

Christ Church

High Harrogate



Living Water

Season of Creation 2026

IMMERSION IN LIVING WATER

Ezekiel 47:9, 12

Matthew 18:15 - 20

A Parish service for when we're
UNITED but APART

for the

**Fourteenth Sunday
after Trinity**

6th September 2026

Welcome to Christ Church, praying and united, with the whole Church of God ; may this bring a blessing upon your home, as also upon the needs of loved ones and the world,

We build upon all that we have shared and shared still, as now we rejoice in our renewal in Christ's grace, gather as the Church, and unite in fellowship, proclamation and prayer from the place of our own homes.

Be it 8am or 10am or other _ still, maybe, the wisdom to quieten our mobile phone  and be very much in prayer .

Please sit very comfortably.

Please feel free to sing ; and maybe to speak some parts of this prayer time out-loud _ you may find it surprisingly helpful.

Please, above all, simply know that we are all together ; and as we pray where we are now, so do many many more, across the town, across these towns, and across the world,

The Lord is here.

His Spirit is with us.

Matthew

The Greeting

In welcome of one-another, near or far -

The Grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ,
the Love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with us all.

[And also with you.]

Prayers of Penitence

God so loved the world
that he gave his only Son Jesus Christ
to save us from our sins,
to be our advocate in heaven,
and to bring us to eternal life.

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith,
firmly resolved to keep God's commandments
and to live in love and peace with all.

- Silence is kept for a short time, in Confession and Prayer.



**All Most merciful God,
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
we confess that we have sinned
in thought, word and deed.
We have not loved you with our whole heart.
We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.
In your mercy
forgive what we have been,
help us to amend what we are,
and direct what we shall be ;
that we may do justly, love mercy,
and walk humbly with you our God. Amen.**

In sharing and receiving the Absolution of God :

May the God of love and power
forgive us and free us from our sins,
heal and strengthen us by his Spirit
and raise us to new life in Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



Almighty God,
whose only Son has opened for us
a new and living way into your presence :
give us pure hearts and steadfast wills
to worship you in spirit and in truth ;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

The Liturgy of the Word



The First Reading - *Exodus 12 : 1 - 14*

The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt : ²This month shall mark for you the beginning of months ; it shall be the first month of the year for you. ³Tell the whole congregation of Israel that on the tenth of this month they are to take a lamb for each family, a lamb for each household. ⁴If a household is too small for a whole lamb, it shall join its closest neighbour in obtaining one ; the lamb shall be divided in proportion to the number of people who eat of it. ⁵Your lamb shall be without blemish, a year-old male ; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. ⁶You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month ; then the whole assembled congregation of Israel shall slaughter it at twilight. ⁷They shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. ⁸They shall eat the lamb that same night ; they shall eat it roasted over the fire with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. ⁹Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted over the fire, with its head, legs, and inner organs. ¹⁰You shall let none of it remain until the morning ; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn. ¹¹This is how you shall eat it : your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand ; and you shall eat it hurriedly. It is the passover of the LORD. ¹²For I will pass

through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike down every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both human beings and animals ; on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgements : I am the LORD. ¹³The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live : when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt. ¹⁴This day shall be a day of remembrance for you. You shall celebrate it as a festival to the LORD ; throughout your generations you shall observe it as a perpetual ordinance.

New Revised Standard Version

This is the word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

The Second Reading - *Romans 13 : 8 - 14*

Owe no one anything, except to love one another ; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. ⁹The commandments, 'You shall not commit adultery ; You shall not murder ; You shall not steal ; You shall not covet' ; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' ¹⁰Love does no wrong to a neighbour ; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law. ¹¹Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers ; ¹²the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armour of light; ¹³let us live honourably as in the day, not in revelling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarrelling and jealousy. ¹⁴Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

New Revised Standard Version

This is the word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

CLICK below to hear Louise from our Choir lead us

Hymn

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KqE7P_9267Y

Breathe on me, breath of God,
fill me with life anew,
that I may love what thou dost love,
and do what thou wouldst do.



Breathe on me, breath of God,
until my heart is pure,
until with thee I will one will,
to do and to endure.

Breathe on me, breath of God,
till I am wholly thine,
until this earthly part of me
glows with the fire divine.

Breathe on me, breath of God,
so shall I never die,
but live with thee the perfect life
of thine eternity.

Words : Edwin Hatch (1835-1889)

Tune : Trentham

The Gospel Reading

Matthew 18 : 15 - 20



The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.
Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus said - 'If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one. ¹⁶ But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. ¹⁷ If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church ; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax-collector. ¹⁸ Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. ¹⁹ Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. ²⁰ For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.'

New Revised Standard Version

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All Praise to you, O Christ.

The Sermon

The Revd Matthew Evans (Vicar)



St Augustine said :

"Love God and do whatever you please"

- Can sound somewhat shocking, and unhelpfully 'modern' - it but turns out to be realistic and hopeful, and even of course, demanding. His fuller quote is :

"Love God and do whatever pleases you, for the soul trained in love to God will do nothing to offend the One who is Beloved."

He wrote or said this in relation to John 4 : 4 - 12, where John calls us 'to love, because love is of God, and because God first loved us'. It could, perhaps, have been said in relation to this reading from St Paul to the Romans ; or even, perhaps, this Gospel episode of St Matthew.

