

A Service of Evensong with a Celtic flavour at All Saints Creeksea. The third  
Sunday after Trinity - 28<sup>th</sup> June 2020

Opening Hymn: The Church's one Foundation.

<https://youtu.be/w1YBYrJ8Hzg>

***We open with a moment of quietness.***

The evening mist rises from the ground to refresh our souls.

And in the darkening shadows of night, we come together in prayer.

Almighty God, we, your people, offer you grateful thanks for this time of refreshment in the midst of our busy lives.

May we, in the quiet and peace of this moment, lay before you ourselves, our hearts, our lives, to do with as you will.

Take from us the cares and worries of our world and let us learn from the beauty we see around us, to trust in your eternal goodness and strength.

Be present among us now as we sit or kneel to worship. Amen

Let us worship the Lord.

**ALL PRAISE TO HIS NAME.**

For the joys and blessings of this day

Let us worship the Lord.

**ALL PRAISE TO HIS NAME.**

For our Lord Jesus Christ who brought light to the world.

Let us worship the Lord.

May we walk in his name.

The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it {John 1:5}

THE DARKNESS IN OUR LIVES BRINGS US GRIEF AND OUR SINS ARE HEAVY TO BEAR.

Hear what our Lord says:

“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”

When Christ came on earth he lived as a man who knew both hardship and despair.

He knows our need.

Come to him now and lay your burdens at his feet, and confess those sins of which you are ashamed.

*A short silence may be kept.*

Eternal king and Father of all, in our pride and our weakness we have failed you and we are truly sorry. We are ashamed that through our own fault we have brought darkness and misery into the world. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Saviour, who died for us, forgive us our sins. Illumine the dark corners of our lives with your spirit of light, and kindle once more the flame of your love in our hearts.

Eternal God, you have lowered the canopy of night and its gentle shadows cover us with your peace. May the dews of heaven heal our wounds and wash our tears from our eyes.

And may the burning light of Christ banish forever the darkness from our souls, that we may be at peace.

**AMEN.**

The people who walk in darkness have seen a great light. {Isaiah 9:2}

*A Candle may be lit.*

Eternal light shine in our hearts.

Eternal goodness deliver us from evil.

Eternal power be our support.

Eternal wisdom scatter the darkness of our ignorance.

Eternal pity have mercy on us.

That with all our heart and mind and soul and strength

We may seek thy face and be brought by thine infinite mercy

To thy holy presence.

### *The Creation of Heaven*

King, you created heaven according to your delight,

A place that is safe and pure, its air filled with the songs of angels.

It is like a strong mighty city, which no enemy can invade,

With walls as high as mountains.

It is like an open meadow, in which all can move freely,

With people arriving from earth but never leaving.

It is huge, ten times the size of earth,

So that every creature ever born can find a place.

It is small, no bigger than a village,

Where all are friends, and none is a stranger.

In the centre is a palace, its walls made of emerald

And its gates of amethyst;

And on each gate is hung a golden cross.

The roof is ruby, and at each pinnacle stands an eagle

Covered in gold,  
Its eyes of sapphire.  
Inside the palace it is always daylight, and the air cool,  
Neither hot nor cold;  
And there is a perfect green lawn, with a blue stream running across it.  
At the edge of this lawn are trees and shrubs, always in blossom,  
White, pink, and purple, spreading a sweet fragrance everywhere.  
Round the lawn walks a King, not dressed in fine robes,  
But in a simple white tunic, smiling and embracing those he meets.  
And people from outside are constantly entering the palace,  
Mingling one with another, and then leaving.  
Everyone in heaven is free to come to the palace, and then to  
Take with them its perfect peaceful joy;  
And in this way the whole of heaven is infused with the joy of the palace.

## 1<sup>st</sup> Reading. {Old testament Isaiah 58: 6-12}

"Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter-- when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?

Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the LORD will be your rear guard.

Then you will call, and the LORD will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I. "If you do away with the yoke of oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk, and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday.

The LORD will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail. Your people will rebuild the ancient ruins and will raise up the age-old foundations; you will be called Repairer of Broken Walls, Restorer of Streets with Dwellings.

**A hymn. Take my life and Let it be:**

<https://youtu.be/Gf11rReeWIs>

## Psalm – 150

Praise the LORD.

Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heavens.

Praise him for his acts of power; praise him for his surpassing greatness.

Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet, praise him with the harp and lyre,

praise him with timbrel and dancing, praise him with the strings and pipe,

praise him with the clash of cymbals, praise him with resounding cymbals.

Let everything that has breath praise the LORD.

Praise the LORD.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading. {New Testament = Acts 27:13-44}

Now when the south wind blew gently, supposing that they had obtained their purpose, they weighed anchor and sailed along Crete, close to the shore. But soon a tempestuous wind, called the northeaster, struck down from the land. And when the ship was caught and could not face the wind, we gave way to it and were driven along. Running under the lee of a small island called Cauda, we managed with difficulty to secure the ship's boat. After hoisting it up, they used supports to undergird the ship. Then, fearing that they would run aground on the Syrtis, they lowered the gear, and thus they were driven along. Since we were violently storm-tossed, they began the next day to jettison the cargo. And on the third day they threw the ship's tackle overboard with their own hands. When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope of our being saved was at last abandoned.

