

SUNDAY 24 May 2026 - St Paul's Cooma 9.30am

Introduction

TIS 452 - God of mercy, God of Grace

1 God of mercy, God of grace,
Show the brightness of Thy Face;
Shine upon us, Saviour, shine,
Fill Thy Church with light Divine;
And Thy saving health extend
Unto earth's remotest end.

2 Let the people praise Thee, Lord;
Be by all that live adored;
Let the nations shout and sing
Glory to their Saviour King;
At Thy feet their tribute pay,
And Thy holy Will obey.

3 Let the people praise Thee, Lord;
Earth shall then her fruits afford;
God to man His blessing give,
Man to God devoted live;
All below, and all above,
One in joy, and light, and love

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 of the day

But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

John 16:7

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.'

Prayer of the Day

O God, who taught the hearts of your faithful people by sending them the light of your Holy Spirit; grant us by that same Spirit to have a right judgement in all things, and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort; through the merits of Christ our Saviour, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of that same Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen**

The Ministry of the Word

Numbers 11:24-30

²⁴ So Moses went out and told the people what the LORD had said. He brought together seventy of their elders and had them stand around the tent. ²⁵ Then the LORD came down in the cloud and spoke with him, and he took some of the power of the Spirit that was on him and put it on the seventy elders. When the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied —but did not do so again.

²⁶ However, two men, whose names were Eldad and Medad, had remained in the camp. They were listed among the elders, but did not go out to the tent. Yet the Spirit also rested on them, and they prophesied in the camp. ²⁷ A young man ran and told Moses, “Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp.”

²⁸ Joshua son of Nun, who had been Moses’ aide since youth, spoke up and said, “Moses, my lord, stop them!”

²⁹ But Moses replied, “Are you jealous for my sake? I wish that all the LORD’s people were prophets and that the LORD would put his Spirit on them!” ³⁰ Then Moses and the elders of Israel returned to the camp.

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

Psalms 104:26-35(NIV)

²⁴ How many are your works, LORD! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.

²⁵ **There is the sea, vast and spacious, teeming with creatures beyond number—living things both large and small.**

²⁶ There the ships go to and fro, and Leviathan, which you formed to frolic there.

²⁷ **All creatures look to you to give them their food at the proper time.**

²⁸ When you give it to them, they gather it up; when you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things.

²⁹ **When you hide your face, they are terrified; when you take away their breath, they die and return to the dust.**

³⁰ When you send your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the ground.

³¹ **May the glory of the LORD endure forever; may the LORD rejoice in his work**

³² he who looks at the earth, and it trembles, who touches the mountains, and they smoke.

³³ **I will sing to the LORD all my life; I will sing praise to my God as long as I live.**

³⁴ May my meditation be pleasing to him, as I rejoice in the LORD.

³⁵ **But may sinners vanish from the earth and the wicked be no more.**

Praise the LORD, my soul. Praise the LORD.

2 Corinthians 2:12-17(NIV)

12 Now when I went to Troas to preach the gospel of Christ and found that the Lord had opened a door for me, 13 I still had no peace of mind, because I did not find my brother Titus there. So I said goodbye to them and went on to Macedonia. 14 But thanks be to God, who always leads us as captives in Christ's triumphal procession and uses us to spread the aroma of the knowledge of him everywhere. 15 For we are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. 16 To the one we are an aroma that brings death; to the other, an aroma that brings life. And who is equal to such a task? 17 Unlike so many, we do not peddle the word of God for profit. On the contrary, in Christ we speak before God with sincerity, as those sent from God.

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

John 15:26-16:15(NIV)

Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ

²⁶ "When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father —the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father—he will testify about me. ²⁷ And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.

