

St Andrew's and St George's West

Order of Service, 25 October 2020

What is the Greatest Commandment?



Music Granny Hirst's 100th set Joanna Stark, Fiddle

Welcome

Call to Worship

Into your presence we come, Lord God,
into your dwelling place,
acknowledging we are so very small before your holiness.
A thousand years are like a day to you,
a day like a dream, like a blade of grass growing fresh each morning,
and yet you love us.
May we rejoice in our praise and prayer today.
We ask for some sense of your glorious power.
Let us worship the Lord!

Hymn 115 Love is the touch of intangible joy

Love is the touch of intangible joy;
love is the force that no fear can destroy;
love is the goodness we gladly applaud:
God is where love is, for love is of God.

Love is the lilt in the lingering voice;
love is the hope that can make us rejoice;
love is the cure for the frightened and flawed:
God is where love is, for love is of God.

Love is the light in the tunnel of pain;
love is the will to be whole once again;
love is the trust of a friend on the road:
God is where love is, for love is of God.

Love is the Maker, and Spirit and Son;

love is the kingdom their will has begun;
love is the pathway the saints all have trod:
God is where love is, for love is of God.

Words: Alison Robertson, Tune: Amor Dei

Opening Prayer

adapted from Spill the Beans

God of love, our foundation and source,
we stand in awe of your unending love for your beloved children,
we know that your great love is given freely and in abundance for all,
whatever or whoever we are.

God of love,
we give thanks this day for the message, for the commandment,
to love and to be loved.
Guide us in our journey to truly live as you have commanded,
teach us to love you, to love our neighbour, and to love ourselves.

God of love,
it is the greatest of your commands,
and though we strive to live each day attempting to fulfil it, we too often fail.
In a world of conflicting allegiances and distractions, where it can be a challenge to
care, help us to know your love.

God of love,
teach us to know a love that is patient, kind, and giving,
that seeks justice and equality for all;
to recognise that discrimination and prejudice must be overcome
for us to achieve true community,
a life lived in the warmth of kindly love, given freely,
Amen.

Confession

God of mercy,
whose heart is full of forgiveness,
and who does not deal with us as we deserve:
When we have thought of ourselves more highly than we ought
and forgotten to put our relationship with You first;

Forgive us, we pray.

When we have loved only those who love us
and ignored or turned aside from those who need a smile
and a hand of friendship;

Forgive us, we pray.

When we have acted as if all tomorrow was ours
yet neglected to do good in the moment of this day;

Forgive us, we pray.

May Christ Jesus,
free us from our faults
and all that would hold us back
from being the children
that the eternal and loving God desires;

Amen

New Testament Reading Matthew 22: 34-46 A paraphrase from Spill the Beans

Questions

Question time in the temple again.

Questions to trap Jesus.

Everyone was asking questions.

From the Pharisees and the Herodians, questions about taxes.

From the Sadducees, questions about resurrection.

From a lawyer, a question about the Law.

“Teacher,” the lawyer asked, “What does the law say is the greatest Commandment?”

The Mosaic law was complicated - the Ten Commandments were only the beginning, there were hundreds of rules and regulations.

Everyone waited.

What would be Jesus’ answer?

“Love God,” said Jesus, “love God with everything you’ve got, your heart, your mind, your soul, your dreams, your hopes, your passions. Love God, that’s the greatest commandment.”

And...

Everyone waited.

“There is another commandment, that is just as important as loving God and it’s this: love your neighbour as much as you love yourself.” Before the lawyer could ask another question Jesus added, “These two great commandments, that’s it. Within these two commandments you can find all the teaching of Moses and the prophets.”

The lawyer looked stunned - all his life he had studied the teaching of the law and the prophets, word by word, sentence by sentence, paragraph by paragraph, law by law, and Jesus was telling him that what was important was not a detailed study of the law, rather it was a lifetime of discovering what loving God and other people, and loving yourself, was all about.

Jesus could see that a group of Pharisees were gathered together nearby, listening and thinking, and he decided to ask them a question: “What do you think about the Messiah? Whose son do you think he is?” And they answered him, “David’s son.”

“Well, if the Messiah is David’s son, how do you explain that David, in one of his songs, called the Messiah his master. If David calls the Messiah his master, how can he also be his son?” None of the Pharisees could answer Jesus. They were aware now that Jesus could ask tricky questions too, as well as answer them, and from that day onwards they didn’t ask him any more questions.

Reflection

Affirmation of Faith

Dorothy McRae-McMahon

**The people of God have a human face
We laugh,
we weep,
we wait in hope.
We lift our eyes,
and love
and struggle,**

**We fail
We stand
And always we stand on trembling ground.**

**But God is God
and Jesus is the Christ
and the Spirit
will lift up our feet.
Nothing lies beyond
the love of God in Christ.**

Hymn 694 Brother, sister, let me serve you

Brother, sister, let me serve you,
let me be as Christ to you;
pray that I may have the grace to
let you be my servant too.