Since they had been without food for a long time, Paul stood up among them and said, "Men, you should have listened to me and not have set sail from Crete and incurred this injury and loss. Yet now I urge you to take heart, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. For this very night there stood before me an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I worship, and he said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must stand before Caesar. And behold, God has granted you all those who sail with you.' So, take heart, men, for I have faith in God that it will be exactly as I have been told. But we must run aground on some island."

When the fourteenth night had come, as we were being driven across the Adriatic Sea, about midnight the sailors suspected that they were nearing land. So they took a sounding and found twenty fathoms. A little farther on they took a sounding again and found fifteen fathoms. And fearing that we might run on the rocks, they let down four anchors from the stern and prayed for day to come. And as the sailors were seeking to escape from the ship, and had lowered the ship's boat into the sea under pretence of laying out anchors from the bow, Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, "Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved." Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the ship's boat and let it go.

As day was about to dawn, Paul urged them all to take some food, saying, "Today is the fourteenth day that you have continued in suspense and without food, having taken nothing. Therefore I urge you to take some food. For it will give you strength, for not a hair is to perish from the head of any of you." And

when he had said these things, he took bread, and giving thanks to God in the presence of all he broke it and began to eat. Then they all were encouraged and ate some food themselves. (We were in all 276 persons in the ship.) And when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship, throwing out the wheat into the sea.

## **The Shipwreck**

Now when it was day, they did not recognize the land, but they noticed a bay with a beach, on which they planned if possible, to run the ship ashore. So they cast off the anchors and left them in the sea, at the same time loosening the ropes that tied the rudders. Then hoisting the foresail to the wind they made for the beach. But striking a reef, they ran the vessel aground. The bow stuck and remained immovable, and the stern was being broken up by the surf. The soldiers' plan was to kill the prisoners, lest any should swim away and escape. But the centurion, wishing to save Paul, kept them from carrying out their plan. He ordered those who could swim to jump overboard first and make for the land, <sup>and</sup> the rest on planks or on pieces of the ship. And so it was that all were brought safely to land.

A Hymn: **Will your anchor Hold in the storms of life?**

<https://youtu.be/UQQO8v-0VBo>

## **A (short) Sermon.**

*Today is the third Sunday after Trinity and we celebrate tomorrow St Peter and St Paul in the church calendar. These Apostles are marked for having spread Christianity to the Gentiles and Rome in particular but without requiring adherence to the minute detail of the Jewish Old testaments in the same way as the Pharisees would want. They focused on the Good News of Jesus and of course he focused on simple obedience of Gods Laws as given to Moses and the Israelites in the Commandments.*

*The passage in Isaiah gives an insight into these questions from an earlier time when fasting was a common religious practice intended to help purge the body – and thus the mind – of all baleful and malignant influences. Isaiah was pointing out that in fact fasting by not doing bad things, by helping one's neighbours, by doing good and not evil, was the behaviour that the Lord wanted. Not simple*

*physical abstinence. By doing this one would restore the buildings of the Lord – ourselves. Jesus taught the same to his followers.*

*Given their understanding of the teachings of Christ and their effort to spread the word in the wider world, naturally got the interest of both the religious establishment – Jewish and Pagan alike – but also the focus of the Secular establishment, Caesar, his regional governors, the Jewish Sanhedrin and so on.*

*For the religious community, the message was not just challenging established customs and practice, but was making the population “Think” about their faith and the teaching they had received. Did they stack up? If not ask questions? Consider the teaching of Jesus – did it oppose the Laws? No. Did it get you to consider alternative meanings? Yes. Could you follow Jesus and still be a good and faithful Jew? Yes, as it turns out but you would no longer slavishly believe what the Pharisees said and did. Oops. That upsets the status quo. And the Preachers (Rabbi’s effectively) of the new “Sect” weren’t from the old, wealthy families. They weren’t Pharisees or Sadducees, they were very ordinary folk who had nothing to gain from being this way. Not obviously. Until you listened to them.*

*For the Secular community, it was exactly the same. While the Sanhedrin were concerned with the Jewish Law being upheld, they left the “detail” to the Priests, Scribes, and Pharisees, and contented themselves with being the “Jewish Ruling Elite”. For the Romans, it was different. They didn’t care what Gods you chose to follow. Their prime requirement was that if you were in part of the Roman Empire, you accepted and Acknowledged that Caesar was the ultimate authority. Speaking out or acting against Caesar or Rome (essentially the same thing) was considered disturbing the peace of the empire and bad behaviour. So stirring up the populations of various countries came to the notice of “Rome” very quickly. Thus it was that Paul, in part because of his dual Jewish/Roman Citizenship came to the notice of Caesar and had the right of every Roman citizen to put his case to Caesar directly (theoretically anyway). For most Romans they wouldn’t actually get close to Caesar but as Paul had been identified as a “person of Interest” in view of his travels as one of the new “Jewish Sect” that was causing all sorts of unrest throughout the empire, he was “sent for”.*



