

The Anglican Parish of St Luke Toowoomba

(in partnership with the Parish of St George-Dirranbandi)



11 October 2020

**Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Prayer during the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Crisis.**

Today we use the First Order of Morning Prayer (APBA page 2) which is based on the old form of Morning Prayer from the Book of Common Prayer (1662).

The service begins with celebratory music.

Hymn: 'How good, Lord, to be here' (TIS 234)

**How good, Lord, to be here!
your glory fills the night;
your face and garments, like the sun,
shine with unborrowed light.**

**How good, Lord, to be here,
your beauty to behold,
where Moses and Elijah stand,
your messengers of old.**

**Fulfiller of the past,
promise of things to be:
we hail your body glorified,
and our redemption see.**

**Before we taste of death,
we see your Kingdom come;
we still would hold the vision bright,
and make this hill our home.**

**How good, Lord, to be here!
yet we may not remain;
but since you bid us leave the mount,
come with us to the plain.**

*Joseph Armitage Robinson
1858-1933 alt.*

Sentences of Scripture.

You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honour and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.

Revelation 4.11

God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.

John 4.24

Give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.

Matthew 22.21

Confession.

Dear friends, the Scriptures urge us to acknowledge our sins, and not to conceal them from God our heavenly Father, but to confess them with a penitent and obedient heart, so that we may be forgiven through his infinite goodness and mercy.

We ought always to admit our sins before God, and especially when we come together to give thanks for the good things we have received at his hands, to offer the praise that is his due, to hear his holy word, and to ask what is necessary for the body as well as the soul.

Therefore, let us draw near to the throne of our gracious God, as we pray:

God is steadfast, even when we waver and wander and argue and complain.

Silence may be kept.

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith, confident in God's forgiveness.

**God of eternal memory,
confront our forgetfulness;
confront our boredom
when living faithfully seems a drag;
confront our complacency;
confront our rebellion.
Shake us up, for we sometimes lose our way.
Forgive us our foibles, our sins, our rebellion.
Recall us into life and responsibility
and the freedom of choosing
what is life-giving for us and for community.
Continue to love us, even when we feel lost.**

Absolution.

The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has no pleasure in the death of sinners, but would rather they should turn from their wickedness and live. He has given authority to his ministers to declare to his people who repent the forgiveness of sins.

God pardons all who truly repent and believe his holy gospel.

And so we ask him to grant us true repentance, and his holy Spirit, that what we do now may please him, and that the rest of our lives may be pure and holy; so that at the last we may come to his eternal joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Open our lips, O Lord;

and we shall declare your praise.

O God, make speed to save us.

O Lord, make haste to help us.

Glory to God; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit:

as in the beginning, so now, and for ever. Amen.

Let us praise the Lord.

The Lord's name be praised.

Hymn: 'Praise to the Lord'. (TIS 111)

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation;

O my soul, praise him, for he is your health and salvation.

Come all who hear,

brothers and sisters draw near,

praise him in glad adoration.

Praise to the Lord who in all things is wondrously reigning

and, as on wings of an eagle, uplifting, sustaining:

have you not seen

all that is needed has been

sent by his gracious ordaining?

Praise to the Lord, who will prosper our work and defend us;

surely his goodness and mercy shall daily attend us:

ponder anew

what the Almighty can do

as with his love he befriends us.

Praise to the Lord, who when darkness of sin is abounding,

who, when the godless do triumph, our best hopes confounding,

sheds forth his light,

scatters the horrors of night,

saints with his mercy surrounding.

Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in me adore him!

All that has life and breath, come now with praises before him.

Let the Amen

sound from his people again:

gladly for ever adore him.

Joachim Neander 1650-80

tr. Catherine Winkworth 1827-78 and others

Psalm 106:1-6, 20-24.

¹ Praise the Lord; give thanks to the Lord, for he is good:
and his mercy endures for ever.

**² Who can express the mighty acts of the Lord:
or fully voice his praise?**

³ Blessed are those who act according to justice:
who at all times do the right.

**⁴ Remember me, O Lord,
when you visit your people with your favour:
and come to me also with your salvation,**

⁵ That I may see the prosperity of your chosen:
that I may rejoice with the rejoicing of your people,
and exult with those who are your own.

