

Weekly service for the Twelfth Sunday after Trinity Sunday 30th August 2020

'Into a New Term'

WELCOME

Rev James Spence (Curate) and Sarah Bradley (Y&C Minister)

Good morning and welcome to Holy Trinity Platt this Sunday morning. We're leading our service today. I'm Sarah the youth and children's minister and I'm James, one of the curates here. We're a church located just south of Manchester city centre. Manchester is a city of many different nationalities, cultures, and experiences of life, and as a church in the city, we're aware of this diversity. We have the joy of welcoming people from different ages and stages, young and old, and from many nations. And throughout lockdown we've been trying to reflect this in our online services. This morning you'll see a few members of our church family and hear many of our musicians who have been recording from home during this time.

Every one of us has had different life experiences, there'll be things we rejoice in, and things we regret, there'll be things we hope will continue forever, and no doubt things that we wish could be different. Whatever our circumstances, it's good to be able to worship together, praising the Lord's name.

HYMN

From all that dwell below the skies

Performed by the musicians of Holy Trinity Platt Church, Directed by Olly Hamilton

From all that dwell below the skies,
Let the Creator's praise arise!
Hallelujah, hallelujah!
Let the Redeemer's name be sung
Through every land, by every tongue!
O praise him, O praise him,
Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah!

Eternal are thy mercies, Lord,
Eternal truth attends thy word;
Hallelujah, hallelujah!
Thy praise shall sound from shore to shore,
'Till suns shall rise and set no more.
O praise him, O praise him,
Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah!

Let all things their creator bless
And worship him in humbleness,
Hallelujah, hallelujah!
Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son,
And praise the Spirit, Three-In-One.
O praise him, O praise him,
Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah!

*Words: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748
Tune: lasst uns erfreue, by John Hatton, d. 1793*

CONFESSION

That God we praise is also the God we have at times turned away from this week. But, as we've just sang, "Eternal are thy mercies, Lord." So, let us return to the Lord our God and say to him:

**All: Father, we have sinned against heaven and against you.
 We are not worthy to be called your children.
 We turn to you again.
 Have mercy on us,
 bring us back to yourself
 as those who once were dead
 but now have life through Christ our Lord. Amen**

Those words are based on the words of the prodigal son as he prepares to return to his father. And just like the father in that parable, we have a heavenly Father who is ready to welcome us with open arms as we return to him. So, in that confidence we pray:

ABSOLUTION

May the God of all healing and forgiveness
draw us to himself,
and cleanse us from all our sins
that we may behold the glory of his Son,
the Word made flesh,
Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

This is amazing grace...

SONG

This is amazing grace (Who breaks the power of sin and darkness)

Performed by the musicians of Holy Trinity Platt Church, Directed by Olly Hamilton

Who breaks the power of sin and darkness?
Whose love is mighty and so much stronger?
The King of Glory, the King above all kings

Who shakes the whole earth with holy thunder?
And leaves us breathless, in awe and wonder?
The King of Glory, the King above all kings.

This is amazing grace,
This is unfailing love,
That You would take my place,
That You would bear my cross;

You lay down Your life,
That I would be set free:
Oh, Jesus, I sing for,
All that You've done for me.

Who brings our chaos back into order?
Who makes the orphan, a son and daughter?
The King of Glory, the King above all kings.

Who rules the nations with truth and justice?
Shines like the sun, in all of its brilliance?
The King of Glory, the King above all kings.

This is amazing grace,
This is unfailing love,
That You would take my place,
That You would bear my cross;

You lay down Your life,
That I would be set free:
Oh, Jesus, I sing for,
All that You've done for me.

Worthy is the Lamb who was slain
Worthy is the King who conquered the grave
Worthy is the Lamb who was slain
Worthy is the King who conquered the grave
Worthy is the Lamb who was slain
Worthy is the King who conquered the grave
Worthy is the Lamb who was slain
Worthy, worthy, worthy.

This is amazing grace,
This is unfailing love,
That You would take my place,
That You would bear my cross;

You lay down Your life,
That I would be set free:
Oh, Jesus, I sing for,
All that You've done for me.
Jesus, I sing for,
All that You've done for me.
Jesus, I sing for,
All that You've done for me.

