

*A Morning Service for Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2020,  
The 8th Sunday after Trinity*

*Hymn*

O Church Arise

<https://youtu.be/x63cVewXAeg>

*Prayer*

Thanks be to you, O God,  
that we have risen this day.

thanks be to you, O God,  
for our coming in safety to this place.

Be the purpose of God between us and each purpose.

The hand of God between us and each hand.

Be the pain of Christ between us and each pain,

The love of Christ between us and each love.

Amen.

As the tide draws the waters close in upon the shore

Make me an island, set apart,

Alone with you, God, Holy to you.

Then with the turning of the tide,  
prepare me to carry your presence

To the busy world beyond,  
the world that rushes in on me

Till the water come again

And fold me back to you.

Amen.

## *Thanksgiving*

Almighty God, we thank you that we can come now before you,  
that you are here waiting to meet with us and speak to us.

We thank you that though we have no claim on your love,  
and no right to expect any mercy,  
you are always reaching out to us,  
eager to forgive and forget.

We thank you that you love and care about each one of us,  
that for all our faults and weaknesses  
you accept us just as we are.

poor though our faith may be,  
you are always ready to guide, to help, and to bless.

And so, we may receive the cleansing, the renewal  
and the forgiveness you long to show us.

Gracious God open our hearts to your love.

In the name of Christ.

Amen.

## *Confession*

Almighty God, as we remember your faithfulness  
so, we are made more conscious of our faithlessness.

Forgive us for the smallness of our vision –  
our failure to worship you as you deserve,  
our carelessness in discipleship.

Forgive our faults and failings –  
our failure to learn from past mistakes,  
our preferring our way to yours.

Forgive us the missed opportunities to serve you  
all we could and should have done but failed to do,  
all the chances to advance your kingdom we have wasted.

Almighty God, we bring our confession with sorrow and shame, but also  
with confidence,

For we know you are a gracious God,  
A God of mercy and compassion,  
Slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.  
Assure us now, we pray, of your continued forgiveness,  
And help us to amend our lives, through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

### *Absolution*

May the God of all healing and forgiveness  
draw *us* to himself,  
and cleanse *us* from all *our* sins  
that *we* may behold the glory of his Son,  
the Word made flesh,  
Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

### *Collect of the Day*

Almighty Lord and everlasting God,  
we beseech you to direct, sanctify and govern  
both our hearts and bodies in the ways of your laws  
and the works of your commandments;  
that through your most mighty protection,  
both here and ever,  
we may be preserved in body and soul;  
through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. Amen.

## Hymn

Every Promise of your Word

Stuart Townend

<https://youtu.be/ODpSlliWkEM>

### 1<sup>st</sup> Reading

Genesis 32.22-31

Jacob Wrestles with God at Peniel and is renamed to Israel.

<sup>22</sup>Jacob got up, took his two wives, his two maids, and his eleven children, and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. <sup>23</sup> He took them and sent them across the stream, and likewise everything that he had. <sup>24</sup> Jacob was left alone; and a man wrestled with him until daybreak. <sup>25</sup> When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he struck him on the hip socket; and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. <sup>26</sup> Then he said, 'Let me go, for the day is breaking.' But Jacob said, 'I will not let you go, unless you bless me.' <sup>27</sup> So he said to him, 'What is your name?' And he said, 'Jacob.' <sup>28</sup> Then the man said, 'You shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with humans, and have prevailed.' <sup>29</sup> Then Jacob asked him, 'Please tell me your name.' But he said, 'Why is it that you ask my name?' And there he blessed him. <sup>30</sup> So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, 'For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life is preserved.' <sup>31</sup> The sun rose upon him as he passed Peniel, limping because of his hip.

*Psalm*

17.1-7, 16

<sup>1</sup>Hear my just cause, O Lord; consider my complaint; listen to my prayer, which comes not from lying lips.

<sup>2</sup>Let my vindication come forth from your presence; let your eyes behold what is right.

<sup>3</sup>Weigh my heart, examine me by night, refine me, and you will find no impurity in me.

<sup>4</sup>My mouth does not trespass for earthly rewards; I have heeded the words of your lips.

<sup>5</sup>My footsteps hold fast in the ways of your commandments; my feet have not stumbled in your paths.

<sup>6</sup>I call upon you, O God, for you will answer me; incline your ear to me and listen to my words.

<sup>7</sup>Show me your marvellous loving-kindness, O Saviour of those who take refuge at your right hand from those who rise up against them.

<sup>16</sup>As for me, I shall see your face in righteousness; when I awake and behold your likeness, I shall be satisfied.

## *Second Reading*

Romans 9.1-5

God's election of the people of Israel as his chosen people.