**⁶ We have sinned like our ancestors:
we have acted perversely and done wrong.**

²⁰ At Horeb they made themselves a calf:
and bowed down in worship to an image.

**²¹ And so they exchanged the glory of God:
for the likeness of an ox that eats hay.**

²² They forgot God who was their saviour:
that had done such great things in Egypt,

**²³ Who had worked his wonders in the land of Ham:
and his terrible deeds at the Red Sea.**

²⁴ Therefore he thought to destroy them:
had not Moses his servant stood before him in the breach,
to turn away his wrath from destroying them.

Notes on Psalm 106:1-6, 20-24.

This psalm picks up the themes and the specific incident of which we read in Exodus 32. Taking it here into the psalm is a reminder to the people of that time, and to us, that we can and do wander off and rebel. Yet God is faithful and loving and forgiving. One wonders how much divine head shaking goes on still when God looks at the messes we get ourselves into!
Paul Mitchell

The first reading, from the Old Testament, Exodus 32:1-14.

When the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people gathered around Aaron and said to him, 'Come, make gods for us, who shall go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.' ² Aaron said to them, 'Take off the gold rings that are on the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me.' ³ So all the people took off the gold rings from their ears, and brought them to Aaron. ⁴ He took the gold from them, formed it in a mould, and cast an image of a calf; and they said, 'These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!' ⁵ When Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation and said, 'Tomorrow shall be a festival to the Lord.' ⁶ They rose early the next day, and offered burnt-offerings and brought sacrifices of well-being; and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to revel. ⁷ The Lord said to Moses, 'Go down at once! Your people, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, have acted perversely; ⁸ they have been quick to turn aside from the way that I commanded them; they have cast for themselves an image of a calf, and have worshipped it and sacrificed to it, and said, "These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!"' ⁹ The Lord said to Moses, 'I have seen this people, how stiff-necked they are. ¹⁰ Now let me alone, so that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them; and of you I will make a great nation.' ¹¹ But Moses implored the Lord his God, and said, 'O Lord, why does your wrath burn hot against your people, whom you brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? ¹² Why should the Egyptians say, "It was with evil intent that he brought them out to kill them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth"? Turn from your fierce wrath; change your mind and do not bring disaster on your people. ¹³ Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, how you swore to them by your own self, saying to them, "I will multiply your descendants like the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it for ever." ' ¹⁴ And the Lord changed his mind about the disaster that he planned to bring on his people.

Here ends the second reading.

Notes on Exodus 32:1-14.

“O God, the people are revolting!” Can you hear Moses uttering those words? The people who he led out of Egypt complained. Constantly. They were unhappy even with the ways in which they had been cared for. They whinged and they painted a false picture of how idyllic their past had actually been. When the progress through the desert didn’t go as fast as they wanted they tried to speed things up through their own efforts, bypassing God and Moses. This did NOT go well. An interesting aspect of the saga is that it seems that God had enough of the grumbling people but Moses kept pleading for ‘one more chance’. And God listened. The more consistent theme throughout the Bible is that it is God who constantly shows love and forgiveness, and that Moses was connecting with this consistency. Paul Mitchell

The Song of the Church (Te Deum)

**We praise you, O God:
we acclaim you as the Lord.
All creation worships you:
the Father everlasting.
To you all angels, all the powers of heaven:
the cherubim and seraphim, sing in endless praise:
Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might:
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
The glorious company of apostles praise you:
The noble fellowship of prophets praise you.
The white-robed army of martyrs praise you:
Throughout the world, the holy Church acclaims you:
Father, of majesty unbounded:
your true and only Son, worthy of all praise,
and the Holy Spirit, advocate and guide.
You, Lord Christ, are the King of glory:
the eternal Son of the Father.
When you took our flesh to set us free:
you humbly chose the Virgin’s womb.
You overcame the sting of death:
and opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers.
You are seated at God’s right hand in glory:
We believe that you will come to be our judge.
Come then, Lord, and help your people,
bought with the price of your own blood:
and bring us with your saints to glory everlasting.**

The second reading, from the New Testament, Philippians 4:1-9.

¹ Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved. ² I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. ³ Yes, and I ask you also, my loyal companion, help these women, for they have struggled beside me in the work of the gospel, together with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life. ⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵ Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. ⁶ Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. ⁸ Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. ⁹ Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

Here ends the second reading.

Notes on Philippians 4:1-9.