*Words and Music: Songwriters: Jeremy Riddle, Josh Farro & Phil Wickham
Tune: This amazing grace*

REFLECTION

Given by Dr. Emmanuel Oladipo

I'm Manny. I'm trained as a doctor but for the last few years I've been teaching at a local medical school. I've been coming to Holy Trinity Platt for about twelve years now, and I was married to my wife Jo there, just over 4 years ago.

These past few months have been pretty eventful for all of us, but for us it's been particularly challenging I guess as a few months ago my wife gave birth to our daughter Amaya-Joy. It's been a pretty surreal experience to be honest. We went from expecting my Nigerian mum and probably an aunty moving in with us by force to completely going it alone. And as new parents it was pretty terrifying, it still is to be honest.

Added to that my work situation was a bit in limbo, so with teaching at the medical school I had work booked in until the summer but with lockdown happening all of that was cancelled from the end of March and I didn't know whether I would be paid for that work or not. But praise the Lord that I was furloughed in the end as we were pretty close to pretty dire financial situation.

Yeah, it's been pretty testing adjusting to life with a little one and learning how to be parents but also how we support each other as a couple. And as someone wrestling with anxiety and depression that's been particular challenge as our world has suddenly become much smaller. We live in Moss Side, just south of the city centre, about seven minutes' walk to church on a good day, and one of the things we've been really thankful for is that our church family and the local community have been so supportive to us and have really loved us during this time.

Our church brought round meals for us to have every night for the first month she was born, our neighbours have given us gifts, they've given us baby toys and we've really felt very loved despite the lockdown.

Looking to September, I start a new job as anatomy demonstrator for a year as I work towards going back into clinical practice. I'm excited for the role, it will look quite a bit different to the job I applied for, as with Coronavirus things will have to change, and there'll be a lot more Zoom teaching as has become the norm, but despite that, like I say, I'm really excited for what September will bring. Although I'm aware it will bring some challenges with me working from home, but not being able support Jo with Amaya-Joy as I have been these last few months. Slightly anxious that we'll feel a little bit more isolated than we have especially not knowing whether baby and parent classes will start up, that Jo might be able to attend during the day.

Despite the challenge and the change, one of the things that has really steadied us is knowing that the Jesus we believe in will never change, and by his Spirit he is present with us always. Despite what it sometimes feels like we know that we are never truly alone, that the grace of the Lord Jesus is sufficient for us even in our weakness and we are encouraged that he is placed around us a great church family and a vibrant community who help to remind us of those truths.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Rev Dr. Paul Mathole, Rector

We're going to join together and affirm our faith in Jesus Christ the Son of God:

**Though he was divine,
he did not cling to equality with God,
but made himself nothing.
Taking the form of a slave,
he was born in human likeness.
He humbled himself
and was obedient to death,
even the death of the cross.
Therefore God has raised him on high,
and given him the name above every name:
that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bow,
and every voice proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.
Amen.**

SONG

Yet not I (What gift of grace)

Performed by the musicians of Holy Trinity Platt Church, Directed by Olly Hamilton

What gift of grace is Jesus my Redeemer
There is no more for heaven now to give
He is my joy, my righteousness, and freedom
My steadfast love, my deep and boundless peace

To this I hold, my hope is only Jesus
For my life is wholly bound to his
Oh how strange and divine, I can sing: all is mine!
Yet not I, but through Christ in me

The night is dark but I am not forsaken
For by my side, the Saviour He will stay
I labour on in weakness and rejoicing
For in my need, His power is displayed

To this I hold, my Shepherd will defend me
Through the deepest valley He will lead
Oh the night has been won, and I shall overcome
Yet not I, but through Christ in me

No fate I dread, I know I am forgiven
The future sure, the price it has been paid
For Jesus bled and suffered for my pardon
And He was raised to overthrow the grave

To this I hold, my sin has been defeated
Jesus now and ever is my plea
Oh the chains are released, I can sing: I am free!
Yet not I, but through Christ in me

With every breath I long to follow Jesus
For He has said that He will bring me home
And day by day I know He will renew me
Until I stand with joy before the throne

To this I hold, my hope is only Jesus
All the glory evermore to Him
When the race is complete, still my lips shall repeat:
Yet not I, but through Christ in me!
Yet not I, but through Christ in me!

