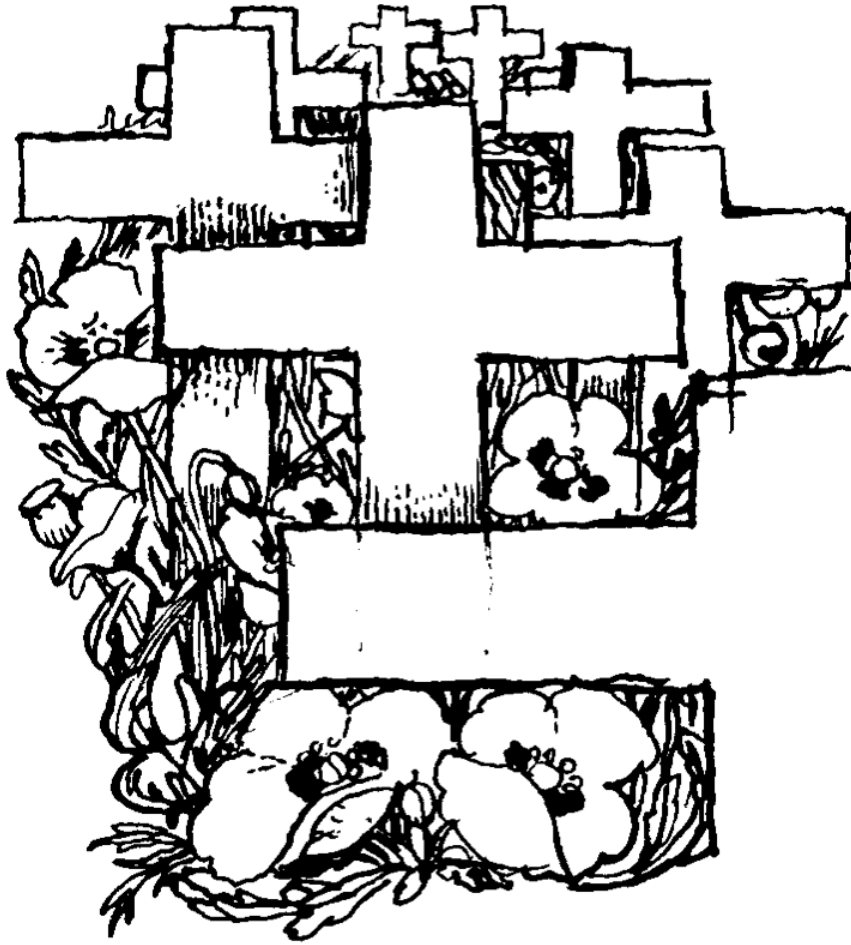


Christ Church

High Harrogate



Matthew 25:1 - 13

A Parish service for when we're
UNITED but APART

on



**REMEMBRANCE
SUNDAY**

12th November 2023

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,

THIS SERVICE is taken in the main from the service we *would have had* today at 10am but is intended also to be accessible as if at 8am. We make our prayers with and for all whom we would have met in worship today - welcoming us at the door, talking with us, sitting beside us, singing for us to lead us, and guiding us in prayer.

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

Let us confess to God
the sins and shortcomings of the world ;
its pride, its selfishness, its greed ;
its evil divisions and hatred.

Let us confess our share in what is wrong,
and our failure to seek and establish that peace
which God wills for his children.

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



**All Lord God,
we have sinned against you.
We have done evil in your sight.
We are sorry and repent.
Have mercy on us according to your love.
Wash away our wrongdoing and
cleanse us from our sin.
Renew a right spirit within us
and restore us to the joy of your salvation,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

In sharing and receiving the Absolution of God :

May Almighty God,
who forgives all who truly repent,
have mercy upon us,
pardon and deliver us from all our sins,
confirm and strengthen us in all goodness,
and keep us in life eternal ;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



Almighty Father,
whose will is to restore all things
in your beloved Son, the King of all :
govern the hearts and minds of those in authority,
and bring the families of the nations,
divided and torn apart by the ravages of sin,
to be subject to his just and gentle rule ;
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