¹ "All this I have told you so that you will not fall away. ² They will put you out of the synagogue; in fact, the time is coming when anyone who kills you will think they are offering a service to God. ³ They will do such things because they have not known the Father or me. ⁴ I have told you this, so that when their time comes you will remember that I warned you about them. I did not tell you this from the beginning because I was with you, ⁵ but now I am going to him who sent me. None of you asks me, 'Where are you going?' ⁶ Rather, you are filled with grief because I have said these things. ⁷ But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. ⁸ When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: ⁹ about sin, because people do not believe in me; ¹⁰ about righteousness, because I am going to the

Father, where you can see me no longer; ¹¹ and about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.

¹² "I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. ¹³ But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. ¹⁴ He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. ¹⁵ All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you."

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

Sermon - Bad News - Good News

The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God of true God, begotten not made, of one being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became fully human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen

Prayers

Let us pray for the world and the church.

Response: God of Peace, 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.

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.

The Confession

God is steadfast in love and infinite in mercy, welcoming sinners and inviting them to the Lord's table. 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.

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.**

Greeting of 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 - TIS 597 - Master, speak, thy servant heareth

1 Master, speak, thy servant heareth,
waiting for thy gracious word,
longing for thy voice that cheereth;
Master, let it now be heard.
I am listening, Lord, for thee;
What hast thou to say to me?

2 Speak to me by name, O Master,
let me know it is to me;
speak, that I may follow faster,
with a step more firm and free,
where the shepherd leads the flock

in the shadow of the rock.

3 Master, speak: and make me ready,
when thy voice is truly heard,
with obedience glad and steady
still to follow every word.

I am listening, Lord, for thee:
Master, speak, O, speak to me

The Thanksgiving

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.**

Loving God, we thank you for this world of wonder and delight. You have given it to us to care for, so that all your creatures may enjoy its bounty.

Lord our God, **we give you thanks and praise.**

We thank you that when we turned away from you, you sent Jesus to live and work as one of us, and bring us back to you. He showed us how to love you and set us free to love and serve one another.

Lord our God, **we give you thanks and praise.**

We thank you that on the cross Jesus took away our sin, all that keeps us from each other and from you. He frees us from hate and fear, from all that destroys love and trust. Lord our God, **we give you thanks and praise.**

And so with everyone who believes in you, with all the saints and angels, we rejoice and praise you, saying:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

And now we thank you for these gifts of bread and wine; may we who receive them, as Jesus said, share his body and his blood.

On the night he was betrayed, he took bread and gave you thanks. He broke the bread and gave it to his friends, and said, 'Take and eat. This is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'

After supper he took the cup and gave you thanks. He shared the cup with them and said, 'This is my blood poured out so that sins may be forgiven. Do this in remembrance of me.'

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

You have gathered us together to feed on Christ and to remember all he has done for us. Fill us with your Spirit that we may follow Jesus in all we do and say, working for justice and bringing your peace to this world that you have made.

Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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

We who are many are one body, **for we all share in the one bread.**

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 with thanksgiving.

After Communion

Father of all we give you thanks and praise that when we were still far off you met us in your Son and brought us home. Dying and living, he declared your love, gave us grace, and opened the gate of glory. May we who share Christ's body live his risen life; we who drink his cup bring life to others; we whom the Spirit lights give light to the world.

Keep us in this hope that we have grasped: so we and all your people will be free, and the whole earth live to praise your name.

Hymn - TIS 687 - God gives us a future

1 God gives us a future, daring us to go
Into dreams and dangers, on a path unknown
We will face tomorrow, with the Spirit's power
We will let God change us, for new life starts now.

2 We must leave behind us sins of yesterday
For God's new beginning is a better way
Fear and doubt and habit must not hold us back
God gives hope and insight and the strength we lack.

3 Holy Spirit teach us how to read the signs
How to meet the challenge of our troubled times
Love us into action stir us into prayer
Till we choose God's life and find our future there

Notices

Dismissal

The peace of God which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the love of God, and the blessing of God almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be amongst you and remain with you always. **Amen**

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

Sermon 26 May 2026 John 15:26-16:15: Good news + Bad news

A woman was nervously waiting at the airport for her husband to return from his skydiving lesson. The pilot approached her: "I'm sorry, but there's been an accident. I have some bad news and some good news.

