

SUNDAY 16 June 2024 - St Paul's Cooma 9.30am

Introduction

Hymn TIS 168 - For the fruit of all creation

**For the fruit of all creation Thanks be to God
For His gifts to every nation Thanks be to God
For the ploughing sowing reaping
Silent growth while we are sleeping
Future needs in earth's safekeeping
Thanks be to God**

**In the just reward of labour God's will is done
In the help we give our neighbour God's will is done
In our worldwide task of caring
For the hungry and despairing
In the harvests we are sharing
God's will is done**

**For the harvests of the Spirit Thanks be to God
For the good we all inherit Thanks be to God
For the wonders that astound us
For the truths that still confound us
Most of all that love has found us
Thanks be to God**

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

And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. Luke 18:7-8

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

Lord, we beseech you to keep your family, the church, in continual godliness, that through your protection it may be free from all adversities, and devoutly given to serve you in good works, to the glory of your name; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The Ministry of the Word

Job 11:7–19

⁷“Can you fathom the mysteries of God? Can you probe the limits of the Almighty? ⁸ They are higher than the heavens above—what can you do? They are deeper than the depths below—what can you know? ⁹ Their measure is longer than the earth and wider than the sea. ¹⁰ “If he comes along and confines you in prison and convenes a court, who can oppose him? ¹¹ Surely he recognizes deceivers; and when he sees evil, does he not take note? ¹² But the witless can no more become wise than a wild donkey’s colt can be born human. ¹³ “Yet if you devote your heart to him and stretch out your hands to him, ¹⁴ if you put away the sin that is in your hand and allow no evil to dwell in your tent, ¹⁵ then, free of fault, you will lift up your face; you will stand firm and without fear. ¹⁶ You will surely forget your trouble, recalling it only as waters gone by. ¹⁷ Life will be brighter than noonday, and darkness will become like morning. ¹⁸ You will be secure, because there is hope; you will look about you and take your rest in safety. ¹⁹ You will lie down, with no one to make you afraid, and many will court your favour.

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

Psalm 32:4–11

⁴ For day and night your hand was heavy on me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer.

⁵ **Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD.” And you forgave the guilt of my sin.**

⁶ Therefore let all the faithful pray to you while you may be found; surely the rising of the mighty waters will not reach them.

⁷ **You are my hiding place; you will protect me from trouble and surround me with songs of deliverance.**

⁸ I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you.

⁹ **Do not be like the horse or the mule, which have no understanding but must be controlled by bit and bridle or they will not come to you.**

¹⁰ Many are the woes of the wicked, but the LORD’s unfailing love surrounds the one who trusts in him.

¹¹ **Rejoice in the LORD and be glad, you righteous; sing, all you who are upright in heart!**

Ephesians 3

¹ For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—

² Surely you have heard about the administration of God’s grace that was given to me for you, ³ that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly.

⁴ In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, ⁵ which was not made known to people in other generations as it has now been revealed by

the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets.⁶ This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.

⁷ I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God's grace given me through the working of his power.⁸ Although I am less than the least of all the Lord's people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the boundless riches of Christ,⁹ and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things.¹⁰ His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms,¹¹ according to his eternal purpose that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.¹² In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.¹³ I ask you, therefore, not to be discouraged because of my sufferings for you, which are your glory.

A Prayer for the Ephesians

¹⁴ For this reason I kneel before the Father,¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name.¹⁶ I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being,¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love,¹⁸ may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ,¹⁹ and to know this love that surpasses knowledge —that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

²⁰ Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us,²¹ to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

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

Luke 18:1–8

Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ

¹ Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up.² He said: "In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared what people thought.³ And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, 'Grant me justice against my adversary.'

⁴ "For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, 'Even though I don't fear God or care what people think,⁵ yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won't eventually come and attack me!'"

⁶ And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says.⁷ And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off?⁸ I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?"

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

Sermon - Ephesians 3 - The Mystery of Christ

Question Time

Prayers

Let us pray for the world and the church.

Response: Gracious God, 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.

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 636 - Alleluia alleluia Give thanks to the Risen Lord

Chorus

Alleluia alleluia Give thanks to the Risen Lord

Alleluia alleluia Give praise to His Name

Jesus is Lord of all the earth

He is the King of creation *Chorus*

Spread the good news o'er all the earth

Jesus has died and has risen *Chorus*

We have been crucified with Christ

Now we shall live forever *Chorus*

God has proclaimed his gracious gift

New life for all alleluia *Chorus*

Come let us praise the Living God

Joyfully sing to our Saviour *Chorus*

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.

