

Anglican Diocese of Wangaratta
Parochial District of Wangaratta West & The Warbys
THE TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST {OS 28}

15th October, 2023—Ante Communion 11.00m

Holy Eucharist, Second Order, APBA p. 119ff.

Hymn: TiS 152. tune, Ode to Joy.

- 1. Joyful, joyful, we adore you,
God of glory, God of love;
hearts unfold like flowers before you
opening to the sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness,
drive the dark of doubt away;
giver of immortal gladness,
fill us with the light of day.**
- 2. All your works with joy surround you,
earth and heav'n reflect your rays,
stars and angels sing around you,
centre of unbroken praise.
Field and forest, vale and mountain,
flowery meadow, flashing sea,
singing bird and flowing fountain
call to praise you joyfully.**
- 3. You are giving and forgiving,
ever blessing, ever blest,
well-spring of the joy of living,
ocean-depth of happy rest.
You our Father, Christ our brother,
all are yours who live in love;
teach us how to love each other,
lift us to your joy above.**

Henry Van Dyke 1852–1933 alt.
Arrangement © L. F. Bartlett

Sentence

This is our God for whom we have waited;
let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

Isaiah 25.9.

Welcome & Greeting

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

The Acclamation

We praise you, living God:

you give strength to the earth that sustains us,

you open your hand to feed all living things.

We praise you, Lord Jesus Christ:

you teach us with stories of seeds and weeds and harvest time,

you call us to accept your word and bear much fruit.

We praise you, Holy Spirit, fire of love:

you are the breath of life in every creature,

you refresh our thirsty souls with grace.

Blessed be God, Source of Wisdom, living Word, abiding Spirit,

Blessed be God for ever.

Let us pray

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.

Gloria

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

The Collect

Let us pray *(a brief silence for reflection on the theme of the day)*

Saving and healing God,
you have promised

that those who have died with Christ shall live with him:

grant us grace to be continually thankful for all you have done for us,

and in that thankfulness to be eager to serve and live for others,

so that we and all your children may rejoice in your salvation;

through Jesus Christ our Lord,

who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,

one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

A Reading from the Book 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.' 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.' So all the people took off the gold rings from their ears, and brought them to Aaron. 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!' When Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation and said, 'Tomorrow shall be a festival to the Lord.' 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.

The Lord said to Moses, 'Go down at once! Your people, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, have acted perversely; 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!" ' The Lord said to Moses, 'I have seen this people, how stiff-necked they are. 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.'

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?

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. 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.” ’ And the Lord changed his mind about the disaster that he planned to bring on his people.

Hear the word of the Lord,
thanks be to God.

Psalm is said: Lectern side (Left), Pulpit side (right) or All together

Psalm 106. 1-6, 20-24

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

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

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

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

**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.**

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

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

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

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

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

***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.***

A Reading from the Letter of Paul to the Philippians [4. 1-9]

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.

I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. 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 coworkers, whose names are in the book of life.

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, brothers and sisters, 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. As for the things that you have learned and received and heard and noticed in me, do them, and the God of peace will be with you.

Hear the word of the Lord,
thanks be to God.

Gradual Hymn A & M 356. tune Savannah (AHB 520)

- 1. Praise we now the word of grace;
may our hearts its truth embrace:
from its pages may we hear
Christ our teacher, speaking clear.**
- 2. May the gospel of the Lord
everywhere be spread abroad,
that the world around may own
Christ as King, and Christ alone.**

Sidney Newman Sedgwick (1872-1941)

The Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ According to Matthew [22. 1-14]

Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ

[Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying:]

‘The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come. 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.”

But they made light of it and went away, one to his farm, another to his business, while the rest seized his slaves, maltreated them, and killed them. The king was enraged. He sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. Then he said to his slaves, “The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet.” 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.

‘But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding robe, and he said to him, “Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding robe?” And he was speechless. 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.” For many are called, but few are chosen.’

For the Gospel of the Lord,
Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection time

Creed

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.**

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Let us pray for the world and for the Church.

God of grace,
hear our prayer.

We remember this week:

Rest eternal grant to them O Lord.
And may Light Perpetual shine upon them.

