

Morning Prayer 18th October 2020

The Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity
Feast of Luke the Evangelist

Service with Bishop Trevor Musonda Mwamba



Personal preparation before the service begins.
Please take time to remember where you are,
and why you are here.
Give thanks and become still
in the presence of God

Prelude

Grace, mercy and peace
from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ
be with us.
This is the day that the Lord has made.
Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Song: SoF 40: Be still

Be Still

Be still, for the presence of the Lord,
the Holy One is here.
Come, bow before Him now,
with reverence and fear.
In Him no sin is found,
we stand on holy ground.
Be still, for the presence of the Lord,
the Holy One is here.

Be still, for the glory of the Lord
is shining all around;
He burns with holy fire,
with splendour He is crowned.

How awesome is the sight,
our radiant King of light!
Be still, for the glory of the Lord
is shining all around.

Be still, for the power of the Lord
is moving in this place.
He comes to cleanse and heal,
to minister His grace.
No work too hard for Him,
in faith receive from Him;
Be still, for the power of the Lord
is moving in this place.

CCLI Song # 120824
David J. Evans
© 1986 Thankyou Music (Admin. by SCM Hänssler)
CCLI Licence No. 546960

Let us pray with words from Psalm 147

Alleluia.
How good it is to make music for our God, •
how joyful to honour him with praise.
The Lord builds up Jerusalem •
and gathers together the outcasts of Israel.
He heals the brokenhearted •
and binds up all their wounds.
He counts the number of the stars •
and calls them all by their names.
Great is our Lord and mighty in power; •
his wisdom is beyond all telling.
The Lord lifts up the poor, •
but casts down the wicked to the ground.
Sing to the Lord with thanksgiving; •
make music to our God upon the lyre;

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit,
**As it was in the beginning,
is now and shall be for ever.**

The Collect for today, the 19th Sunday after Trinity.

Almighty God,
you called Luke the physician,
whose praise is in the gospel,
to be an evangelist and physician of the soul:
by the grace of the Spirit
and through the wholesome medicine of the gospel,
give your Church the same love and power to heal;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

The first reading is taken from Isaiah 35.3-6

Let us prepare ourselves for the word of God
Our hearts and our minds are open

Strengthen the weak hands,
and make firm the feeble knees.
Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
'Be strong, do not fear!
Here is your God.
He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.
He will come and save you.'

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,
and streams in the desert.

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

The reading is taken from Luke 10.1-9

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke

Glory to you, O Lord

After this the Lord appointed seventy others and sent them on ahead of him in pairs to every town and place where he himself intended to go. He said to them, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest. Go on your way. See, I am sending you out like lambs into the midst of wolves. Carry no purse, no bag, no sandals; and greet no one on the road. Whatever house you enter, first say, "Peace to this house!" And if anyone is there who shares in peace, your peace will rest on that person; but if not, it will return to you. Remain in the same house, eating and drinking whatever they provide, for the labourer deserves to be paid. Do not move about from house to house. Whenever you enter a town and its people welcome you, eat what is set before you; cure the sick who are there, and say to them, "The kingdom of God has come near to you."

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Homily

Feast of St Luke the Evangelist.

The Beloved Physician

Today we celebrate the Feast of St Luke the Evangelist. He was the most literary of the New Testament writers. He wrote the Gospel that bears his name and the Acts of the Apostles. In his Letter to the Colossians, St Paul affectionately referred to him as "the beloved physician".

Taylor Caldwell wrote a "historical novel" about St Luke or Lucanus as he was called in life titled Dear and

Glorious Physician. St Luke, like St Paul, never saw Jesus. He was a Greek physician who as a convert decided to write the history of the Lord he worshiped.

So what prescriptions does the dear beloved and glorious physician prescribe for us in his Gospel?

The first prescription is for the poor. Jesus loves the poor. The pulse of Luke's Gospel is that Jesus has a soft spot for the poor.

Luke's Gospel points to this at the start of Jesus' ministry. Jesus in the Synagogue reads from the Prophet Isaiah:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor".

When he finished all eyes were fixed on Him. Then Jesus said to them, " Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

And throughout Luke's Gospel we see Jesus befriending the poor, the outcasts, the tax collectors, Samaritans, Gentiles, women. He is the God of the poor, the victimised, and oppressed.

As the Virgin Mary prayed in the Magnificat, "He has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate; He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He has sent away empty".

This is who God is. In Christ, the Friend of sinners, God's love welcomes everyone and heals those who cannot even accept and love themselves.

This is the foundation of Luke's Gospel and first prescription from the beloved physician. Jesus loves the poor. Now a word of caution this prescription should not be taken with grapefruit.

The second prescription is for the lost. St Luke prescribes that the "Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost". This is the Gospel of Lost and Found!

The 15th Chapter draws us into God's compassion. There is a town hall assembly and the cast arrayed are guaranteed not to disappoint. We have the flamboyant and dodgy mix of tax collectors "sinners" in front row seats to hear Jesus. And those rather boring holier than thou characters the Pharisees and the teachers of the law oozing negative energy and muttering as usual,

"This man welcomes sinners and eats with them."

