the eternal banquet.

Servant God, on this night Jesus washed his disciples' feet: may we follow this example of love and service.

God of compassion, on this night Jesus prayed for those who would believe through the message of the disciples: may those who gathered on this day to renew their ordination vows so live what they proclaim that all may come to know your saving love.

God our redeemer, we pray for those unable to eat at the Lord's Table or at any other table, for those who betray and for those betrayed, and for all innocent victims.

God of hope, remember all those in need, especially those we silently hold before you now ...

Holy God,
you give us this meal of bread and wine
in which we celebrate your great compassion;
grant that we may work with you to fulfil our prayers,
and to love and serve others as Christ has loved us;
this we ask through Jesus Christ our Redeemer,
who is alive with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever, and in whose name we pray:

ALL: 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 debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory for ever.

Amen.

Reflecting on God's Word

Reading: Matthew 26:17-30 (NT page 996)

Reader: Robert Alexander

MP 544 Open my eyes that I may see

Sermon

The text verses for my reflection will be verses 21 & 22:

21 And while they were eating, he said, "Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me." ²² They were very sad and began to say to him one after the other, "Surely you don't mean me, Lord?"

It is remarkable that most of us have a different picture of Jesus' last meal with his disciples. Most of us think of this nice and cosy upper room where you could almost feel the peace.

According to our reading that was not the case. We can almost feel the tension in the air when Jesus announced the dreadful words that someone is going to betray him. It is also quite real to see the humanness of the disciples when they immediately respond by saying: It is not me! And then the most saddest moment of all when Judas said: "Surely you don't mean me, Rabbi?"

The point I want to make is that the last supper of Jesus with his disciples was clouded with tension and as sense of sadness. Most certainly not the most peaceful meals!

But Jesus came to bring peace again between God and the human race. Jesus had to overcome the tension and the unreliability within the human race to create an everlasting peace. He had to overcome the terrible tension that existed at the last supper to be fully obedient to God, in order to save the human race from death, destruction, tension, and hell. If Jesus did not bring the peace, can you imagine all our meals, all our relationships and all our conversations?

To be honest: we can recognise ourselves in the characters of the last supper of Jesus. We can also be known as people who will fall out with our own shadows. We too can be very "unpeaceful" in the way we talk, gossip, stir and engage with other people. We too betray Jesus on a daily basis by the way we talk and walk on earth.

But we are no saints. And because we are fragile and fallible human beings we need God every minute of every day. We need his peace.

But Jesus taught us that peace is a verb. It is hard work. If we want to convince the world that we are different and that we belong to Christ, we need to show them peace in action. And tonight that is exactly what we are going to do.

It is common knowledge that we have all sorts of tensions among ourselves. It is just human. It is almost impossible to get along with all the people around us. But because we belong to Christ, we need to keep our peace and make sure our tensions and divisions do not drive other people away from God and his church. We need to keep the focus namely to proclaim his salvation to all people. We need to get on with it despite ourselves, our tensions, and our human failures. We need to focus more on what is more important than ourselves.

Tonight is not about ourselves or our tensions or our divisions. Tonight is about grieving the fact that our humanness caused Jesus to die to rescue us from sin, death and hell. Tonight we are weeping willows,, crying because we are still so full of sin, and tension, waiting and begging the Lord God to touch us once more with his grace and forgiving mercy.

Tonight is about his love that will not allow us to stray away from him and his presence. A love that we cannot comprehend or even begin to understand.

So let us prepare ourselves for tomorrow because it is actually you and me that are supposed to be crucified. It is because of you and me that our Lord and Saviour had to die to save us all.

May we go from here and be under the impression of His forgiving love and what He had to do to establish peace and harmony between God and the human race!

Amen

Communion

Invitation

This is the 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 you who have little, you who have been here often

and you who have not been for a long time, you who have tried to follow
and you who have failed.
Come, not because it is I who invite you:
it is our Lord.
It is his will that those who want him should meet him here.

MSP 515

O Love that wilt not let me go

The story of the sacrament

Sharp, jagged, splintered, glinting,
our world lies broken
in fragments as broken glass:
broken by violence,
broken by hate,
broken by greed,
broken by fear.
Sharp, jagged, splintered, glinting,
we lie broken
in fragments as broken glass:
broken by pain,
broken by anger,
broken by loss,
broken by despair.
On the night he was betrayed
Jesus took bread (*break bread*),
bread made from many grains,
mirroring his life,
mirroring our own lives,
and he broke it, saying,
'Do this in memory of me.'

On the night he was betrayed
Jesus took wine (*hold up cup*),
wine made from many grapes,
mirroring his life,
mirroring our own lives,
and he poured it, saying,
'Do this in memory of me.'
And so in this sacrament,
in this breaking of bread and pouring of wine,
Jesus gave thanks:
thanks mirrored in his own love of life,
thanks mirrored in his own ability to touch,
thanks mirrored in his own appreciation of beauty,

thanks mirrored in his own celebration of hope.
And so in this sacrament,
in this breaking of bread and pouring of wine,
we give thanks:
thanks mirrored by our love of justice,
thanks mirrored in our concern for others,
thanks mirrored in our work for peace,
thanks mirrored in our celebration of life.

Now we join hands around your table,
and with all creation
we hymn your praise for your unending love,
as we say as printed in the order of service:

*All: 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.*

And so through this sacrament,
in this breaking of bread and pouring of wine,
the broken fragments come together:
mirroring the strength that leads to healing,
mirroring the courage that speaks of hope,
mirroring the relationships that recreate community
mirroring the love that will not let us go.

Taking and breaking the bread

Among friends, gathered round a table,
Jesus took bread, broke it and said,
"This is my body
it is broken for you."

(Taking the cup of wine)

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 – to remember me.'"

Sharing the Peace

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.

Let us share it with each other saying: "*The Peace of our Lord will be with you!*"

Responding to God's love

Our offerings are given for the ministry and mission of the church while we sing **MSP 456 "Make me a channel of your peace"**.

Prayer of thanksgiving: Andrew Coutts

MP 469 My faith looks up to Thee

Benediction **receive the blessing of God and go in peace:**

The whole earth is full of the glory of God.

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord.

The blessing of God almighty,

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

Be with you

with all whom you love

and all whom you seek to love

This day and for evermore"

Sung MP 554 "Peace is flowing like a river"