

Cooma Anglican 7 September 2025 1st Order APBA

Welcome

Hymn TIS 156 - Morning has broken

**Morning has broken like the first morning
Blackbird has spoken like the first bird
Praise for the singing, praise for the morning
Praise for them springing fresh from the world**

**Sweet the rains new fall, sunlit from Heaven
Like the first dewfall on the first grass
Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden
Sprung in completeness where His feet pass**

**Mine is the sunlight, mine is the morning
Born of the one light, Eden saw play
Praise with elation, praise every morning
God's recreation of the new day**

Greeting

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Sentence of the Day

Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. John 6:68

Prayer of Preparation

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.'

Jesus said: 'This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: you shall love your neighbour as yourself.'

Lord, have mercy on us, and write your law in our hearts by your Holy Spirit

Prayer of the Day

O God you know us to be set in the midst of so many and so great dangers that by reason of the frailty of our nature we cannot always stand upright; grant to each of us such strength and protection as may support us in all dangers and carry us through

all temptations through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. **Amen**

The Ministry of the Word

Deuteronomy 30:15-20

¹⁵ See, I set before you today life and prosperity, death and destruction. ¹⁶ For I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in obedience to him, and to keep his commands, decrees and laws; then you will live and increase, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land you are entering to possess.

¹⁷ But if your heart turns away and you are not obedient, and if you are drawn away to bow down to other gods and worship them, ¹⁸ I declare to you this day that you will certainly be destroyed. You will not live long in the land you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess.

¹⁹ This day I call the heavens and the earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live ²⁰ and that you may love the LORD your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him. For the LORD is your life, and he will give you many years in the land he swore to give to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God**

Psalms 119:153-160

¹⁵³ Look on my suffering and deliver me, for I have not forgotten your law.

¹⁵⁴ **Defend my cause and redeem me; preserve my life according to your promise.**

¹⁵⁵ Salvation is far from the wicked, for they do not seek out your decrees.

¹⁵⁶ **Your compassion, LORD, is great; preserve my life according to your laws.**

¹⁵⁷ Many are the foes who persecute me, but I have not turned from your statutes.

¹⁵⁸ **I look on the faithless with loathing, for they do not obey your word.**

¹⁵⁹ See how I love your precepts; preserve my life, LORD, in accordance with your love.

¹⁶⁰ **All your words are true; all your righteous laws are eternal.**

Acts 13:46-52

⁴⁶ Then Paul and Barnabas answered them boldly: "We had to speak the word of God to you first. Since you reject it and do not consider yourselves worthy of eternal life, we now turn to the Gentiles. ⁴⁷ For this is what the Lord has commanded us:

"I have made you a light for the Gentiles,
that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth."

⁴⁸ When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed.

⁴⁹ The word of the Lord spread through the whole region. ⁵⁰ But the Jewish leaders incited the God-fearing women of high standing and the leading men of the city. They stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them from their region. ⁵¹ So they shook the dust off their feet as a warning to them and went to Iconium. ⁵² And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God**

John 6:60-71

Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ

⁶⁰ On hearing it, many of his disciples said, “This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?”

⁶¹ Aware that his disciples were grumbling about this, Jesus said to them, “Does this offend you? ⁶² Then what if you see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before!

⁶³ The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you—they are full of the Spirit and life. ⁶⁴ Yet there are some of you who do not believe.” For Jesus had known from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray him. ⁶⁵ He went on to say, “This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled them.”

⁶⁶ From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him.

⁶⁷ “You do not want to leave too, do you?” Jesus asked the Twelve.

⁶⁸ Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. ⁶⁹ We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God.”

⁷⁰ Then Jesus replied, “Have I not chosen you, the Twelve? Yet one of you is a devil!”

⁷¹ (He meant Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, who, though one of the Twelve, was later to betray him.)

This is the gospel of the Lord: **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ**

Sermon - John 6:60-71 The Words of Eternal Life

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 from the dead, he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

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

Thanksgiving for Offering

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have gifts to share. Accept and use our offerings for your glory and for the service of your kingdom. **Blessed be God forever.**

Prayers

Let us pray for the world and the church.

Response: Lord, in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

The Lord's Prayer

Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord, who taught us to pray,
Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.

Exhortation

Brothers and sisters in Christ, we who would come to the holy communion of the body and blood of our Saviour Christ must consider how St Paul exhorts us to examine ourselves before presuming to eat of that bread and drink of that cup.

For the benefit is great, if with a penitent heart and lively faith we receive that holy sacrament. We then spiritually eat the flesh of Christ and drink his blood; we dwell in Christ and he in us; we are one with Christ and Christ with us.

Yet also the danger is great if we receive the bread and cup unworthily. Judge yourselves therefore, that you be not judged of the Lord. Repent truly of your sins, having a steadfast faith in Christ our Saviour. Amend your lives and love your neighbour.