The bad news is your husband fell out of the plane. The good news is he had his parachute on. The bad news is he hit the ground before his chute could open. The good news is we hadn't taken off yet."

In today's reading, we are still in the upper room with Jesus and the disciples had the last supper, and Jesus is teaching the disciples. The whole episode has been a roller coaster for the disciples, like the good news bad news joke I just mentioned (but a lot more serious).

In this upper room, Jesus had washed the disciples' feet, then told them they would never be greater than their master, that Judas would betray him, Peter would deny him. He has said that he had to leave them, but was going to prepare their place in heaven, for which he is the way, the truth and the life. He said they could ask anything of the father in his name and be given it, and God would send the Holy Spirit, an advocate. He tells them they are branches of his vine, but if they didn't remain in him they would be cut off and thrown in the fire. Jesus calls them his friends, but then says that the world hates them without reason.

You can see what an emotional roller coaster this was, how up and down they would have felt. Now, this week Jesus comes back to talking about the Holy Spirit.

Jesus called the Holy Spirit the paraclete, or literally, 'the one who is called alongside them'. The translators have translated this word as 'advocate' in the Bible version we read today, but other translators call him a comforter, a helper, a counsellor, or a companion and the amplified translation goes even further, calling him a Counselor, Helper, Intercessor, Advocate, Strengthener, and Standby. None of the translators are wrong in the word they chose, and they are trying to give an idea of what the Holy Spirit will do, rather than just translating his title. The range of words gives you an idea of the range of meanings of the word - the range of things that the Holy Spirit will do for us - advocate for us, comfort us, help us and so on. All these translations suggest that the Holy Spirit will stand with us through the highs, and particularly the lows, that the disciples will experience between Jesus' ascension and his coming again. The coming of the Holy Spirit means that the disciples will not have to suffer the trials and tribulations, and

particularly the world's hate and persecution, on their own. The Holy Spirit will stand alongside them to advocate, to comfort, to counsel, to strengthen and help them, and stand by them through their trials. He won't stop all the trials, but he will stand with them through them all.

Of these trials that Jesus says will come, persecutions will come from the religious, those who claim to believe and follow God. For the disciples, this meant that they would be barred from their places of worship, their synagogues, by the religious administrators. These people would show their hypocrisy by claiming to serve their God, the God of love, but kill the disciples because of their faith in Jesus. We should expect the same things from the religious in our world. We should expect the same hypocrisy, and indeed, the same persecutions from those who claim to love God, but are blinded by their own sin.

The first thing Jesus says the Spirit will come to do is teach Christians all things, because he is the Spirit of Truth. Knowledge may not feel like a lot of comfort when you are being persecuted, but it is important to know that you are not being persecuted for fake news, but the truth. It is important to know that the one we are being persecuted for also suffered, and that his suffering was the most significant suffering, the most purposeful suffering the world has ever witnessed. The Holy Spirit will teach us that it was suffering for the greatest good, for forgiveness of the world's sins and for eternal life. This knowledge that the Holy Spirit gives at least helps us to understand our suffering, to put it in context, and helps to ensure that we withstand suffering with the strength of the Spirit of the one who suffered for us. This knowledge also helps us to persist, to avoid falling away from God's infinite love.

Jesus then says that the Holy Spirit teaches the whole world. He will convict the world that it is wrong in the areas of sin, of judgement and of righteousness. He will convict the world about sin, because people do not believe in Jesus. Ultimately the world does not believe in sin, it considers good and evil relative, only better or worse than what other people do. But for a perfect God, sin is absolute. The world's sin is not believing in the goodness of God who made us perfect and sent his Son to redeem people from their sin. By leading us into all truth, the Holy Spirit will show the sin of the world, and show it in contrast to the Christian's faith in Jesus.