The priest says

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.**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

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, confident in God's forgiveness.

**Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
we have sinned against you in thought, and word, and deed,
and in what we have failed to do.
Have mercy on us, forgive us all that is past,
and grant that we may serve you
and live a new life to your glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

the minister may say this Word of Assurance

If anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father,
Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the perfect offering for our sins,
and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world:

1 John 2.1,2

THE GREETING OF PEACE

We are the body of Christ.

His Spirit is with us.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

Offertory Hymn: TiS 168. tune, Ar Hyd Y Nos

1. **For the fruits of all creation,
thanks be to God;
for his gifts to every nation,
thanks be to God;
for the ploughing, sowing, reaping,
silent growth while we are sleeping,
future needs in earth's safe keeping,
thanks be to God.**
2. **In the just reward of labour,
God's will is done;
in the help we give our neighbour
God's will is done;
in our worldwide task of caring
for the hungry and despairing,
in the harvests we are sharing,
God's will is done.**
3. **For the harvests of the Spirit,
thanks be to God;
for the good we all inherit,
thanks be to God;
for the wonders that astound us,
for the truths that still confound us,
most of all, that love has found us,
thanks be to God.**

Frederick Pratt Green 1903–2000

THE SENDING OUT OF GOD'S PEOPLE

Offertory prayer:

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.

Notices

Eternal God and Father,
**by whose power we are created,
and by whose love we are redeemed:
Guide and strengthen us by your Spirit,
that we may give ourselves to your service,
and live this day in love to one another and to you;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

A Hymn may be sung

- 1. May the mind of Christ my Saviour
live in me from day to day,
by his love and power controlling
all I do and say.**
- 2. May the word of God dwell richly
in my heart from hour to hour,
so that all may see I triumph
only through his power.**
- 3. May the peace of God my Father
rule my life in everything,
that I may be calm to comfort
sick and sorrowing.**
- 4. May the love of Jesus fill me,
as the waters fill the sea;
him exalting, self denying
this is victory.**

5. **May I run the race before me,
strong and brave to face the foe,
looking only unto Jesus
as I onward go.**

Kate Barclay Wilkinson (1859-1928)

The Grace

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

Eucharist, Second Order Text from A Prayer Book for Australia (Sydney: Broughton Books, 1995)

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human being, standing before them, taking liberties with the tradition that they alone understand and are authorized to interpret, has their lives in his hand. They do not believe that their reaction to him will decide their fates. Would you have done? Or are you, by any chance, the man without a wedding robe?

It is terribly hard to feel that this man is being treated fairly. After all, he didn't know he was going to be invited, and if the rest of the guests were picked up off the streets, how well dressed were any of them? You imagine this poor guest sitting there, eating as much as he can, filling up his cup steadily, not sure what he's doing there, but determined to make the most of it. Then all of a sudden, there's the King. The man is completely thrown. Perhaps he hadn't even realized where he was. He had just gone along with the crowd, eager for a free feed. He didn't know he was celebrating the Son's banquet. The King's initial question is quite friendly in tone. All kinds of possible responses might have allowed the man to stay at the banquet. He could have said, 'I could see how urgent it was, and I wanted to make sure I didn't miss it.' Or, 'I don't own a wedding gown, but I'd love to borrow one.' Instead, he is silent, and he loses his chance.

Like the people who rejected the initial invitation, this guest is not interested in his relationship with the King. He never expected or wanted to meet him or speak to him, and he doesn't care what the banquet is for. This is Matthew's sombre warning—unless we have come to rejoice with the Son, there is nothing for us here.

Jane Williams. (2004). Lectionary Reflections: Year A (pp. 116–117). SPCK.

Isaiah 25:1–9; Philippians 4:1–9; Matthew 22:1–14

This is an enigmatic little parable in Matthew. If you look at Luke's version of the story (Luke 14:15–24), you will see a much more straightforward narrative about the failure of those originally invited to realize the value of the invitation. The most striking difference between Matthew and Luke is the tone. Matthew's version of the story is full of urgency and bitter anger. It is only in Matthew that the banquet is completely ready and about to go to waste, and it is only in Matthew that the messengers are mistreated and vengeance exacted. And who is the mysterious guest without a wedding garment? He doesn't appear in Luke, but he adds an element of fear, so that there is no assurance of a happy ending, even for those who have made it to the banquet.