Above all, give hearty thanks to God for the redemption of the world by the death and passion of our Saviour Christ, truly God and truly human, who humbled himself to death on the cross for us sinners, that he might make us children of God, and raise us to eternal life.

You who truly and earnestly repent of your sins, and are in love and charity with your neighbours, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God and walking in his holy ways, draw near with faith, and take this holy sacrament to strengthen and comfort you. But first, let us make a humble confession of our sins to almighty God.

Confession

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, maker of all things, judge of all people, we acknowledge with shame the sins we have committed, by thought, word, and deed, against your divine majesty, provoking most justly your wrath and indignation against us.

We earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for all our misdoings. Have mercy on us, most merciful Father. For your Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake forgive us all that is past, and grant that we may ever hereafter serve and please you in newness of life, to the honour and glory of your name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Almighty God our heavenly Father, who of his great mercy has promised forgiveness of sins to all who with hearty repentance and true faith turn to him: have mercy on you; pardon and deliver you from all your sins; confirm and strengthen you in all goodness; and keep you in eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Hear the words of assurance for those who truly turn to Christ: If anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the perfect offering for our sins. 1 John 2:1-2

Hymn TIS 703 As the deer pants for the water

As the deer pants for the water
So my soul longs after You
You alone are my heart's desire
And I long to worship You

Chorus

You alone are my strength my shield
To You alone may my spirit yield
You alone are my heart's desire
And I long to worship Thee

I want You more than gold or silver
Only You can satisfy
You alone are the real joy giver
And the apple of my eye *Chorus*

You're my friend and You are my brother
Even though You are a King
I love You more than any other
So much more than anything *Chorus*

The Thanksgiving

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to you, Lord, Mighty Creator and Eternal God. Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we proclaim your great and glorious name, for ever praising you and saying:

**Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Glory to you, O Lord most high.**

Prayer of Approach

We do not presume to come to your table, merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in your manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table. But you are the same Lord whose nature is always to have mercy. Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

All glory to you, our heavenly Father, for in your tender mercy you gave your only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death on the cross for our redemption: who made there, by his one oblation of himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world; and instituted, and in his holy gospel commanded us to continue, a perpetual memory of his precious death until his coming again.

Hear us, merciful Father, we humbly pray, and grant that we who receive these gifts of your creation, this bread and this wine, according to your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of his death and passion, may be partakers of his most blessed body and blood; who on the night he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given you thanks, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, 'Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me.' Likewise after supper he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them saying, 'Drink from this, all of you; for this is my blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the remission of sins; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.' Amen.

Come let us take this holy sacrament of the body and blood of Christ in remembrance that he died for us, and feed on him in our hearts with thanksgiving.

After Communion

Almighty and everliving God, we heartily thank you that you graciously feed us, who have duly received these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious body and blood of your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, and thus assure us of your favour and goodness towards us and that we are true members of the mystical body of your Son, the blessed company of all faithful people, and are also heirs, through hope, of your eternal kingdom, by the merits of the most precious death and passion

of your dear Son. And we humbly beseech you, heavenly Father, so to assist us with your grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as you have prepared for us to walk in, through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with you and the Holy Spirit be all honour and glory, world without end.

Hymn TIS 179 Praise With Joy the World's Creator

**Praise With Joy the World's Creator, God Of Justice, Love, And Peace,
Source And End Of Human Knowledge, Force Of Greatness Without Cease.
Celebrate The Maker's Glory, Power To Rescue And Release.**

**Praise the Son Who Feeds The Hungry, Frees The Captive, Finds The Lost,
Heals The Sick, Up-Sets Religion, Fearless Both Of Fate And Cost.
Celebrate Christ's Constant Presence: Friend And Stranger, Guest And Host.**

**Praise The Spirit Sent Among Us, Liberating Truth From Pride,
Forging Bonds Where Race Or Gender, Age Or Nation Dare Divide.
Celebrate The Spirit's Treasure: Foolishness None Dare Deride.**

**Praise The Maker, Christ, And Spirit, One God In Community,
Calling Christians To Embody Oneness And Diversity.
Thus The World Shall Yet Believe, When Shown Christ's Vibrant Unity.**

Notices

Dismissal

The peace of God which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord: **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

Sermon - John 6:60-71 - The Words of Eternal Life

Why do people leave particular churches? Often they don't like the minister, or his style, maybe they don't get on with the others in the congregation, maybe they think other church members are hypocrites who say one thing with their mouths, but living the complete opposite when they are outside the church's walls. Often they just drift away from church, like in the parable of the weeds where the busyness of this life, the worries of this world, crowd out God's word, until they just leave the church completely.

