

9 October 2022

Hymn

Greeting

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.
And also with you.

Sentence

What shall I return to the Lord for all his bounty to me? I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord, I will pay my vows to the Lord in the presence of all his people. Psalm 116.12–14

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.

Prayer of the Day

O God, you have made heaven and earth and all that is good:
help us to delight in simple things
and to rejoice always in the richness of your bounty;
through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Jeremiah 29.1, 29.4-7

¹ This is the text of the letter that the prophet Jeremiah sent from Jerusalem to the surviving elders among the exiles and to the priests, the prophets and all the other people Nebuchadnezzar had carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon. ⁴ This is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says to all those I carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: ⁵ 'Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce. ⁶ Marry and have sons and daughters; find wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage, so that they too may have sons and daughters. Increase in number there; do not decrease. ⁷ Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.'

Psalm 66.1-11

¹ O shout with joy to God, all the earth: sing to the honour of his name and give him glory as his praise.
² Say to God 'How fearful are your works: because of your great might your enemies shall cower before you.'
³ All the earth shall worship you: and sing to you and sing praises to your name.
⁴ Come then and see what God has done: how terrible are his dealings with the children of Adam.
⁵ He turned the sea into dry land, they crossed the river on foot: then were we joyful because of him.
⁶ By his power he rules for ever, his eyes keep watch on the nations: and rebels shall never rise against him.
⁷ O bless our God, you peoples: and cause his praises to resound,
⁸ Who has held our souls in life: who has not suffered our feet to slip.
⁹ For you have proved us, O God: you have tried us as silver is tried.
¹⁰ You brought us into the net: you laid sharp torment on our loins.
¹¹ You let our enemies ride over our heads, we went through fire and water: but you brought us out into a place of liberty.

2 Timothy 2.8-15

⁸ Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David. This is my gospel, ⁹ for which I am suffering even to the point of being chained like a criminal. But God's word is not chained. ¹⁰ Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they too may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory. ¹¹ Here is a trustworthy saying: If we died with him, we will also live with him; ¹² if we endure, we will also reign with him. If we disown him, he will also disown us; ¹³ if we are faithless, he remains faithful, for he cannot disown himself. ¹⁴ Keep reminding God's people of these things. Warn them before God against quarrelling about words; it is of no value, and only ruins those who listen. ¹⁵ Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.

Luke 17.11-19

¹¹ Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus travelled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. ¹² As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance ¹³ and called out in a loud voice, 'Jesus, Master, have pity on us!' ¹⁴ When he saw them, he said, 'Go, show yourselves to the priests.' And as they went, they were cleansed. ¹⁵ One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. ¹⁶ He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him – and he was a Samaritan. ¹⁷ Jesus asked, 'Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine?' ¹⁸ Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?' ¹⁹ Then he said to him, 'Rise and go; your faith has made you well.'

Sermon

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.
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.

the prayers

Let us pray for the world and for the Church.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Introduction of 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.

Jesus said: Come to me all who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Matthew 11.28
God is steadfast in love and infinite in mercy, welcoming sinners and inviting them to the Lord's table.

Confession

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith, confident in God's forgiveness.

Merciful God, our maker and our judge, we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, and in what we have failed to do: we have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves; we repent and are sorry for all our sins. Father, forgive us. Strengthen us to love and obey you in newness of life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Absolution

Almighty God, who has promised forgiveness to all who turn to him in faith: pardon you and set you free from all your sins, strengthen you in all goodness and keep you in eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Peace

We are the body of Christ. **His Spirit is with us.**

The peace of the Lord be always with you. **And also with you.**

Hymn

OFFERTORY

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have these gifts to share.

Accept and use our offerings for your glory and for the service of your kingdom.

Blessed be God for ever.

Thanksgiving 2

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.** 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 right to praise you, faithful God, always and everywhere, for with your only begotten Son and life-giving Spirit, you are the one true God from everlasting to everlasting. At the dawn of time you wrought from nothing a universe of beauty and splendour, bringing light from darkness and order from chaos. You formed us, male and female, in your image, and endowed us with creative power. We turned away from you but you did not abandon us. You called us by name and searched us out, making a covenant of mercy, giving the law, and teaching justice by the prophets.

And so we praise you, joining with your faithful people of every time and place, singing the eternal song: **Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

When the fullness of time was come, you sent your Son to be born of Mary.

Bright image of your glory, he learnt obedience to you in all things, even to death on a cross, breaking the power of evil, freeing us from sin, and putting death to flight.

You raised him from death, exalting him to glory, and the new day dawned.

On the night he was betrayed your Son Jesus Christ shared food with his friends, his companions on the way. While at table he took bread, blessed, and broke it, and giving it to them, said: 'Take, eat; this is my body.'

He took a cup of wine, and, giving thanks, he gave it to them, and said,

'This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. Do this in remembrance of me.'

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Therefore, living God, as we obey his command, we remember his life of obedience to you, his suffering and death, his resurrection and exaltation, and his promise to be with us for ever.