Amos 5 : 18 - 24



Alas for you who desire the day of the Lord ! Why do you want the day of the Lord ? It is darkness, not light ; ¹⁹ as if someone fled from a lion, and was met by a bear ; or went into the house and rested a hand against the wall, and was bitten by a snake. ²⁰ Is not the day of the Lord darkness, not light, and gloom with no brightness in it ? ²¹ I hate, I despise your festivals, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies. ²² Even though you offer me your burnt-offerings and grain-offerings, I will not accept them ; and the offerings of well-being of your fatted animals I will not look upon. ²³ Take away from me the noise of your songs ; I will not listen to the melody of your harps. ²⁴ But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

New Revised Standard Version

This is the word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

The Second Reading

1 Thessalonians 4 : 13 - 18



But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. For this we declare to you by the word of the

Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage one another with these words

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=cqji2or15Ug>

Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us
o'er the world's tempestuous sea ;
guard us, guide us, keep us, feed us,
for we have no help but thee ;
yet possessing every blessing
if our God our Father be.



Saviour, breathe forgiveness o'er us,
all our weakness thou dost know ;
thou didst tread this earth before us,
thou didst feel its keenest woe ;
lone and dreary, faint and weary,
through the desert didst go.

Spirit of our God, descending,
fill our hearts with heavenly joy ;
love with every passion blending,
pleasure that can never cloy ;
thus provided, pardoned, guided,
nothing can our peace destroy.

Words : James Edmeston (1791-1867)

Tune : Mannheim

The Gospel Reading

Matthew 25 : 1 - 13



The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

“Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them ; but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a shout, ‘Look ! Here is the bridegroom ! Come out to meet him.’ Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ But the wise replied, ‘No ! there will not be enough for you and for us ; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.’ And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet ; and the door was shut. Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open to us.’ But he replied, ‘Truly I tell you, I do not know you.’ Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

New Revised Standard Version

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All Praise to you, O Christ.

The Sermon

The Revd Matthew Evans (Vicar)



From the Old Testament reading _ I only learned Latin as far as the words for 'house' and 'dog' (and I can only remember one of those !), but my understanding is that in Latin you have to wait for the end - of the sentence - until it is complete and makes makes sense. As here. Why 'darkness' etc ? -

Maybe because we're that far away from where we could be, should be - from living the 'day of the Lord'. Just look at the world - near or far - and we see how That might be the case.

The New Testament reading, in brief, in a word : - Why would we think that 'death' is any barrier to God ? That is a very small, limited, human conclusion, surely ? Grieve, of course ; it is a beautiful, precious, vital thing to do _ but don't do it *'as those who have no hope'*.

The Gospel _ always reminds me of an old Landrover, and no oil - - another story, maybe another time. The point here is : - ? - The 'Kingdom of Heaven' is ___ unexpected.

- The oil, the lamps, the bridesmaids _ in a sense are immaterial _ it's an image, a scenario, a hook ___ the point is, 'being prepared' _ alert, ready, engaged - - not thinking : *We'll fight today, we'll make it up tomorrow ___ We'll war today _ we'll do peace tomorrow ___ We'll get it wrong today _ God will not see till the day after tomorrow.*

We sit at the foot of a War Memorial _ and we have Today to learn its lessons. It's too late tomorrow _ Our chance will have gone.

We hear words of Grace today _ they invite us into a glorious banquet _ party like a wedding : Celebration, but more than that _ such Joy _ even more than that, such Love. Why wait ? Why say 'No'. Why choose turning into the gloom and not the party Light ; into the darkness, not to the peace-filled day, and to making it so ?

I've always loved old Landrovers _ Series II especially, they're the prettiest _ and I even seized the day to buy one _ not quite 'selling all that I had', but many would have thought me very foolish.

But I didn't know it all. I didn't know how it still needed tending, still needed care ; I thought 'those' rattles from the engine were just 'part of it' - and not that, after driving it a while, it was now beautifully dry and almost perfectly free of any oil. It was a retired farmer who noticed ___ found it lovingly funny in relation to this reading of the bridesmaids, their lamps, and taking oil ___ and it was he who provided me with some - to get me Home, and more.

We can learn [*] from those who have gone before us. Not repeat their mistakes. Be encouraged by their joys of discovery.