In our gospel today, People who had been following Jesus were leaving him. The passage gives a number of reasons why they were leaving. Many were saying that Jesus's teaching was hard. It seems they were referring, possibly amongst other things, to verse 54 where Jesus said: 54 Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day." It isn't surprising that his Jewish listeners found this teaching difficult. We pretty much take eating the bread and drinking the wine at Holy Communion for granted, and at least Anglicans and other Protestants understand that we spiritually eat and drink. But you can imagine if I were to stand up in front of you and say that you had to eat my flesh and to drink my blood, that you would have difficulty if you took it literally. I would also have difficulty, as I'm currently quite attached to my body and blood, and I wouldn't be comfortable with you making a meal of me or having a glass of what the blood donation ads used to call my finest red. I'm a bit squeamish even about blood pudding, and I know I couldn't face fresh blood, so I understand that it is a hard teaching.

Today, people continue to find Jesus's words difficult. They say they can't line up Jesus's words with what they 'know' from science, or from what the world around them is telling them. In many cases it is probably because they don't carefully and respectfully read their Bibles with the wisdom that God the Holy Spirit has given them. So it is not surprising that the words are difficult to understand. In other cases, God uses the sin that is in people's hearts to obscure his words because they were never meant to be understood. I would also suggest that if this is the case, that these people have decided in their own hearts that they are not willing to listen, and would reject God, no matter how clear the message is.

For Jesus's Jewish followers it was even worse than just finding Jesus's words difficult. John tells us that Jesus's words offended them. The Jewish would not even go a good rare steak, dripping with blood as it supposed be. For Jesus to suggest that they needed to consume his body and blood would quite rightly

have offended them. For a pious Jew, the mere suggestion that they should consume life blood, let alone human blood, would be absolutely abhorrent.

Today, people find many other reasons to be offended with Jesus's words. They think that they are basically good people, or not as bad as others who deserve judgment. They don't think anyone has to do anything for them to be accepted into eternal life, and quite frankly they are offended that anyone would suggest otherwise, that that they needed Jesus to die for them and rise again

Ultimately, Jesus says that these people do not believe his words. They did not believe that they would have to share in Jesus's body and blood, even though his flesh counts for nothing, as they would see when Jesus ascends to be with the father. They did not believe because they would never believe his words, even though they are the words of Spirit and of truth. Jesus says that he has known from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray him, and John specifically points to the disciple Judas Iscariot, although even he did not desert Jesus at that point.

People's sin, and their pride so often stands between them and Jesus. They claim it is too difficult, or that the words are offensive to them, or that they just don't believe. In practical terms, God the Father has not enabled them, or at least not yet enabled them. As John notes, from this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him. They rejected his words and they rejected Jesus, just as many do today.

When we compare these reasons with the reasons people give today for leaving the church, the reasons that Jesus gives here are all about Jesus's words - unlike the reasons that people actually give today: they don't like the minister, or his style, or they don't get on with the others in the congregation; they think other church members are hypocrites, or the worries of this world. These may seem like they are not about Jesus's words, but when you think about it, they are often reflections of the way the church lives out Jesus words, not just how they verbally proclaim Jesus's words.

While very rarely today will people use the excuse that they don't believe Jesus's words for them stopping coming to church, they might leave if the churches they go to have stopped preaching God's word. It is a good reason to stop being a member of a particular church if it stops preaching God's word from the pulpit, and my earnest prayer is that this will never happen in this church.. I also pray that this is not a church that stops proclaiming God's word in its members' lives - the lives of the preacher and of the congregation.

If these are the seasons that people give for stopping coming to church, what are the reasons they should stay? Verses 66-69 are my favourite verses in the Bible. Let me read them again: 66 From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him. Jesus asked the Twelve "You do not want to leave too, do you?". 68 Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. 69 We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God."

Despite the persecutions they knew they would suffer, despite the inconveniences that following Jesus would bring them, like interfering Peter from looking after his aging mother-in-law. Despite the ridicule they would get from the religious and civil authorities of their day, to say nothing of their family, friends and neighbours, and even despite the conflicts within the church, the sinful jockeying for positions of authority, and the plain sinfulness that would still seek to corrupt the church, Simon Peter knew that Jesus has the words of eternal life, that only Jesus has those words, and he believes them. He knew that he had nowhere else to go.

Jesus says that our concerns regarding the difficulty of his teaching about eating his body and drinking his blood will melt away when we appreciate that he has bodily ascended into heaven, once the disciples see him ascend to where he was before, to heaven alongside his Father.

He says that his words are full of Spirit and life and of life. They are not just human words, but words directly from God, imparted and interpreted by the Holy Spirit, the same Holy Spirit who convicts us of the source and truth of God's word, God the Father who enables us to understand and believes his word.

Ultimately, Peter's response resonates, at least with me. Simon Peter answered Jesus, in words that I can only repeat: , "Lord, to whom else shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. 69 We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God."

Do you also have no where else to go? Have you come to believe and know that Jesus is the Holy One of God, intending to live out that truth to eternal life, or are you, like Judas, and so many of Jesus disciples, one who will betray Jesus?