This beautiful passage reminds us of many things. The place of women in the early church was central, valued and honoured. It was only after 'the Church' became more institutionalised that men pushed women into the background for centuries. Another important piece to recognise is the order of the way in which our lives find stability. Rejoicing – in EVERYTHING – leads to finding peace. How often may we think it is the opposite. We think we can only find joy once everything is settled. And yet it is through finding joy that we discover a deeper equilibrium. Paul Mitchell

The Peace

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all!

Wherever you are, reaching out with your hands or with your heart to those who are nearby and those who are far away, send a greeting of peace and love.

A reading, from the New Testament, Matthew 22:1-14.

¹ Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying: ² 'The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. ³ He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come. ⁴ Again he sent other slaves, saying, "Tell those who have been invited: Look, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding banquet." ⁵ But they made light of it and went away, one to his farm, another to his business, ⁶ while the rest seized his slaves, maltreated them, and killed them. ⁷ The king was enraged. He sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. ⁸ Then he said to his slaves, "The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. ⁹ Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet." ¹⁰ Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both good and bad; so the wedding hall was filled with guests. ¹¹ 'But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding robe, ¹² and he said to him, "Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding robe?" And he was speechless. ¹³ Then the king said to the attendants, "Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." ¹⁴ For many are called, but few are chosen.'

Here ends the third reading.

Notes on Matthew 22:1-14.

Klyne Snodgrass (Stories with Intent. A comprehensive Guide to the Parables of Jesus. p 299) suggests that this parable "is enough to make any interpreter go weak at the knees; ... it is among the most difficult parables of all." Since the earliest Christian interpretations (e.g. Origen and Augustine) this parable has been interpreted as an allegory of salvation history. It is thought to speak about how God had and does and will act, inviting people into relationship with himself. When focussed on the past or the time of the first century the people who respond without proper respect to the king (to God) are seen as the Jewish leaders and people who did not accurately interpret and understand God's call on their lives. Some interpreters project this primarily into the future, as eschatological vision, looking at how people will be treated at the end of time.

Throughout the Bible there are many places in which connection with God, present but especially future, is depicted as a banquet. This context would have been obvious to the hearers. Matthew is certainly being critical of those who refuse God's invitation (see the

parallel in Luke 14 for another version of this refusal and excuses which are made!). There is some question (because of a change of language and even the words used. The servants of the king are 'slaves' – *douloi* in verse 10 and 'attendants' – *diakonoi* in verse 13) whether verses 11-14 belonged originally with the rest of the parable. Verse 10 sets the scene though for a separation of the 'good' from the 'bad'. The focus on one person who seems to have come with disrespect is a little odd and makes individual what had been a communal responsibility. Snodgrass suggests (p322) that the essential teaching of this parable is that we cannot have the kingdom "on our own terms. The invitation of grace brings with it demand. At stake is the issue of a person's identity. It is not enough to wear the right label ("the invited one"); rather, the kingdom must shape identity so that one has a whole different set of concerns." We are invited. We are embraced. And the invitation to be here in relationship with God includes the invitation to be transformed, to be made new. Paul Mitchell

Sermon.

Music for reflection.

The Song of Zechariah (Benedictus)

**Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel:
who has come to his people and set them free.
The Lord has raised up for us a mighty Saviour:
born of the house of his servant David.
Through the holy prophets, God promised of old:
to save us from our enemies, from the hands of
all who hate us,
To show mercy to our forebears:
and to remember his holy covenant.
This was the oath God swore to our father Abraham:
to set us free from the hands of our enemies,
Free to worship him without fear:
holy and righteous before him, all the days of our life.
And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High:
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,
To give his people knowledge of salvation:
by the forgiveness of their sins.
In the tender compassion of our God:
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,
To shine on those who dwell in darkness and**

**the shadow of death:
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.
Glory to God; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit:
as in the beginning, so now, and for ever. Amen.**

The Apostles' Creed.

With the Church, throughout the world and across the ages we say together:

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

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father;
from there 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.**

Hymn: 'Among us and before us, Lord, you stand' (TIS 259)

**Among us and before us, Lord, you stand
with arms outstretched and bread and wine at hand.
Confronting those unworthy of a crumb,
you ask that to your table we should come.**

**Who dare say No, when such is your resolve
our worst to witness, suffer and absolve,
our best to raise in lives by God forgiven,
our souls to fill on earth with food from heaven?**

**Who dare say No, when such is your intent
to love the selves we famish and resent,
to cradle our uncertainties and fear,
to kindle hope as you in faith draw near?**

**Who dare say No, when such is your request
that each around your table should be guest,
that here the ancient word should live as new,
'Take eat and drink – all this is meant for you.'**?