Characterised sometimes under the title '*Church Discipline*' — this Gospel reading sounds rather harsh ; an air of finality and brutality to it ; the 'casting out' of the one as a 'gentile and a tax collector'. Brings in us a feeling of discomfort, and dis-ease, a niggle in the stomach and down the spine — we like to think that Christ is all about 'sweetness and light' — and in many important ways this is — but more than that — as invited here — God, in Christ, for Us — is about truth.

It is noticeable that three times here, there is no penalty, no scolding, no attack or even reprimand ; there is instead — by an individual, by witnesses, by the whole Church — an appeal for good faith to the one who has perpetrated a harm, a sin, a wrong. An invitation and opportunity to recognise and to repent — and in that also, to bring redress — an opportunity to 'sweetness and light' through the truth.

It is only after all of this — and all of this dismissed — that a penalty comes : such a one is treated as a Gentile and Tax-Collector.

Our desire for forgiveness, renewal, repentance is very real, and deeply felt ; which means of course it can become 'deeply buried' under a hurt or a guilt or a shame which we lose sight of the ability to unpick. *"Love God and do whatever pleases you, for the soul trained in love to God will do nothing to offend the One who is Beloved."* — we are called to something great — and we are called to Truth, and we are called to it Now. Always Now — a constant refrain ; not a

chastisement, but an invitation _ with a hint of 'there is not time to waste'. - How many times do we think or hear, *"Life is too short..."* ? _ *"Salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers ; the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside..."*.

The Passover for the Hebrews from Egypt, the pre-eminent, defining festival and remembrance for the Jews. Salvation from slavery, and into freedom, and home.

Christ as the 'Lamb of God' ; Us baptised into his Life and Resurrection ; Us as One with him ; configured in Remembrance in this moment and celebration : to mark the beginning of Every new week ; where We are freed, not by being ready to run to freedom _ but by being ready to Live in freedom _ sin, guilt, shame, mishap washed away, removed, and deliberately so. The chance and perpetual invitation to Live _ and with others, all others, do the same. Treat 'them' as a 'Gentile or Tax Collector' ? _ Treat them as those who need to hear, see, and receive the Grace of God - just like we did, and have, and do : renewed again and again, restored, refreshed _ as you, and I, made clean _ and taking that, as the Truth.

Amen.

The Revd Matthew Evans

The Nicene Creed

**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 from
the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and was made man.
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.**

In the power of the Spirit, and in union with Christ,
let us pray to our Father _

O God, the creator and preserver of all,
we pray for people in every place and every kind of need ;
we pray for your grace, your wisdom, your inspiration and care;
make your ways known on earth,
your saving health among and for the nations.
Lord in your mercy - **hear our prayer.**

We pray for your Church ; guide and govern us by your Spirit,
teach and lead us that we and all who call upon your Name
may be led into the way of Truth, and hold the faith in –
unity of spirit, the bond of peace, in righteousness of life.
Lord in your mercy - **hear our prayer.**

We pray for, and commend into your goodness,
all those who are in any way afflicted or distressed -
those known to us and those known to you alone -
those in sickness of body, mind, or spirit :
comfort and relieve them in their need,
give them patience in their troubles,
bring good out of all afflictions,
Lord in your mercy - **hear our prayer.**

We remember in love and faithfulness
all who have gone before us in the peace of Christ : . . .
We give you praise for all your faithful ones,
we make our prayer with and for all who mourn.
Lord in your mercy - **hear our prayer.**

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name ; thy
kingdom come ; thy will be done ; on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our
trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation ; but deliver us from evil. For
thine is the kingdom the power and the glory, for ever and
ever. **Amen.**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=893Oykactyw>

Love divine, all loves excelling,
joy of heaven, to earth come down,
fix in us thy humble dwelling,
all thy faithful mercies crown.
Jesu, thou art all compassion,
pure unbounded love thou art ;
visit us with thy salvation,
enter every trembling heart.



Breathe, O breathe thy loving Spirit
into every troubled breast ;
let us all in thee inherit,
let us find thy promised rest.
Take away the love of sinning,
Alpha and Omega be ;
end of faith, as its beginning,
set our hearts at liberty.

Come, almighty to deliver,
let us all thy life receive ;
suddenly return, and never,
never more thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing,
serve thee as thy hosts above,
pray, and praise thee, without ceasing,
glory in thy perfect love.

Finish then thy new creation,
pure and spotless let us be ;
let us see thy great salvation,
perfectly restored in thee ;
Changed from glory into glory,
till in heaven we take our place,
till we cast our crowns before thee,
lost in wonder, love, and praise !

Words : Charles Wesley (1707-1788) Tune : Blaenwern

The Dismissal

The Blessing



May God the Father,
who has given to his Son
the name above every name,
strengthen us to proclaim Christ as Lord ;
And may the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among us and remain with us always.
Amen.

The Peace

We are all one in Christ Jesus.
We belong to him through faith,
heirs of the promise of the Spirit of peace.

*Please look to your ROOM and HOME _
- - - please look from your WINDOW - - -*

In our place, heart and home, and to all the world :

The peace of the Lord be always with you.
{ - and also with you. Alleluia }

The Dismissal

So let us go into the day in peace ;
and may we love and serve the Lord
in the name of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia ! Amen.