Part of the anger in the story is generated by the scene-setting opening verses. The King is throwing this party for his Son. The wedding banquet of the King's Son is a glorious and spectacular occasion for rejoicing, and most people would beg, borrow and steal to get themselves invited. But these strange people either don't care about the invitation at all, or else they treat it as a positive nuisance, to the point where they beat up the postman who brings the card. What should have been an occasion for national rejoicing is turned abruptly into a war zone.

There is bewilderment here—surely the people knew that the King's Son was about to get married? But there is also grief for the Son. Clearly, these people, his future subjects, don't care enough about him to want to share in his rejoicing. What's he got to do with us, they say? He won't make our businesses run. He won't generate an income for us. Their rejection of the Son is both personal and corporate. They reject not just him, but also their share in the future of the nation that he represents.

But the other source of anger in the story comes out of the sense of urgency. Twice (verses 4 and 8) the King says that everything is 'ready'. It cannot wait, it will not keep, it's now or never. Why don't the invited guests realize? They will never again get the chance to go to a royal wedding.

The three parables, from 21:28 to this one, are all about the way in which Jesus's audience are passing up their chance to share in the kingdom. The stories get more and more pointed, making it clearer and clearer that all of this focuses on Jesus. Jesus and the kingdom of God go together—to reject one is to reject the other. It is clear from the way that they react to all three of the stories that the Pharisees understand what is being said, and that it is directed towards them: it's just that they don't believe it. They do not believe that this ordinary

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Exodus 32:1–14; Philippians 4:1–9; Matthew 22:1–14

The party was ready, the guests were on the way, but somehow they got distracted. Today's gospel fits Exodus 32 like a glove, forming a combined warning.

Readers of Exodus perceive the golden calf incident in black and white. It was a wicked blasphemy. But at the time it must have appeared in shades of grey. The key question is: who brought Israel out of Egypt? Moses, say the people, growing restless while Moses is away getting the instructions for the tabernacle (the physical object, symbolizing both the presence and the untameability of Yahweh, upon which golden earrings were to have been lavished). Treat the leader as God, and you'll have a vacuum when the leader goes off doing business with God. So Aaron gives another answer: the calf brought them out (imagine Isaiah's mockery).

God's reaction is interesting. He scornfully agrees with the people: Your people, he says to Moses, whom you brought out of Egypt. Moses knows that this means trouble, but in his prayer he goes straight to the point: No, he replies to God, they are your people. You brought them out. You were fulfilling promises made long ago and establishing a worldwide reputation. You can't go back on it.

It is a defining moment in the relationship between Yahweh, Moses and Israel. From now on nothing will be the same again. There is still hard bargaining ahead; Moses spends the next two chapters persuading God to accompany the people in person, rather than just sending an angel. But the people have effectively shown themselves to be that strange hybrid, the people of God who yet bear the mark of Cain. They carry God's light for the world, but remain capable of darkness. The rabble of slaves now invited to feast in God's Kingdom still need to put on the wedding garment.

The best way to stop the weeds of idolatry growing is to plant flowers. Paul, after his word of reconciling encouragement to two otherwise unknown women, offers two basic plants which will leave no room for thorns and thistles: celebration and thinking.

Both require a positive decision. You can't just drift into rejoicing in the Lord, or the prayerful renunciation of anxiety which follows. In the pagan world of Paul's day, anxiety was a major factor in daily life, to be kept at bay by ceaselessly appeasing the malevolent deities. Since the true God is revealed in Jesus, this anxiety can and should be replaced by celebration, but you've got to work at it if you want the peace, undreamed of in a place like Philippi, which follows.

Likewise, you have to work at putting into your mind all the positive things in God's good world. The media bombard us every day with the negatives; go with the flow and that's what you'll get. Remember, instead, who it was that brought you out of Egypt, and ponder the thousands of things that are good in creation. It's a great party; don't get distracted.