<sup>1</sup>I am speaking the truth in Christ - I am not lying; my conscience confirms it by the Holy Spirit – <sup>2</sup>I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. <sup>3</sup>For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my own people, my kindred according to the flesh. <sup>4</sup>They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises; <sup>5</sup>to them belong the patriarchs, and from them, according to the flesh, comes the Messiah, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.

## *Hymn*

Take my Life and let it be

<https://youtu.be/sss-g50Dw1Q>

## *Gospel Reading*

Matthew 14.13-21

### Feeding of the five Thousand.

<sup>13</sup>When Jesus heard that Herod had beheaded John the Baptist, he withdrew in a boat to a deserted place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns.

<sup>14</sup>When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them and cured their sick. <sup>15</sup>When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, 'This is a deserted place, and the hour is now late; send the crowds away so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves.' <sup>16</sup>Jesus said to them, 'They need not go away; you give them something to eat.' <sup>17</sup>They replied, 'We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish.' <sup>18</sup>And he said, 'Bring them here to me.' <sup>19</sup>Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. <sup>20</sup>And all ate and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full. <sup>21</sup>And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

## *Reflection*

Not what it seems? Onions.... You are probably thinking this is a strange way open this part of today's service – and you may be right. Various parts of the bible, arguably the whole thing, have been described to me as being like an "Onion" with layer after layer of meaning and insight if you can stay the course without the equivalent of the streaming eyes many are afflicted with in the kitchen when dealing with onions.

We have three outwardly quite different passages from the bible today, but I would suggest that in fact they all deal with the same theological "onion" and that they can be all summed up by "things aren't what they might at first appear".

Most obviously is the passage from Genesis which tells about where Jacob is seeking to make peace with his brother Esau who he fears, and as they are approaching the meeting place it's clear that Esau is coming with many of his armed men. In order to appease Esau he breaks his flocks and herds into batches and sends them ahead telling the drovers that when stopped by Esau they should tell him that they, and those following behind are all of Jacobs and he is also coming behind to meet his brother Esau. Jacob and his family are resting overnight at a ford of the river Jabbok at a place called Peniel, and he sends his wives and family over the river but before he can cross, he is finds himself challenged by a stranger! They wrestle all night with neither overcoming the other but the stranger put Jacob's hip out and despite this disadvantage Jacob wasn't prepared to give up. Then as it became daybreak the stranger tells Jacob to let him go. But Jacob says to the stranger, "I will not let you go unless you bless me"! The stranger then says, "tell me your name" and when Jacob replies the stranger then says, "you shall no longer be called Jacob but Israel for you have striven with God and with humans and have prevailed". The stranger then blessed him. Clearly the stranger was God and the whole event was about getting Jacob, now Israel, to focus on his true role for God in creating his people and instil the lesson that nothing good was going to come about without effort. In those times particularly, a person's name was not just a family thing but often described what they were or did. An early example being the tribe of the Levites. Where the name was not only a clan name but became synonymous with their role as Priests of the Tabernacle.



Moving on to the other readings we again have cases where the outward passage has underlying meanings. In the case of the passage from Paul to the Romans it picks up on the passage from Genesis but here Paul is trying to explain to the Romans that while the Israelites as tribes and peoples were those initially chosen by God, now it is the case through the coming of his Son, that those who believe in Him and follow Jesus's teaching "are all Israelites". The passage today is the preface to that revelation but sets the scene by acknowledging the identification of God's chosen peoples began with the Israelites for who it was not just a spiritual thing but a "family fact" begun with Jacob at the ford at Peniel. However, with the coming of Jesus, being the chosen of God was no longer simply birth-right, and so the Gentiles have an equal opportunity to accept the new Law and Covenant by following Jesus and loving God.

The last reading from Matthew is one I think we are all familiar with from our earliest recollection of Bible stories. Jesus often spoke in parables to put the truth in the Hebrew bible into "everyday language" that it could be better understood by people with widely varying backgrounds and education. This story from Matthew is partly a "physical parable" for the disciples and for those who would come along after the Apostles. It is no doubt a miracle that the 5000 were fed and replete with such little physical food, but the underlying, the onion layer, part of this is that the disciples were being shown that in the same way that the physical needs of so many were completely met by God supplying the food – it wasn't Manna as happened in olden times but not dissimilar – so the spiritual needs of followers of Christ at that time and in the future would be met by a small number of dedicated believers (by comparison) and the "Spiritual food" – the "Good News " would contain all that the faithful would need to sustain them. So again, we have onion layers.