*Any travel in the world in those days was dangerous and in particular sea travel. Notwithstanding the skill of sailors who routinely plied the high seas, navigation was not a highly developed skill. The compass had yet to be invented and so whenever possible long voyages were made keeping the coastline in sight and anchoring overnight in a suitable bay or even taking the boat up a beach! If you hit a storm or fog and lost sight of the land some captains were skilled enough to partially navigate using the sun and the stars, otherwise you followed the winds hoping they would blow you to a shore you recognised and hoped it was a friendly one. So here we have Paul, en route to Rome as a prisoner and having left Crete, they are crawling through the Aegean “island Hopping”, and a storm blows up. They are blown out of sight of land and some of the crew want to take their small boat and leave. However Paul has had a visit from an Angel who tells him that God needs him to stand before Caesar and All who journey with him will be safe. So he tells the Centurion and his men and they are sufficiently convinced by Paul that they stop the crew from deserting by cutting free the ships tender so no one can leave! Otherwise it would defeat the terms of Gods promise if they didn’t all arrive. Paul convinces everyone to take food to sustain them through the coming journey and then the ship strikes a reef and breaks up.*

*Given that few sailors (or anyone else) could swim in those days, now it was the soldiers were all for killing the prisoners to prevent them escaping and then abandoning the ship. However, now the Centurion was determined to get Paul to Rome after all they had been through and organised those who could swim to do so and the rest to cling onto any bits of the ship and thus float ashore. And everyone was saved.*

*Now you might think that this was simply luck and providence etc. But equally one can see it as the hand of God in not only ensuring his servant Paul completed his mission but it also established among the sailors, soldiers, and the other prisoners aboard, that Paul’s God had not played him falsely and maybe there was more to this faith that Paul was teaching.*

*For us, whether we sail or not, whether we journey or not, we should have no less faith than Paul. God had given him a mission which he didn’t waiver from. He didn’t somehow give him a “first class, all expenses paid” ticket from Crete to*

*Rome but ensured he had a fairly typical journey with all the hazards that involved, not only to test Paul' faith but to use it as an example of it through his constancy no matter what befell him. God has given us a mission too. We might not explicitly know that just yet or we might be just recognising it or we might already know, and our Journey through life, may not take us to far-away or exotic places and we may not meet people of great import and power – but none of that matters. If we just continue to behave as Christ taught us, like he and Isaiah both said be good to those around us, then we will be spreading the message, Good News, and Light of Christ and the will of God – and what better employment could one have?*

### **Prayers & Intercessions.**

#### **Let us pray as our Lord taught us:**

OUR Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive them that trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil. Amen.

#### **The Collects:-**

For St Peter and St Paul:

Almighty God,  
whose blessed apostles Peter and Paul  
glorified you in their death as in their life:  
grant that your Church,  
inspired by their teaching and example,  
and made one by your Spirit,  
may ever stand firm upon the one foundation,  
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**

For Peace:

O GOD, from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed: Give unto thy servants that peace which the world cannot give; that both our hearts may be set to obey thy commandments, and also that by thee we being defended from the fear of our enemies may pass our time in rest and quietness; through the merits of Jesus Christ our Saviour. **Amen.**

For Aid against all Perils:

LIGHTEN our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord; and by thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night; for the love of thy only Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

## Intercessions

Come close to our hearts this evening and listen to our prayers.

Let us feel your presence ever near us as we lay our burdens at your feet and offer our souls to your service. Amen

Show your loving kindness to all of us this night, O Lord, for we all stand in need of your help. Be with the weak to make them strong, and with the strong to make them gentle. Cheer the lonely with your company and the worried with your peace. Prosper the Church in the fulfilment of her mighty task and grant your blessing to all who toil in Christ's name. Amen

Watch, dear Lord, with those who wake or watch or weep tonight and give your angels charge over those who sleep. Tend your sick ones, O Lord, rest your weary ones, bless your dying ones, soothe your suffering ones, shield your joyous ones, and all for your love's sake. Amen

(St Columba's 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,  
Even your Son Jesus Christ,  
Our Saviour and our Redeemer. AMEN

**Closing Hymn.** The Day thou Gavest Lord, is ended.

<https://youtu.be/hCuvVPycy2Q>

### **The Blessing.**

*May the peace of the Lord Christ go with us,  
Wherever he may send us.*

*May He guide us through the wilderness,  
Protect us through the storm.*

*May he bring us home rejoicing  
At the wonders He has shown us.*

*May He bring us home rejoicing  
Once again into our doors.*

**The All Saints sung blessing. I realise that we can't claim true ownership of this lovely blessing but it has become a common feature in our services, and having found the version we do I could not end without sharing it with you.**

<https://youtu.be/pWjsqHKTWGg>