The Holy Spirit will also convict the world that it is wrong about righteousness. Jesus says this will become obvious, because he is going

to the Father, where we can see him no longer. When Jesus ascended and departed this world, His perfect righteousness also departed this world. When the Spirit comes, Jesus's absence convicts the world of righteousness and the Holy Spirit teaches that it is no longer found in a world without Jesus.

And the Holy Spirit convicts the world about judgement, because Satan, the prince of this world now stands condemned. Even though the devil continues to prowl around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour, he has been defeated by Jesus's death and resurrection. If the purest embodiment of evil is judged, how much more will every sinner be judged as well? The Holy Spirit convicts us of this now, and it will become convict the whole world, including Satan himself, how obvious it is, when Jesus returns.

After this discussion of judgement, Jesus tells his disciples and us that it is for their good that he was going away. He said that unless he went away, the Advocate would not come to us. In the form of a finite human being, Jesus limited himself to only being able to be with a small number of people at a time, but the Holy Spirit, as the perfectly divine spirit, can be with all Christians at all times. It is God's plan that the Holy Spirit come only after Jesus had returned to the father, and so Jesus, having achieved what he came to earth to do, namely to defeat sin on the cross, then had to return to the father that the Holy Spirit might come. I imagine that this would raise the disciple's spirits after all the talk about evil and judgement.

As you know, the Holy Spirit did come on the day of Pentecost, the day we remember today in the church calendar. The Holy Spirit has come to stand by and comfort all Christians, and as the spirit of truth, to convict us of sin and righteousness and judgment.

So, the Spirit has come and teaches Christians the truth, and specifically that the world is wrong about sin, righteousness and judgement. However, the way that God and the Spirit usually work in the world is through Christians. Ultimately, the Holy Spirit will or won't convince individual people of their sin, but he chooses to rely on Christians proclaiming the truth, His truth. So as Christians whom the Holy Spirit has convicted of the truth, we must testify that truth to the world. The disciples in particular had to testify - since they had been with Jesus from the beginning of his ministry, and Jesus had just spent three or so years preparing them to proclaim his gospel, to start the chain of gospel preaching and hearing, believing and in turn passing

on to others that has continued to this day, and must continue until Jesus returns.

We are part of this chain. We have heard the gospel from our forebears that was taught to them by the Holy Spirit, and have responded as the Holy Spirit has convicted us of that truth. Consequently we also must testify to the truth, just as the disciples who had been with Jesus from the beginning. We also have the truth through the people who taught us from God's Holy word that the Holy Spirit convicts us of the truth of, and we must testify to that truth to the people that God puts around us, and to people we go out to. Like the disciples, it is not our job to convince people of the truth of the gospel, that is the job of the Holy Spirit. Our only responsibility is to proclaim it faithfully and accurately in accordance with God's word - the Holy Spirit does all the rest.

I started this morning's sermon with a very bad job about bad news and good news. The disciples had been hearing what they saw as bad news and good news from Jesus in that upper room, just before Jesus was to be arrested and executed. Ultimately, as Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 2:15-16 'For we are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. ¹⁶ To the one we are an aroma that brings death; to the other, an aroma that brings life.' We are to bring bad news and good news: an aroma that brings death, eternal judgement to those who do not repent and believe the gospel of Jesus death and resurrection for forgiveness, and an aroma that brings life - eternal life for those who believe the gospel and put their faith in Jesus. The gospel is both this bad and this good news, and we, like the first disciples, must proclaim it to the world as the Spirit of truth guides us into all the truth, We will not speak on our own, like the Spirit who does not speak on his own. We must only speak what we are convicted of by the Holy Spirit, who only speaks what he hears from the Father. In this way we will glorify Jesus, and through him God the Father as people are convicted by the Holy Spirit, repent and put their faith in Jesus and live.

Will you, with the Holy Spirit, proclaim this bad and good news that people will be saved? Amen