

## Welcome

### Hymn TIS 444 - Dear Shepherd of your people, hear

Dear Shepherd of your people, hear, your presence now display;  
as you have given a place for prayer, so give us hearts to pray.

Within these walls let holy peace and love and concord dwell;  
here give the troubled conscience ease, the wounded spirit heal.

May we in faith receive your word, in faith present our prayers;  
and in the presence of our Lord unburden all our cares.

The hearing ear, the seeing eye, the humble mind bestow;  
and shine upon us from on high to make our graces grow.

## Greeting

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

## Sentence of the Day

My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one." John 10:29-30

## 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

Righteous God, you confound the world's wisdom by giving your blessing to the lowly and pure in heart; give us such a hunger and thirst for justice and perseverance in striving for peace that in our words and deeds the world may see the promise of your kingdom, which has been revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen**

## The Ministry of the Word

## **Isaiah 53:7-12 (NIV)**

<sup>7</sup> He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. <sup>8</sup> By oppression and judgment he was taken away. Yet who of his generation protested? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was punished. <sup>9</sup> He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth.

<sup>10</sup> Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life an offering for sin, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand. <sup>11</sup> After he has suffered, he will see the light of life and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities. <sup>12</sup> Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

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

## **Psalms 82 (NIV)**

<sup>1</sup> God presides in the great assembly; he renders judgment among the "gods":

**<sup>2</sup> "How long will you defend the unjust and show partiality to the wicked?**

<sup>3</sup> Defend the weak and the fatherless; uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed.

**<sup>4</sup> Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.**

<sup>5</sup> "The 'gods' know nothing, they understand nothing. They walk about in darkness; all the foundations of the earth are shaken.

<sup>6</sup> "I said, 'You are "gods"; you are all sons of the Most High.'

<sup>7</sup> But you will die like mere mortals; you will fall like every other ruler."

**<sup>8</sup> Rise up, O God, judge the earth, for all the nations are your inheritance.**

## **Philippians 2:5-11**

<sup>5</sup> In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

<sup>6</sup> Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; <sup>7</sup> rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. <sup>8</sup> And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death — even death on a cross! <sup>9</sup> Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

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

## John 10:24-39 (NIV)

### Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ

<sup>24</sup> The Jews who were there gathered around him, saying, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly.”

<sup>25</sup> Jesus answered, “I did tell you, but you do not believe. The works I do in my Father’s name testify about me,<sup>26</sup> but you do not believe because you are not my sheep.<sup>27</sup> My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.<sup>28</sup> I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand.<sup>29</sup> My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand.<sup>30</sup> I and the Father are one.”

<sup>31</sup> Again his Jewish opponents picked up stones to stone him,<sup>32</sup> but Jesus said to them, “I have shown you many good works from the Father. For which of these do you stone me?”

<sup>33</sup> “We are not stoning you for any good work,” they replied, “but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God.”

<sup>34</sup> Jesus answered them, “Is it not written in your Law, ‘I have said you are “gods”’?<sup>35</sup> If he called them ‘gods,’ to whom the word of God came—and Scripture cannot be set aside—<sup>36</sup> what about the one whom the Father set apart as his very own and sent into the world? Why then do you accuse me of blasphemy because I said, ‘I am God’s Son’?<sup>37</sup> Do not believe me unless I do the works of my Father.<sup>38</sup> But if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father.”<sup>39</sup> Again they tried to seize him, but he escaped their grasp.

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

### Sermon - Jesus the Messiah

#### 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 314 As With gladness men of old**  
**At the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow,**  
**every tongue confess him King of Glory now:**  
**this the Father's pleasure that we call him Lord,**  
**who from the beginning was the mighty Word.**

**Humbled for a season to receive a name**  
**from the lips of sinners unto whom he came,**  
**faithfully he bore it, spotless to the last,**  
**brought it back victorious, when from death he passed.**

**In your hearts enthrone him, there let him make new**  
**all that is not holy, all that is not true.**  
**He is God the Saviour, he is Christ the Lord,**  
**ever to be worshipped, trusted and adored.**

**When this same Lord Jesus, shall appear again,**  
**in his Father's glory, there with him to reign,**  
**then may we adore him, all before him bow,**  
**as our hearts confess him King of Glory now.**

### **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 223 I will sing the wondrous story

**I will sing the wondrous story of the Christ who died for me,**

how he left the realms of glory for the cross on Calvary.