We are pilgrims on a journey,
and companions on the road;
we are here to help each other
walk the mile and bear the load.

When we sing to God in heaven
we shall find such harmony,
born of all we've known together
of Christ's love and agony.

Brother, sister, let me serve you,
let me be as Christ to you;
pray that I may have the grace to
let you be my servant too.

Words: Richard Gillard Tune: Servant Song

Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

Invitation

Who would we invite for dinner if we could choose the people?

I know who would be invited to our table.

People we miss and those we have wanted to be with for months.

People escaping from other countries, because they are the ones who find it hard to get here.

People in our own homes because they are seemingly always going to be here.

People we have never met, whose lives impressed us from the stories we heard.

People who can teach us new songs and tell us about different ways of living together.

Christ invites all to this table.

Through this meal we are made One.

Eucharistic Prayer

Elizabeth Baxter

Before life stirred
your Spirit brooded over darkness
exploding light in all directions.

**Rainbow promise
celebrated your creation.**

Your Spirit led a people to long for you,
**guiding them gently:
a pillar of cloud by day;
fire by night.**

Prophets spoke of your justice
dancing Spirit songs of liberation;
with tambourine and whispered hope.

Your still small voice in lonely places;
**as dry bones lived
and friendships blossomed.**

With tender Spirit passion
you embodied Love
nestling in the womb of Mary
**calling fishermen,
accompanying women,
blessing children.**

They found themselves on Calvary's road
accompanying Love
to the cross and the tomb;
Meeting Love in the garden and on the shore;
**Taking the risk of letting go
so the Spirit of comfort might
come to them.**

Accompanying Christ today in one another
with life-giving encounters of grace,
we flesh out the Spirit's fruit
through Spirit gifts
in communities of hope;
**celebrating the gifts of others
sustaining us on our journeys;
our hearts burn within us
as we feel the stirrings of your presence,**

Touch us by your Spirit
**as we touch this bread and wine,
fruits of the earth to nourish us**

with the very presence of Christ;
as we recall the night of betrayal
after he had washed the feet of his companions,
when Jesus blessed bread,
breaking it and
sharing it, saying,
'This is my body, which is giving for you;
Do this to re-member me.'

We recall the moment after supper
when Jesus blessed the cup
he gave to them saying,
'Drink this all of you;
this is my blood
of the new promise
shed for you and for many
for the forgiveness of sin;
do this as often as you drink it
to re-member me.

Blazing Spirit,
light these gifts with holy fire,
so we who receive them
may be ablaze with your love.
As we re-member
fractured stories
of your marred image,
broken bodies of inhospitality
and blood spilt in war and waste
do not leave us in this place of loneliness;
do not abandon us.

Come make your home in us.

In this humble meal we receive you;
in our embodied hospitality
you take your refuge;
when your wings are broken
and your fire quenched.

Come, Spirit, yearn for us
as we yearn for you.
Together we shall burst the bars of fear
flying freely,
bringing warmth to the earth
and winds of justice
To those who cry, 'Peace'.

The breaking and sharing of the bread

The Spirit calls us to break down the walls of division;
to break through the barriers of fear;
to break out of our tombs of apathy.
So, we break this bread as a symbol of solidarity (the bread is broken)
with all communities who work and pray to this end.
This is our unity with all that breathes and the Spirit of God,
and our commitment to embody the fruits and gifts of Pentecost.

These are gifts of God – for all God’s people in every age.
Let us eat. Let us drink.

Anthem During Communion To thee O Lord

To thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.
My God, I trust in thee.

From the Liturgy of St John Chrysostom, translated AM Henderson.
Music: Sergei Rachmaninov

Hymn 661 Eat this bread, drink this cup

Eat this bread, drink this cup,
Come to me and never be hungry.
Eat this bread, drink this cup,
Trust in me and you will not thirst.
Taizé Community, from John 6

Sharing the Peace

We have experienced the peace that Jesus offers.
May we share that peace others in our daily living.
The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

Blessing

Iona Abbey Worship Book

The blessing of action
the blessing of reflection
the blessing of a God
who is in each of these, and in each one of us,
be with you all. Amen.

Sung Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face to shine upon you
and be gracious unto you;
the Lord lift up his countenance upon you
and give you peace.

Organ Music Dialogue sur les Grands Jeux L.-N. Clérambault

Minister and Leaders: Rev Dr Rosie Magee, Alison Campbell, Crispin Longden, Katie McNeill.

Scripture paraphrase: Lachlan and Niall Angus

Director of Music: Brigitte Harris

Vocal ensemble: Eleanor Cozens, Eleanor Wilson, Caitlin McGillivray, Drew Crichton, Tim Cooper, Andrew Carvel

Pianists: Tim Cooper, Eleanor Cozens

Technical team: Alison Bruce, Andrew Carvel, Susan McLarty, Mary Margaret Scott

British Sign Language interpreter: Louise Holden

Sources:

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