With this bread and this cup we celebrate his saving death until he comes.

Accept, we pray, our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, and send your Holy Spirit upon us and our celebration that all who eat and drink at this table may be strengthened by Christ's body and blood to serve you in the world. As one body and one holy people, may we proclaim the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom, with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory is yours, eternal God, now and for ever.

Blessing and honour and glory and power are yours for ever and ever. Amen.

As this broken bread was once many grains, which have been gathered together and made one bread: **so may your Church be gathered from the ends of the earth into your kingdom.**

The gifts of God for the people of God. 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 by faith with thanksgiving.

The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for you, preserve your body and soul to everlasting life.

Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your heart by faith with thanksgiving.

The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for you, preserve your body and soul to everlasting life. Drink this in remembrance that Christ's blood was shed for you, and be thankful.

AFTER COMMUNION

Bountiful God, at this table you graciously feed us with the bread of life and the cup of eternal salvation.

May we who have reached out our hands to receive this sacrament be strengthened in your service;

we who have sung your praises tell of your glory and truth in our lives; we who have seen the greatness of your love see you face to face in your kingdom and come to worship you with all your saints for ever.

Father, we offer ourselves to you as a living sacrifice through Jesus Christ our Lord. Send us out in the power of your Spirit to live and work to your praise and glory.

Hymn

Blessing

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.

Dismissal

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

Cooma Jeremiah 29:1, 4-7, 10-14.

1. SLIDE Jeremiah & Lambeth

Thanks for your invitation to join you today, to share a little about the Lambeth conference.

Let me begin with a short reflection on the Jeremiah passage which I found most appropriate, given the themes that were part of the Lambeth Conference.

I think the Jeremiah reading stopped a little short of the main thrust of the passage, so allow me to read verses 10-14 as well. You may recognise a couple of well-known verses in there:

¹⁰For thus says the LORD: Only when Babylon's seventy years are completed will I visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place. ¹¹For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. ¹²Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. ¹³When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart, ¹⁴I will let you find me, says the LORD, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, says the LORD, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.

This passage is full of hope, isn't it? Because of their disobedience, God had allowed the Israelites to be defeated and dragged off into exile in Babylon, and it had been a hard road. They had lost heart and were beginning to think God had forgotten them; that they would never see their beloved Jerusalem again. But ultimately, God had the Israelites' future in his hands.

Through the prophet, God told them that they *would* return; and that in the meantime, they should live their lives, not in some sort of limbo just moving from one day to the next, but to grasp life with both hands and live it to the full. They weren't to listen to the false prophets who told them what their deliverance would be just around the corner, which took away any motivation for them to better their situation.

God reminded them it was going to be a while – that nothing would happen until Babylon's 70 years were up. He warned them not to settle into inertia.

"Build houses and live in them", said God. "Plant gardens and eat their produce. Get married, have kids! Thrive!" And more than that, they were to *bless* the city they were exiled to. They were to pray for them and look after their welfare, because in doing that, they would be looking after their own.

So not only were the Israelites told to live life to the full – God renewed their call to ministry! This has echoes of the original covenant where God called the Israelites to be a nation of priests to the pagan nations that surrounded them. Here, the pagans could not be any closer – "Pray for them", says God. "Look after their welfare."

While God's word to the Israelites in Babylon was specific to their situation at the time, if we look a little deeper, we'll recognise in this passage, some underlying principles regarding the relationship of God to his people that apply in our own age, and which can apply to our personal circumstances and walk with God as well.

We live in a world in the grip of worsening political, economic and natural catastrophes. Many of our young people – like the exiles in Babylon – are losing heart. A young man I know has shared with me that he is about to propose to his girl. But they don't want to bring kids into this world. They are doing what they can to lessen their carbon footprint on this earth- they're quite committed to that -but they're not optimistic enough to consider having children.

I have a friend who is so plugged into the political situation in Australia, that it actually affects his mental health at times! He is often in despair.

Now of course not everyone is this pessimistic – but this attitude is understandable. Our global problems seem insurmountable to some, and it can really affect how people live their lives.

If we read this passage more devotionally, the themes that emerge are these:

2. SLIDE with animations*

Themes:

***God gives us HOPE!** God has promised he will make all things new in his time. The apostle John's vision in Rev. 21 says that there will be a new heaven and a new earth where God will dwell with his people; where God will wipe away all our tears, and where death will be no more. Despite Climate change, despite power crazy world leaders, despite unstable economies, despite poverty and suffering – God will ultimately make everything fresh and new! He has promised.

***God gives us PRESENCE!** God has not abandoned us. If, in the midst of any difficulties we face, we seek God with all our hearts, he will allow us to find him! Have you ever encountered the presence of God in your prayers or circumstances? I have. When we become aware God's actual presence, it has the power to sustain us like nothing else! We know are not alone.

***God give us a PURPOSE!** There is no need to sink into lethargy or inertia, nor should we give in to despair. We might be struggling, but God has still called us to live the fullest lives we can live. He has called us to care for our world and to care for each other. It can actually help us cope better with our own dark times when we intentionally turn our focus outward and upward, rather than being centred by our own pain.