*Chorus*

Yes, I'll sing the wondrous story of the Christ who died for me,  
sing it with the saints in glory, gathered by the crystal sea.

I was lost: but Jesus found me, found the sheep that went astray,  
raised me up and gently led me back into the narrow way. *Chorus*

Faint was I, and fears possessed me, bruised was I from many a fall,  
hope was gone, and shame distressed me: but his love has pardoned all. *Chorus*

Days of darkness still may meet me, sorrow's path I oft may tread;  
but his presence still is with me, by his guiding hand I'm led. *Chorus*

He will keep me till the river rolls its waters at my feet:  
then he'll bear me safely over, where the loved ones I shall meet. *Chorus*

**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 10:22-42 - Jesus the Messiah

### Introduction - Arguing with 4 year olds

I love my grandson dearly, but I get really frustrated when he simply will not accept my answers to his questions. Sometimes, no matter what I say, not matter how seriously I try to take his question, if the answer isn't the one that he wants, and the question comes straight back to me, or maybe I just get a continuous series of "but Why?", or, he asks Cath, who has been listening to the entire conversation, and gives him precisely the same answer. Sometimes I just give up and reply "It is that way so you can ask infuriating questions!"

I am sure you have experienced this, perhaps with 4 year olds, and almost certainly with people who claim to be adults! Jesus seemed to be just as frustrated with the Jews in today's reading. Their equivalent of "Why?" was "Tell as plainly."

### The Messiah

The question the Jews were frustrating Jesus with was "Are you the Messiah?"

Way back at the start of Jesus's ministry, Andrew was convinced Jesus was the Messiah as he had told his brother Simon Peter that he had found the Messiah, and many of Jesus's contemporaries were convinced he was, while others were equally convinced he was not. In fact, by this stage, as far as I can see, the only person Jesus had specifically told that he was the Messiah was the Samaritan woman at the well.

A large part of the problem was that the title Messiah carried a lot of baggage. Many expected the Messiah to be a powerful political or military leader who would throw out the Romans and re establish the main of Israel to the glory they expected it to have.

You see, the Jewish Bible, our Old Testament, mentions the 'anointed one' who is to come a number of times, and it isn't clear if these references are to the same person or two or even more different people who are to come. In some cases, the anointed one could be a contemporary figure, the king of Israel or Judah, or even a priest. Sometimes he is a political, powerful ruler, but other passages talk of a powerless, suffering servant who doesn't sound like a mighty king at all. While the anointed one is

usually human, he often does have a special, very close relationship with God that hints at him being more than human. Consequently, it is not surprising that Jews expected these prophecies to be fulfilled by different people, even if they thought there would only be one true Messiah.

Jesus understood that he was the one, true Messiah, and more importantly, how he would personally fulfil all the disparate prophecies. In this instance, he tells the Jews that he is not only the good shepherd who cares for his flock, but he not only has a special relationship with God, but that he is actually one with God.

### **He does the Father's works**

In showing that he is the Messiah, Jesus tells the Jews is that the works he does in his Father's name testify who he is. Up to this point, he had turned water into wine, miraculously discerned the details of the life of the Samaritan woman at the well, healed an official's son, fed the 5000 and performed a few other miracles. In today's reading he said that these works testify to who he is, to him being the Messiah. Jesus's miracles point to messianic prophecies like when Isaiah; the blind will see, the deaf will hear and and the lame will walk, but they are also things that only God can do. I can't think of any Old Testament prophecies that say the Messiah will turn water into wine, but the psalms say that God makes wine to make glad the heart of humankind, so God makes wine. Also, many of Jesus's miracles are similar to miracles that God did in Israel's history: walking on water reflects gods passing the Red Sea so God's people could walk across dry shod and be saved from slavery. These miracles show that Jesus is doing what God did in saving his people Israel, which happens to be what the Messiah was to do: to bring about the salvation of God's people, but not just the nation of Israel but all nations.