The Lord's Supper is open to all who love the Lord.

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 446 - Glorious things of you are spoken

Chorus

**God has spoken to His people Alleluia
And His words are words of wisdom Alleluia**

**Open your ears O Christian people
Open your ears and hear good news
Open your hearts O royal priesthood
God has come to you *Chorus***

**They who have ears to hear His message
They who have ears then let them hear
They who would learn the way of wisdom
Let them hear God's Word *Chorus***

**Israel comes to greet the Saviour
Judah is glad to see His day
From east to west the peoples travel
He will show the way *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 - The Mystery of Christ

Introduction

Last week we talked a lot about how Christ has joined us gentiles to the Jews as God's people.

Verses 1-13 of today's reading calls this the great mystery - that is, something once hidden but now revealed. In this chapter, Paul also tells us that God gave him the job of preaching this mystery to the gentiles: It says: *I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God's grace given me through the working of his power. 8 Although I am less than the least of all the Lord's people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the boundless riches of Christ, 9 and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things.*

Note how honoured Paul seems to be with this job: even though Paul considers himself *less than the least of all the Lord's people*, for him it was a *gift of grace, given through the working of God's power*, and the mystery is the boundless riches of Christ. I wonder how often we see the responsibility of sharing Christ in this way?

Because of course, this job is not only Paul's but the whole church's. Paul goes on to say:

10 God's intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, 11 according to his eternal purpose that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. 12 In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.

It is our, the church's responsibility to let the world know that through Jesus we can directly approach God, with freedom and confidence. This is surely the greatest news that anyone can hear, and it is our job to share it. Are you joining with Paul and all other Christians in this essential task?

Paul realises that for us, as it was for him, there will be many discouragements along the way. He didn't want his sufferings to discourage the Ephesians or us, and so he prayed for in the words of verses 14-21.

Now this may be one of the shortest sermons you will ever hear, at least from me, but today, I want to follow it with one of the longest prayers you will hear from me, a prayer in Paul's example, praying for every member of Cooma Anglican with Paul's words. Will you join me in this prayer for your family, friends and neighbours?

14 For this reason I kneel before the Father,

I pray for this church family in the Cooma region 15 a family of God the Father from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name.

I pray for our Adaminaby congregation: Colin and Edith Mayhew, Gordon and Theresa Thomson, and the others there.

I pray for our Bredbo congregation: Olwyn Davies, Peter and Julie Harris.
Our Jerangle congregation: Hugh Bennett and Chelsea Newman, Bill and Helen Boate, Bob Boate, Nathan, Steven and Maddie Boate, Peter and Carolyn Ewart, Damien and Cathy Hopkins, Ted and Ellie Hopkins, Bob Lowden, Richard Lowden.

I pray for our congregation at Nimmitabel: Sarah Buick, Howie and Anne Charles, Peter and Margaret Haylock, Joey Herbert, Tooth Kendall, Lanie Lawson, Leon and Margaret Weston

Our Numeralla congregation: Elizabeth Fletcher, Glenn Fletcher, Peter and Mary Mitchell

And here at Cooma: Edna and Paul Allenspach, Laura Azzam, Alec and Nella Bacon, Meredith Bacon, Roslyn Carroll, Warren Catton, Ian and Karen Clark, Greg Colton (and Ali and Elsie, and Bea), Kathy Devonshire-Gill, Gaile Fitzgerald, David and Ruth Fletcher, Russell Fox, Bernie and Gayle Harding, Brian Hodge, Allan and Colleen Hood, Vi Jenkins, Ross Johnson, Ian and Liz Litchfield, Michael and Sue Litchfield, Heather Little, Leanne Lowery, Don and Lorraine McGregor, Beryl McGuffick, Brenda Miles, Carley Monroe-Donahue (and the boys), Robin Mould, John Munn, Liz Pirie, David Price, Stuart and Jan Reid, Steve Rendell, Jenni Roberts, Beattie Russell, Marc Schmidt, Elaine Schofield, Mary Shaeffer, Liz Sherlock, Kaye Simpson, Graeme and Erika Somerset, Janet Stalvies, Lola Van der Plaat, Margaret Wainwright, Chris and Sarah Wall, Gilbert Wallace, Robert Wallace, Frank Wood, and any I have missed, as well as visitors and those passing through.

I pray that out of his glorious riches God may strengthen us with power through his Spirit in our inner being, 17 so that Christ may dwell in our hearts through faith. And I pray that we, being rooted and established in love, 18 may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, 19 and to know this love that surpasses knowledge —that we may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

*Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! **Amen.***