**No more we hesitate and wonder why;
no more we stand indifferent, scared or shy.
Your invitation leads us to say Yes,
to meet you where you nourish, heal and bless.**

John L. Bell

1949-

The Prayers

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Let us pray.

Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ, have mercy on us.
Lord, have mercy on us.

The Lord's Prayer (from the New Zealand Prayer Book)

We pray the prayer that Jesus taught His friends, in words shaped by the experience of the Anglican Church in New Zealand

**Eternal Spirit,
Earth-maker, Pain bearer, Life-giver,
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God, in whom is heaven:
The hallowing of your name echo through the universe;
The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world;
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings;
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom
sustain our hope and come on earth.
With the bread we need for today, feed us.**

**In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trial too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love,
now and forever.
Amen.**

Lord, show us your mercy,
and grant us your salvation.
Keep our nation under your care,
and guide us in justice and truth.
Clothe your ministers with righteousness,
and make your chosen people joyful.
Lord, save your people,
and bless your inheritance.
Give peace in our time, O Lord,
for you are our help and strength.
Create in us clean hearts, O God,
and renew us by your Holy Spirit.

The Collect for the day

O God,
whose beauty is beyond our imagining
and whose power we cannot comprehend:
show us your glory,
as far as we can grasp it,
and shield us from knowing more than we can bear,
until we may look upon you without fear,
through Jesus Christ.
Amen.

The Collect for Peace

O God, the author and lover of peace, in knowledge of whom stands our eternal life, whose service is perfect freedom; defend your servants in all assaults of our enemies, that, surely trusting in your defence, we may not fear the power of any adversaries, through the might of Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Morning Collect

Lord, our heavenly Father, almighty and everlasting God, we thank you for bringing us safely to this day: keep us by your mighty power, and grant that we fall into no sin, neither run into any kind of danger; but lead and govern us in all things, that we may always do what is righteous in your sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Prayers are offered by a member of the Church community.

Response:

Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

A concluding prayer from the Liturgy of St John Chrysostom

Lord, you have given us grace to agree in these our prayers, and you have promised that when two or three ask together in your name you will grant their requests. Fulfil now, Lord, our desires and prayers as may be best for us. Grant us, in this life, knowledge of your truth and in the age to come, life eternal.

Amen.

A general thanksgiving

Almighty God and merciful Father,
we give you hearty thanks
for all your goodness and loving-kindness to us
and to all people.

We bless you for our creation and preservation,
and all the blessings of this life;
but above all, for your immeasurable love
in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ,
for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.

And, we pray, give us such a sense of all your mercies,
that our hearts may be truly thankful
and that we may praise you
not only with our lips, but in our lives,
serving you in holiness and righteousness all our days,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord,
to whom with you and the Holy Spirit,
be honour and glory, now and for ever.

Amen.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with us all evermore. Amen.

Hymn: 'All things bright and beautiful'. (TIS 135)

*All things bright and beautiful,
all creatures great and small,
all things wise and wonderful
the Lord God made them all.*

The wildflowers in their beauty,
the mountain ranges tall,
the billabongs and rivers,
and friendly birds that call,

All things bright and beautiful ...

The cold wind in the winter,
the bright, life-giving sun,
the ripe fruits in the garden
he made them every one.

All things bright and beautiful ...

The coloured walls of gorges,
the gum trees green and tall,
the rocks, and pools, and palm trees,
the sparkling waterfall,

all things bright and beautiful ...

The many-coloured corals,
the creatures of the sea,
of bushland, field or desert,
on farms, or roaming free,

all things bright and beautiful ...

**He gave us eyes to see them,
and lips that we might tell
how great is God Almighty
who has made all things well.**

All things bright and beautiful ...

Cecil Frances Alexander 1818-95 (vv. 2 alt.,5, and refrain)

Brian Black 1926- (vv. 1 and 3)

Compilers (v. 4)

The service concludes with a time of joyful music.

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