Jesus Christ has gone before us all ___ both in Birth, and in Resurrection ; One with the Father ; one through whom All things have been made ; Light from Light _ who came for Us and Our Salvation.

For us to Believe, and Live.

Amen.

Revd Matthew Evans

The Prayers of Intercession

As children and pilgrims of a loving God who always listens to our cries, we are invited to come before God, in all that we are, and with all the prayer we need make.

Let us pray for all who suffer as a result of conflict,
and ask that God may give us peace :



for the service men and women
who have died in the violence of war,
each one remembered by and known to God :
- may God give peace.

For those who love them in death as in life, offering the distress of our grief and the sadness of our loss :

- may God give peace.

For all members of the armed forces
who are in danger this day,
remembering family, friends
and all who pray for their safe return :

- may God give peace.

For civilian women, children and men
whose lives are disfigured by war or terror,
calling to mind in penitence
the anger and hatreds of humanity :

- may God give peace.

For peacemakers and peacekeepers,
who seek to keep this world secure and free :

- may God give peace.

For all who bear the burden and privilege of leadership,
political, military and religious ;
asking for the gifts of wisdom and resolve
in the search for reconciliation and peace :

- may God give peace.

O God of truth and justice,
we hold before you those whose memory we cherish,
and those whose names we will never know.
Help us to lift our eyes above the torment of this broken world,
and grant us the grace to pray for those who wish us harm.
As we honour the past,
may we put our faith in your future ;
for you are the source of life and hope,
now and for ever.

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. 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.

Act of Remembrance

Let us remember before God
and commend to his sure keeping :
those who have died for their country in war ;
those whom we knew and whose memory we treasure ;
and all who have lived and died in the service of mankind.

They shall grow not old as we that are left grow old ;
age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning,
we will remember them.

All We will remember them.

Here follows **THE SILENCE.**

Ever-living God, we remember those whom you have gathered from the storm of war into the peace of your presence ; may that same peace calm our fears, bring justice to all peoples and establish harmony among the nations, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

CLICK below to hear our Choir lead us

The Dismissal

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1U6Nn7kL4Co>



In Christ alone my hope is found ;
he is my light, my strength, my song.
This cornerstone, this solid ground,
firm through the fiercest drought and storm.
What heights of love, what depths of peace,
when fears are stilled, when strivings cease ;
my comforter, my all in all,
here in the love of Christ I stand.

In Christ alone - who took on flesh,
fullness of God in helpless babe ;
this gift of God, this righteousness,
scorned by the ones he came to save ;
till on that cross as Jesus died
the wrath of God was satisfied,
for every sin on him was laid.
Here in the death of Christ I live.

There in the ground his body lay,
light of the world by darkness slain ;
then bursting forth in glorious day,
up from the grave he rose again.
And as he stands in victory
sin's curse has lost its grip on me ;
for I am his and he is mine,
bought with the precious blood of Christ.

No guilt in life, no fear of death,
this is the power of Christ in me.
From life's first cry to final breath
Jesus commands my destiny.
No power of hell, no scheme of man
can ever pluck me from his hand.
Till he return or call me home,
here in the power of Christ I'll stand.

Act of Commitment

Let us pledge ourselves anew
to the service of God and our neighbour :
that we may help, encourage and comfort others,
and support those working for the relief of the needy
and for the peace and welfare of the nations.

**ALL Lord God our Father, we pledge ourselves
to serve you and all humankind,
in the cause of peace,
for the relief of want and suffering,
and for the praise of your name.
Guide us by your Spirit ;
Give us wisdom ; Give us courage ;
Give us hope ; And keep us faithful ;
now and always. Amen.**

The Blessing



May God grant
to the living grace,
to the departed rest,
to the Church, the King, the Commonwealth,
the world, and all people
unity, peace and concord,
and to us and all God's servants,
life everlasting ;
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

Jesus said,
'Peace I leave with you ; my peace I give to you.
I do not give to you as the world gives.' *John 14: 27*

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

In truth let us go into this day in peace ;
and may we love and serve the Lord
in the name of Christ. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Thank you for joining in this prayer.