### **He is the Good Shepherd**

Next, to show he is the Messiah, Jesus again emphasises that he is the good shepherd. He says the Pharisees do not believe because you are not his sheep. The Pharisees are not his sheep and therefore do not believe. An important aspect of this is that they are sheep first: they are chosen by God and then they believe. They are only able to believe because God has chosen them to be in his flock. Unlike the Pharisees, those who are in

the flock and believe listen to Jesus's voice; He knows them, and they follow him. He gives them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of Jesus's hand.

This is part of what the Messiah is: the one anointed by God to do God's works in saving his people.

### **He is God the Son**

However, Jesus says that He, the Messiah, more than does God's work. His relationship with God is deeper than this. Jesus actually makes an earth shattering claim to the Jews in this regard. He says that he is One with God. This is earthshaking because the fundamental statement of Faith of the Jews is the Shema . Hear, O Israel: YHWH our God, YHWH is one" (Deuteronomy 6:4).

Jesus isn't contradicting this statement. He certainly isn't denying that God is one, but he is saying that God's oneness is different to the way the Jews expected. He says that no one can snatch his sheep out of his own hand, and then, in almost the same breath, says that no one can snatch them out of God the fathers hand. Obviously this is picture language since God the father does not have physical hands like we do, but somehow God the Father and Jesus have the same hand that holds the flock. This was enough to make the Jews want to stone him, the punishment in the Old Testament for blasphemy. Still, Jesus goes even further. He says the **Father is in me, and I in the Father**. He is not talking about panentheism, the idea that God is in everything. The Bible is quite clear that God is quite separate from his creation: everything that is created is created from nothing. Nor is he talking pantheism, the idea that everything is part of God. No, Jesus is talking about the Trinity, there are three members of the godhead: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit: three in one, one in three, three distinct personalities, completely united and completely inseparable. They are not parts of a single whole like leaves of a three leaf clover, nor are they different expressions (or modes) of a single God, because Jesus prayed to the father and he wasn't praying to himself. Similarly, Jesus sent the Holy Spirit, so he too is separate. Our New Testament reading from Philippians talks more about how Jesus is human and divine.

By expressing this tri-unity of God, Jesus was saying that the Messiah was not only human, as Jews had believed from every since Moses prophesied about the Messiah. Jesus was saying that the Messiah is also divine, and was divine without contradicting the fundamental fact of the unity of God. This was too much for the Jews and they tried to seize him again. However, it was not his time yet, and he retreated to the Jordan where John the Baptist had baptised him. This was at least partly in preparation for his upcoming arrest, trial and crucifixion.

## Conclusion

The Jews would not accept that Jesus was the divine Messiah, even though it did not contradict their firm belief that there is but one God. However, the real question today is not whether the Jews of Jesus's day believed in him, after all, they did not have the evidence of his resurrection, nor did they have the Holy Spirit, whom Jesus only sent after he had ascended to heaven. No one here has either of those excuses. We know from God's authoritative word that Jesus died and rose for our salvation, and we have the Holy Spirit whom Jesus sent to open our hearts and minds to the truth: the truth that Jesus is the Messiah, the promised anointed one, perfectly human, perfectly divine, fully in God the father, and with God the father fully in him. This Jesus the Messiah (or in Greek, the Christ), God the son, died and rose again to save all who believe in him to eternal life.

Do you believe this truth, and have the eternal life that is only possible through believing it? Or are you like the Jews, unwilling to accept the true answer, even if you constantly re-ask the question like my grandson?

Let those of us who have this Faith, believe, and recite together our belief in the words of the apostle's creed.