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Exodus 3:1-15

Dr. Jo Oladipo

The Old Testament reading is from Exodus Chapter three, verses one to fifteen.

Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up. So Moses thought, 'I will go over and see this strange sight – why the bush does not burn up.'

When the Lord saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, 'Moses! Moses!' And Moses said, 'Here I am.' 'Do not come any closer,' God said. 'Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.' Then he said, 'I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.' At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.

The Lord said, 'I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey – the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt.'

But Moses said to God, 'Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?' And God said, 'I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain.' Moses said to God, 'Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, "The God of your fathers has sent me to you," and they ask me, "What is his name?" Then what shall I tell them?' God said to Moses, 'I am who I am. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: "I am has sent me to you."'

God also said to Moses, 'Say to the Israelites, "The Lord, the God of your fathers – the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob – has sent me to you." 'This is my name for ever, the name you shall call me from generation to generation.

GOSPEL READING

Matthew 16:21-28

Dr. Jo Oladipo

The Gospel reading is from Matthew, chapter sixteen, verses 21-28.

From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.

Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. 'Never, Lord!' he said. 'This shall never happen to you!' Jesus turned to Peter and said, 'Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling-block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns.' Then Jesus said to his disciples, 'Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what they have done.

'Truly I tell you, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.'

This is the word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

SERMON

Rev Dr. Paul Mathole, Rector

SONG

This I believe (The Creed)

Performed by the musicians of Holy Trinity Platt Church, Directed by Olly Hamilton

Our Father everlasting
The all creating One
God Almighty
Through the Holy Spirit
Conceiving Christ the Son
Jesus our Saviour

I believe in God our Father
I believe in Christ the Son
I believe in the Holy Spirit
Our God is three in One
I believe in the resurrection
That we will rise again
For I believe in the name of Jesus

Our Judge and our Defender
Suffered and crucified
Forgiveness is in You
Descended into darkness
You rose in glorious life
Forever seated high

I believe in God our Father
I believe in Christ the Son
I believe in the Holy Spirit
Our God is three in one
I believe in the resurrection
That we will rise again
For I believe in the name of Jesus

I believe in You
I believe You rose again
I believe that Jesus Christ is Lord

I believe in God our Father
I believe in Christ the Son
I believe in the Holy Spirit
Our God is three in one
I believe in the resurrection
That we will rise again
For I believe in the name of Jesus

I believe in life eternal
I believe in the virgin birth
I believe in the saints' communion
And in Your holy Church
I believe in the resurrection
When Jesus comes again
For I believe, in the name of Jesus
For I believe, in the name of Jesus

*Words and Music by Ben Fielding & Matt Crocker
Tune: This I believe*

REFLECTION

Sarah Bradley (Youth & Children's Ministry)

Normally at this time of year, I'd be busy planning for a new term, writing dramas, choosing songs, planning a youth weekend away. But as things are, the future's looking uncertain. We're not sure when and how we'll be able to do all the things we'd like to.

And that's really hard. Before lockdown, we had children's groups that met on a Sunday during the service, a busy toddler group, and midweek groups that all met in the building. When we couldn't meet in person, we like everybody else didn't want to lose contact with people, so we had to re-think.

On a Sunday, we have all of our different groups, from two- and half-year olds right up to adults, looking at the same part of the Bible, and we call it "whole church curriculum". And so during lockdown, we've sent out sheets each week tailored to the different ages for them to do with their families at home.

It's not easy, but it's been encouraging to hear from families how these have helped them stay engaged as they watch online. We decided to do our toddler group on Zoom, which has been fun. We have a Bible story and a song time each week, and then we send out a craft idea, it's been a lovely way to stay connected. The children and the parents have enjoyed seeing each other and showing us their crafts and various toys and joining in with the singing!

With our midweek groups, we've sent out activities out to those in primary school and our 11-14 and our 14-18 groups have met together on Zoom. The games we've played have had to change quite a lot, as we have to find things that work on screen, and one of our favourites has been the 'bring me' game, where we give them a strange item and they have to run round their houses and be the first one to bring it back to show everyone.

