

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



Moses striking the rock to get water - Painting in the Cubiculum of the Sheep in the Catacomb of Callixtus, along the Appian Way, Rome.

St Paul's Church • Ipswich
27 September 2026

GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

Processional Hymn: *Seek ye first the Kingdom of God [TIS 745]*

The Invocation

Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever.

The Greeting

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Welcome & Acknowledgement of Country

Sentence

Come, let us return to the Lord, that we may live before him.

Hosea 6.1a,2b

Prayer of Approach

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.

Kyrie eleison (Lord, have mercy)

Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

Confession

God is steadfast in love and infinite in mercy, welcoming sinners and inviting them to the Lord's table.

Silence may be kept.

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith, with a sincere and a true heart.

**Merciful God,
our maker and our judge,
we have sinned against you
in thought, word and deed,
and in what we have failed to do:
we have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves;
we repent and are sorry for all our sins.
Father, forgive us.
Strengthen us to love and obey you
in newness of life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Words of Assurance

These words of assurance from the First Letter of John declare that: If anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the offering for our sins, and not for us only, but for the sins of the whole world. (1 John 2:1-2)

The Hymn of Praise, *Gloria in excelsis*

**Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to God's people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.**

**For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

Collect

Grant, O merciful God,
that your people may have that mind that was in Christ Jesus,
who emptied himself, and took the form of a servant,
and in humility became obedient even to death.
For you have highly exalted him
and bestowed on him the name that is above every name,
Jesus Christ, the Lord;
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, in everlasting glory. **Amen.**

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

First Reading

Exodus 17.1-7

¹ From the wilderness of Sin the whole congregation of the Israelites journeyed by stages, as the Lord commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. ² The people quarrelled with Moses, and said, 'Give us water to drink.' Moses said to them, 'Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the Lord?' ³ But the people thirsted there for water; and the people complained against Moses and said, 'Why did you bring us out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?' ⁴ So Moses cried out to the Lord, 'What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me.' ⁵ The Lord said to Moses, 'Go on ahead of the people, and take some of the elders of Israel with you; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. ⁶ I will be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so that the people may drink.' Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. ⁷ He called the place Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarrelled and tested the Lord, saying, 'Is the Lord among us or not?'

Hear the word of the Lord,

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 78.1-4;11-16

- ¹ Give heed to my teaching, O my people:
incline your ears to the words of my mouth;
- ² For I will open my mouth in a parable:
and expound the mysteries of former times.
- ³ What we have heard and known:
what our forebears have told us,
- ⁴ We will not hide from their children,
but declare to a generation yet to come:
**the praiseworthy acts of the Lord,
his mighty and wonderful works.**
- ¹¹ For he did marvellous things
in the sight of their ancestors:
in the land of Egypt, in the country of Zoan.
- ¹² He divided the sea and let them pass through:
he made the waters stand up in a heap.
- ¹³ In the daytime he led them with a cloud:
and all night long with the light of fire.
- ¹⁴ He cleft rocks in the wilderness:
**and gave them drink in abundance
as from springs of water.**
- ¹⁵ He brought streams out of the rock:
and caused the waters to flow down like rivers.
- ¹⁶ But for all this they sinned yet more against him:
and rebelled against the Most High in the desert.

Second Reading

Philippians 2.1-13

- ¹ If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love,
any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy,
- ² make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being
in full accord and of one mind.
- ³ Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others
as better than yourselves.
- ⁴ Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of
others.
- ⁵ Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,
- ⁶ who, though he was in the form of God,

did not regard equality with God
as something to be exploited,
⁷ but emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave,
being born in human likeness.
And being found in human form,
⁸ he humbled himself
and became obedient to the point of death—
even death on a cross.
⁹ Therefore God also highly exalted him
and gave him the name
that is above every name,
¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bend,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
¹¹ and every tongue should confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.
¹² Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my
presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation
with fear and trembling;
¹³ for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work
for his good pleasure.
Hear the word of the Lord,
Thanks be to God.

Gradual Hymn: *May the mind of Christ my Saviour* [TIS 609]

The Gospel

Matthew 21.23-32

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St Matthew.

Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.

²³ When he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the
people came to him as he was teaching, and said, 'By what authority are you
doing these things, and who gave you this authority?' ²⁴ Jesus said to them,

'I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. ²⁵ Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?' And they argued with one another, 'If we say, "From heaven", he will say to us, "Why then did you not believe him?" ²⁶ But if we say, "Of human origin", we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet.' ²⁷ So they answered Jesus, 'We do not know.' And he said to them, 'Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things. ²⁸ 'What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, "Son, go and work in the vineyard today." ²⁹ He answered, "I will not"; but later he changed his mind and went. ³⁰ The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, "I go, sir"; but he did not go. ³¹ Which of the two did the will of his father?' They said, 'The first.' Jesus said to them, 'Truly I tell you, the tax-collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. ³² For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax-collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.