For many years I have enjoyed art in all its forms and found that paintings can give visual peace to one or can stir up other emotions in the same way that Music does through the ears. For me, just like in art, in music some forms are more enjoyable than others, and I unashamedly prefer more classical forms in both media. I mention this because they are both things that impact the soul, the emotions and the psyche and again often have "onion layers". If you have looked at a painting of a famous battle it's unlikely the first

reaction is about the death and pain depicted but more about the accuracy of the scenery and uniforms etc. the detail. If you then look at a painting of an old map, you will no doubt simultaneously marvel at the ability to produce it with the limited scientific knowledge of the time, while being amused at how inaccurate it is compared to today. Again, focus on the detail. If you then look at one of the medieval works by Hieronymus Bosch in the late 1400's – The Garden of Earthly Delights - it was done for a Cardinal who wanted depictions of the dangers of sin and the wages of torment and damnation. It is probably one of the first “surreal” paintings created and is very disturbing to look at in detail – which was probably the whole point. The more one looks at it the more one finds “detail” that is disquieting.

My journey through art took me to a learning experience with Picasso and his work. I couldn't understand his modern “stuff” it sat wrongly on the eyes. It wasn't till I was taken through a journey of his whole life and painting styles that I realised that he had reached the “Cubist” style after being a classical painter for many years but had always wanted to find another way to portray his subjects. He felt he was missing out being able to show “the whole subject”. Thus, he developed a style where he takes a 3-dimensional subject and changes it into a 2-dimensional representation - something any good draughtsman or architect knows all about – and the result, while more wholly complete just looks odd to our 3-dimensional eyes. My point is that he was so engrossed in depicting the detail of his subjects that on this occasion peeling away the onion layers does not mean we all see the object the same way. As we read the stories in the Bible, we can take them at face value or can start to peel away the onion layers, but as we do so we need to remind ourselves not to get lost in the detail or we'll miss the intended message. Then the eyes of our soul will be shedding onion tears.

## *Creed*

I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.  
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting.

Amen.

## *Hymn*

I heard the voice of Jesus.  
<https://youtu.be/74kyfROS4q8>

## *Intercessions*

Lord we bring to you today some of the ordinary, unspectacular things  
which have been happening around us this week,  
but which have affected people deeply.

We bring to you today all those who have been victims of crime this week,  
and feel angry or afraid. Lord, in you we trust, we look to you for help.

We bring to you today all those who have had major arguments this week  
and don't know how to get back to safety.

Lord, in you we trust, we look to you for help.

We bring to you today all those who have had bad news this week,  
and don't know how they will cope.

Lord, in you we trust, we look to you for help.

We bring to you today all those who have tried very hard  
to do something this week but have not been able to achieve it.

Lord, in you we trust, we look to you for help.

We bring to you today our close family and best friends,  
and ask your blessing on them, wherever they are,  
and whatever they need.

Lord, in you we trust, we look to you for help.

We bring to you today our own concerns,  
our hopes and fears, our plans and problems,  
and in a silent moment  
we tell you what they are and why they matter to us.....

Lord, in you we trust, we look to you for help.

We bring to you today those for whom others have asked  
for our intercession on their behalf

whether due to sickness or bereavement, especially:

Alex, Anne & Geoff, Catherine, Derek & Val, Don & Ro, Eileen, Frances,  
Harriet, Jacky, Matthew, & Lucy, Michelle, Peter, Val Adams, Jake Agnew,  
Elizabeth Bailey & family, Ken Baker, Robert Bloomfield, Nonnie Bridge,  
Doreen Clarke, David Kloose ( Close), Guy Coxeter, Beryl Dabson, Peter

Dickinson, Barry Dowsett, Jean Foster, Tom & Kylie Freeman & family,  
Doreen Gilbert, Eddie Gordon, Richard Green, Colin Hart, Kaye Head, Kath  
House, Stephen Johnson, Hayden Keeling, Colin Lister, Rene M, Claire &  
Andrew MacLeod, Rhys Maples, David McNeill, Carole Noble, Harriet  
Pearson, Cecilia Phelps, Dave Phillips, Robert Price, Ruth Thurston, Doug  
Watson, Ruth Wells, and the family and friends of the late Karon Dallard,  
the late Ken Cole and the late Joan Holmes

### *The Lord's 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.

### *Closing Prayer*

Kindle in our hearts, O God,  
the flame of love that never ceases,  
that it may burn in us, giving light to others.  
May we shine for ever in your temple,  
set on fire with your eternal light,  
through your Son Jesus Christ,  
our Saviour and Redeemer.  
Amen.

Hymn  
You Raise me up  
[https://youtu.be/oni0tO\\_HN30](https://youtu.be/oni0tO_HN30)

*Blessing*

God of life,  
may the promise of sunrise be echoed in our minds.  
May the warmth of the midday sun flow through our hearts.  
May the peace of sunset touch our souls.  
And when life seems dark  
Teach us to remember even then you are with us,  
And that we will again see your light.  
In the name of Christ. Amen.

*Closing Music.*

Faure's Pie Jesu  
<https://youtu.be/o9al6HNOgSo>