It's been great to be able to see them each week, we've enjoyed staying in touch and being able to laugh and chat and learn together. Last term we looked at the story of Joseph from Genesis, and it was helpful to see how God worked through some pretty horrible things for Joseph, and to be reminded of his sovereignty in all things.

Now we're looking forward. Technology has been great, but it doesn't work for everyone, and it's not even close to being the same as meeting together in person. We'd much rather be able to meet face to face, but we'll have to see what Autumn brings. Over the last few months, it's been great to be reminded that God is still ruling his world. After all that happens to him, Joseph tells his brothers, "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives!" We might not understand all that's going on, but we can be sure that God's got it all in his hands, and that's a great help and comfort as September comes.

PRAYERS

Led by Rev James Spence

As we start this new term, let us come to our heavenly father in prayer.

And we begin our prayers with the prayer for today:

God of constant mercy,
who sent your Son to save us:
remind us of your goodness,
increase your grace within us,
that our thankfulness may grow,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Lord God, our maker and our redeemer, we lift our eyes to you in prayer and praise. We praise you for all our spiritual blessings in the Lord Jesus. We thank you that he will return again in glory and on that day he will make everything new. And until that day, help us to continually take up our crosses and follow Christ. Grow in us, by your Spirit, a deeper and wider love for you and an increasing desire to serve and worship our Lord Jesus.

May our churches be shining lights and loving examples of the faith we profess. And will you bring us, from every tribe, tongue and nation, to that day when we gather around your throne in endless worship of you. Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Loving Father, we thank you for this holiday season. As children, young people and teachers return to schools and colleges this week, comfort those who are nervous about returning. Help those starting new schools to settle quickly and give an infectious joy to those excited to go back. Give wisdom too to teachers, admin staff and all making plans for pupils to return, may it be a safe and enjoyable start to this new term.

And we pray all that too, for all preparing to begin or return to university, and for those returning to workplaces they may not have been to for a while. Father, at this time of new starts, may we know your unchanging love and faithfulness to us, and may we rest in your promises.

All: Amen.

Almighty God, creator of the world, sustainer of life, we thank you for our world, and praise you for your kindness and your goodness to us. Please bring hope and comfort at this time to all those affected by Covid-19, by unrest, by grief, by persecution, or by poverty. Give wisdom and humility to leaders trying to navigate these issues and help us to love our neighbours.

We particularly pray for those known personally to us who are suffering in mind, body, or spirit. You are the Lord of all healing and comfort, so please may these people know your peace and your presence at this time. May you draw close to them, showing them the hope available through our Lord Jesus Christ. And for all of us, assure us of your love, empower us by your Spirit, and may we fix our eyes on the Lord Jesus, who is alive and reigns with you now and forever.

All: Amen.

We conclude our prayers by saying together the Lord's prayer:

**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.**

Our final hymn helps us to fix our vision and our life on that God who gave himself for those he loves. Let's sing this together.

HYMN

Be Thou my vision

Performed by the musicians of Holy Trinity Platt Church, Directed by Olly Hamilton

Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart.
Nought be all else to me, save that thou art.
Thou my best thought in the day and the night
Waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.

Be thou my wisdom, be thou my true word,
I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord;
Thou my great Father and I thy true child,
Once far away, but by love reconciled.

Be thou my breastplate, my sword for the fight.
Be thou my armour and be thou my might,
Be my soul's shelter, and thou my high tower,
Raise thou me heavenwards, O pow'r of my pow'r.

Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise;
Thou mine inheritance, now and always.
Thou and thou only, the first in my heart,
Sovereign of heaven, my treasure thou art.

High King of heaven, thou heaven's bright sun,
Grant me its joys after vict'r'y is won,
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
Still be my vision, O ruler of all.

Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
Still be my vision, O ruler of all.

Words: Eleanor Hull

Tune: Slane

Thank you for joining us this morning and let's pray as we draw our service to a close.

BLESSING

The love of the Lord Jesus
draw us to himself,
the power of the Lord Jesus
strengthen us in his service,
the joy of the Lord Jesus fill our hearts;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among us and remain with us always.

All: Amen.

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