This is the Gospel of the Lord
Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

The Reflection

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Let us together affirm the faith of the church.

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made
of one being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,**

**was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son
is worshipped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come.
Amen.**

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

The celebrant says.

Let us pray to the God of boundless mercy, whose love reaches beyond every border and barrier.

A minister continues

God of living water, we pray for your Church throughout the world, that we may be reconciled to one another and dwell together in unity. Where there are quarrels and growing anxiety in your, remain faithful still. Give us the mind of Christ, who humbled himself and became obedient even to death on a cross, that we may trust you, and look not only to our own interests but to the interests of others. We pray for Jeremy our Archbishop, for Cameron our Bishop, and for all clergy and people of this diocese and parish, that we may proclaim your gospel with courage and grace.

Lord, in your mercy.

Hear our prayer

God of all nations, we pray for the world you love: for places torn by war and violence, for peacemakers and negotiators, for all who lead the nations. Where there is conflict, give wisdom and compassion; where there is suffering and thirst, provide relief. Let those in authority act with humility, seeking the good of all rather than their own gain, that the strong may protect the vulnerable and all peoples may live together in peace.

Lord, in your mercy.

Hear our prayer

Healing God, we bring before you all who are sick in body, mind, or spirit and all who care for them. As you brought forth water for your thirsty people, so refresh all who are weary and draw near to all who suffer. Grant them your healing touch, patience in suffering, and hope in your promises.

Lord, in your mercy.

Hear our prayer

Eternal God, we remember with thanksgiving all who have died in the faith of Christ and those whose anniversaries fall at this time. For all the departed: bring them, with all your saints, into the joy of your eternal kingdom, where every tear is wiped away.

Lord, in your mercy.

Hear our prayer

Please join me as we pray the Ipswich Anglicans Prayer together:

**God of new beginnings,
bless our Ipswich Anglican community
with a fresh vision for the future,
with generous hearts to love one another,
and with courage for the changes we now embrace.
Draw us more deeply into the mystery of Christ,
so that we draw closer to you and to each other.
Make us a blessing to the city of Ipswich
as we walk together
into the future you have prepared for us;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**

Almighty God, you have promised to hear our prayers.

**Grant that what we have asked in faith
we may by your grace receive,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

GREETING OF PEACE

Christ has reconciled us to God in one body by the cross.

We meet in his name and share his peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

Offertory Hymn: *Make me a Channel of your Peace [TIS 607]*

During the offertory hymn the Sacrament which has been reserved from the Eucharist for use at this service will be brought to the Altar. The regular offertory prayer for the collection is then said.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation.

Through your goodness we have these gifts to share.

Accept and use our offerings for your glory

and for the service of your kingdom.

Blessed be God for ever.

COMMUNION

In place of the usual Great Thanksgiving Prayer, the following words are said by the lay Minister.

The Gospel of St Luke tell us that:

At supper with his disciples on the night he was betrayed Jesus took a cup, and after giving thanks he said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves; for I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them saying, "this is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

The Ipswich Anglican community of which we are members, has taken this bread and wine, and given thanks over it according to our Lord's command. I bring you these Holy Gifts so that you may share in the communion of our Lord's body and blood. For these are the gifts of God for the people of God.

The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour Christ has taught us, we are confident to pray,

**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.**

**Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.**

As this broken bread was once many grains,
which have been gathered together and made one bread:

**so may your Church be gathered
from the ends of the earth into your kingdom.**

Agnus Dei

Jesus, Lamb of God, have mercy on us.

Jesus, bearer of our sins, have mercy on us.

Jesus, redeemer of the world, grant us your peace.

Invitation to the Table

The gifts of God for the people of God.

**Jesus Christ is holy,
Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.**

*Please note that intinction (dipping the bread) is forbidden as it is a health risk; it also introduces gluten to the wine, which is a further health risk to those who have a gluten allergy. Please ask the priest if you require a gluten free wafer.
If you do not wish to drink from the cup but want to acknowledge the sacramental presence, please feel free to pause briefly before the chalice and say 'Amen'.*

THE SENDING OUT OF GOD'S PEOPLE

Prayer after Communion

Living God,
in this holy meal you fill us with new hope.
May the power of your love,
which we have known in word and sacrament,
continue your saving work among us,
give us courage for our pilgrimage,
and bring us to the joys you promise.

Most loving God,
you send us into the world you love.
Give us grace to go thankfully and with courage
in the power of your Spirit.

Notices

God of peace, may you equip us with everything good for doing your will, working in us that which is pleasing in your sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ. Amen.

Recessional Hymn: *I, the Lord of sea and sky [TIS 658]*

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