

ST PETER & ST PAUL'S CHURCH, AYLESFORD



Giving Sunday

Trinity 18

3rd October 2021

We Gather

Opening Words

Each should give what they have decided in their heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.

2 Corinthians 9: 7,8

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

And also with you.

**Faithful One, whose word is life:
come with saving power
to free our praise,
inspire our prayer
and shape our lives
For the kingdom of your Son
Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

Hymn

O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness;
bow down before him, his glory proclaim;
with gold of obedience and incense of
lowliness,
kneel and adore him: the Lord is his name.

Low at his feet lay thy burden of carefulness:
high on his heart he will bear it for thee,
comfort thy sorrows, and answer thy
prayerfulness,
guiding thy steps as may best for thee be.

Fear not to enter his courts in the
slenderness
of the poor wealth thou wouldst reckon
as thine:
truth in its beauty, and love in its
tenderness,
these are the off'rings to lay on his shrine.

These, though we bring them in trembling
and fearfulness,
he will accept for the name that is dear;
mornings of joy give for evenings of
tearfulness,
trust for our trembling and hope for our fear.

John S B Monsell

We draw close to God

Forgetting God's grace

Coming together as God's family, with confidence let us ask the Father's forgiveness for our failure to respond fully to his grace, remembering his gentleness and compassion.

Gracious God, you are the giver of every good and perfect gift. You give us our talents, our freedom, and our financial resources. We struggle to give back to you from these gifts.

We often worry that these gifts are not enough; that we must hold onto them for ourselves and for our family.

Continued ...

Remind us again that you have blessed us to be a blessing to others, and free us for more generous living. Forgive us, O God, for all our sins, as we continue to pray in silence ...

A time of silence for reflection

Gracious God, we acknowledge that we have forgotten where every good gift comes from – you. Holy Spirit, shape our hearts to have a posture of gratitude and open our hands to give, that others might see your generous grace and love. Amen.

Gracious God, we receive your forgiveness with gratitude. We know that all we have is yours: save us from the delusion of believing it is ours; save us from our possessiveness, that your grace may abound in all things at all times; through Jesus Christ our Saviour. **Amen.**

Giving in Grace

A Prayer from the Iona Community

**Reshape us, good Lord,
until in generosity, in faith,
and in the expectation that the best is
yet to come,
we are truly Christ-like.
Make us passionate followers of Jesus,
rather than passive supporters.
Make our churches places of radical
discipleship
and signposts to heaven,
then, in us, through us,
and if need be despite us,
let your kingdom come. Amen.**

We listen

Bible Reading

2 Corinthians 8.1-15

And now, brothers and sisters, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the Lord's people. And they exceeded our expectations: They gave themselves first of all to the Lord, and then by the will of God also to us. So we urged Titus, just as he had earlier made a beginning, to bring also to completion this act of grace on your part. But since you excel in everything--in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you--see that you also excel in this grace of giving.

I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.

And here is my judgment about what is best for you in this matter. Last year you were the first not only to give but also to have the desire to do so. Now finish the work, so that your eager willingness to do it may be matched by your completion of it, according to your means. For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what one does not have.

Our desire is not that others might be relieved while you are hard pressed, but that there might be equality. At the present time your plenty will supply what they need, so that in turn their plenty will supply what you need. The goal is equality, as it is written: "The one who gathered much did not have too much, and the one who gathered little did not have too little."

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

Comment

Hymn

Take my life, and let it be
consecrated, Lord, to thee;
take my moments and my days,
let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my hands, and let them move
at the impulse of thy love;
take my feet, and let them be
swift and beautiful for thee.

Take my voice, and let me sing
always, only, for my King;
take my lips, and let them be
filled with messages from thee.

Take my silver and my gold;
not a mite would I withhold;
take my intellect, and use
ev'ry pow'r as you choose.

Here am I, all of me.
Take my life, it's all for thee.

Take my will, and make it thine:
it shall be no longer mine;
take my heart: it is thine own;
it shall be thy royal throne.

Take my love; my Lord, I pour
at thy feet its treasure-store;
take myself, and I will be
ever, only, all for thee.

Take myself, and I will be
ever, only, all for thee.
Frances Ridley Havergal (1874)

Generous Giving Presentation

By Liz Mullins
Diocesan Generous Giving Adviser

We respond

A Prayer for Giving in Grace

Heavenly Father, give grace to us, the living stones who form your Church, to reflect prayerfully at this special time on our love for you and our neighbour.

Make us mindful of the many gifts you bestow upon us.

We ask that your Holy Spirit will inspire and direct us in our choice of giving, remembering that we are only giving back that which is truly yours.

Strengthen us, Lord, to meet this challenge according to your will. Through Jesus Christ our Lord who has given all that we might live. Amen.

Offertory Hymn

I have heard your voice Lord Jesus
Saying in your grace divine
Do not fear I have redeemed you
I have called you, you are mine

Lord I bring you full allegiance
Therefore now to you I sing
Answering yes, you have redeemed me
I am yours my Lord my King

*So I come to you Lord Jesus
Laying in surrender meet
All I am and have and hope for
All I love at your dear feet*

I have nothing worth your taking
You whom heavenly hosts adore
But my heart is longing, yearning
To be yours forevermore

So I come to you Lord Jesus ...

Yet the offerings here are humble
Which your children bring to you
And their best and sweetest praises
Are but rendered falteringly

So I come to you Lord Jesus ...

But our song shall be triumphant
When Your glory we will see
All for Jesus, all for Jesus
Now and through eternity

So we come to you Lord Jesus

Laying in surrender meet

All we are and have and hope for

All we love at your dear feet

CCLI Song # 6622862 | Edith Gilling Cherry |

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Offertory Prayer

On my own
what I have to give
doesn't amount to much
in the light of all you have given to me
and in the face of so much need.

Put together as a congregation,
what we offer you here in love
becomes more,
not simply added together,
but somehow multiplied in its usefulness.

We ask you to bless our gifts
and with the addition of your blessing,
just as it was with the loaves and fishes,
there is enough for all.

Amen.

Prayers

Response

Generous God,
hear our prayer.

And at the end

Generous God,
source and sustainer of all life,
**hear our prayer, and make us one in
heart and mind to serve you with joy
forever. Amen.**

Ending with The Lord's Prayer

**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.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the
glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.**

We leave to show God's love and
generosity in the world

News and Notices

Hymn

For the fruits of all creation,
thanks be to God;
for the gifts to every nation,
thanks be to God;
for the ploughing, sowing, reaping,
silent growth while we are sleeping,
future needs in earth's safe-keeping,
thanks be to God.

Continued ...

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 world-wide 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.

Fred Pratt Green (1903-2000)
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Closing Prayer and Blessing

**Loving Father,
you have made us your people,
richly provided us with good gifts
and called us to live for you.
May gratitude be in our hearts,
may generosity be in our hands,
may justice and righteousness guide our
feet,
and may the life of your kingdom and
the joy of heaven be found among us.**

So may the Father who provides for all
creatures,
the Son who encompasses all in his mercy,
the Spirit who gives breath to all living
things
bless our lives with goodness and guide
us in generous living.

Amen.

Go now, to love and serve the Lord
generously.

In the name of Christ. Amen.

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