One of the most beautiful promises in scripture is Jeremiah 29:11 – worthy of memorising if we don't already know it:

3. SLIDE - verse

¹¹For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope."

Regardless of what may be bringing us down this morning, God offers us hope, his presence, and a purpose! Let's grasp these things with both hands and move into a fresh tomorrow.

4. SLIDE – Lambeth opening session

Lambeth was all about these three things – hope, presence and purpose. The theme of the conference was "God's Church for God's World." In the midst of this world gone wrong, Lambeth called and calls us to truly live as God's people and to make a difference in this world in Jesus' name.

The Archbishop of Canterbury said: "The Lambeth Conference is a wonderful gathering because it brings people from all over the world. But the reality is that Lambeth Conferences are there to come together and to discern what God is saying to the church... to offer that discernment, that insight, that imagination to the whole church, to every single one of the provinces...."

One of the main aspects of the conference was the **Lambeth Calls**. Following input from speakers from around the world on various topics, and discussion at tables amongst the bishops, recommendations were agreed upon which would be made public, and, in the Archbishop of Canterbury's words, "will call on the Anglican Communion, the whole Communion to pray, and to think and reflect, and for each province to decide on its response."

5. SLIDE – Lambeth calls.

The Lambeth Calls related to the main themes of the conference and included:

- Mission and Evangelism,
- Reconciliation,
- Safe Church,
- The Environment and Sustainable Development,
- Christian Unity,
- Inter-faith Relations,
- Anglican Identity,
- Human Dignity
- Discipleship

Personal reflections.

6. SLIDE – all the bishops, & bishop's spouses.

There were around 650 Bishops and 450 Bishop's spouses at this 15th Lambeth Conference of the Anglican Communion.

Of the 650 bishops, 136 are women. There were 95 of the women bishops present at the conference

7. SLIDE – women bishops.

This is a pic of four of us outside Canterbury Cathedral

8. SLIDE – Jay & me

Jay (my husband) and I both went, and it was truly an amazing experience. There was so much colour and diversity at every turn.

9. SLIDE – colour

There were bishops there of every colour, race & language imaginable.

10. SLIDE – Lambeth Palace front

The visit to Lambeth Palace was memorable, and part of the call to care for our environment.

11. SLIDE – Communion Forest

We were introduced to the concept of the Global Communion Forest, where all Anglican churches across the world are encouraged to plant trees and care for their environment.

12. SLIDE – Bishops in the Cathedral

The worship at the conference was a taste of heaven. You can imagine what was like to worship God with well over 1200 people. We were treated to a rich spectrum of worship music from across the globe.

13. SLIDE – Music

The worship took place every morning in the auditorium, every evening for those who wanted to, and there were a couple of very special services at the Canterbury cathedral.

14. SLIDES – Canterbury Cathedral

Sharing worship and the Eucharist with the global Anglican Communion was a very great gift, and one I will treasure always.

Another highlight for me was the opportunity to study the Scriptures with a small group of 8 bishops from around the world. Each morning we listened to expositions of the New Testament letter of 1 Peter from the Archbishop of Canterbury. Then we would go to our small group venue in the University of Kent and discuss the passage.

15. SLIDE – Bible study group

My group included bishops from Zambia, South Sudan, India, the UK, Australia and New Zealand.

It was eye-opening to hear the stories from the African & Asian bishops, about their struggles and their joys.

16. SLIDE-Bishop Robert from Zambia

The Bishop Robert from Zambia told us of his 'confirmation tours', where twice a year he would set out in his jeep and drive to the various Anglican churches in the villages for confirmations – usually 200 or more people at a time. I asked him if they stuck around, and he obviously thought that was a strange question. "Of course they stay", he said. "They are part of the community."

17. SLIDE – Bishop David from South Sudan

The South Sudanese bishop told me there had been a bishop in South Sudan who had confirmed 500 people at one service!

Though we consider ourselves privileged in the West, there is a fire in the African church that is burning pretty low in our own.

One of the studies was on Suffering in Christ in 1 Peter. A statement that moved me to the core was from one of the African bishops when he said, "There is no greater pain than leading a divided church". For many bishops in Africa, the tribal divisions in their countries have meant war. For us in Australia there is no war, but there is a somewhat strained and brittle Communion, divided over issues of theology and practice. This brings its own pain.

A call to unity despite our differences was a strong thread through all plenary and group sessions. We all hope and pray that as we work towards this, we will be able to shine as Christ's light in this world.

Lambeth was an amazing privilege, challenge and blessing. I know that every bishop who attended will have returned to his or her province encouraged and inspired to lead their respective dioceses to rise to their call to be God's Church in God's World – though perhaps we were all a tad exhausted!

18. SLIDE Bishops on the bus

My thanks go to you all, as members of this diocese, for sending your bishops to such a challenging, inspiring and potentially world changing gathering