To dispel their negativity and stop their muttering Jesus told three parables of the lost sheep, lost coin, and prodigal son.

He asks them to imagine...to act as if...suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. The trilogy share the theme of loss, searching, and recovery and rejoicing.

He asks them to imagine... to act as if... but God does not imagine or act as if. God is the Shepherd, God is the woman, God is the father who has lost the sheep, coin, and prodigal son or daughter.

We are all lost and God searches for us until he finds us because each person is precious to God. We don't find God. God always finds us and rejoices at finding us and throws great parties to celebrate.

Malcolm Muggeridge said these wise words in describing his return to God or being found:

"In the end, coming to faith remains for all a sense of homecoming, of picking up the threads of a lost life, of responding to a bell that had long been ringing, of taking a place at a table that had long been vacant."

The third prescription is for healing. St Luke's Gospel prescribes our complete healing, spirit, mind, and body, in Christ.

The early Church Fathers like St Augustine of Hippo and St. John Chrysostom thought of the church as a hospital for sinners.

So we see sin as an illness and the church a hospital where the salvation and healing of souls through the grace of God takes place.

Jesus is more concerned about the direction of our lives than He is about particular sins. Indeed, the Scriptures say,

"If you, LORD, kept a record of sins, Lord, who could stand? But with you there is forgiveness..."

That salvation and healing is a process makes our failures understandable. That our spiritual illness needs access to the grace of God often and repeatedly draws us to worship.

And as we worship God regularly it sharpens the point of our relationship with God and heals our inner life changing us.

Being healed we too are inspired to heal others for we become the wounded healers.

St Luke the dear beloved and glorious physician's prescription to everyone around the world, whatever our social or moral status, is that we meet and follow Christ, the great Friend of sinners; our cure and health. For in Christ, all are welcome... all are found...all are healed...all are appreciated and valued, all are precious. And I am talking about you.

We conclude with a poem that expresses St. Luke's Gospel of God who welcomes and loves us all.

It's George Herbert's " Love bade me welcome".

Love bade me welcome: yet my soul drew back,

Guilty of dust and sin,

But quick-eyed Love, observing me grow slack

From my first entrance in,
Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning,
If I lack'd any thing.

A guest, I answer'd, worthy to be here:

Love said, You shall be he.

I the unkind, ungrateful? Ah my dear,

I cannot look on thee.

Love took my hand, and smiling did reply,

Who made the eyes but I?

Truth Lord, but I have marred them: let my shame

Go where it doth deserve.

And know you not, says Love, who bore the blame?

My dear, then I will serve.

You must sit down, says Love, and taste my meat:

So I did sit and eat.

Intercessions (by Will)

Lord you are the maker of the universe and the fountain of all good things. We come to you this morning, praying with confidence that you will guide us, help us and heal us.

Lord in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

Guide us

We pray for church leaders of all denominations. May they recognize Your peace in their lives. Give those who have been entrusted to spread this peace the

courage to reach every corner of the world and the words to disseminate your loving and giving Gospel. Instill in us all an attitude of openness to receive Your peace, and let it govern our work life, our family life, our relationships with friends and our interactions with strangers so that we may each carry your light forward into the world.

We pray especially this morning for our annual general meeting, for listening attitudes, for honest and clear speaking and for open hearts.

Lord in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

Help us

We pray for world leaders, those who guide communities, and those who have the influence to bring about reconciliation. Without you, no good things are possible. Still the hearts of the outraged, give patience to the peacemakers, and strengthen Your Spirit in all our hearts so that it leaves no room for bitterness and hatred. We pray especially for wisdom among leaders of all countries in response to the recent increases in rates of COVID infection.

Lord in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

Heal us

We are your children who you love. We pray for reconciliation and forgiveness in our own lives. We pray for those who are sad, anxious or angry. May the change we ask for in other people's lives begin in our own. We pray for those who have recently lost loved ones, or for whom painful anniversaries are close. We pray for those who are worried about recent rises in COVID infection rates, and the consequences this will have on all our lives. We pray for all those who are ill and especially remember Margret, praying for healing, for comfort and for confidence that you will be with her through all the challenges which lie ahead.

Lord in your mercy,

I am all unrighteousness;
false and full of sin I am,
Thou art full of truth and grace.

Plenteous grace with Thee is found,
grace to cover all my sin;
let the healing streams abound,
make and keep me pure within.
Thou of life the Fountain art;
freely let me take of Thee;
spring Thou up within my heart,
rise to all eternity.

CCLI Song # 2648280
Charles Wesley
Public Domain
CCLI Licence No. 546960



The Blessing

The Lord bless you and watch over you,
the Lord make his face shine upon you
and be gracious to you,
the Lord look kindly on you and give you peace;
and the blessing of God Almighty,
the Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
be with you now and always.
Amen.

The Conclusion

The Lord bless us, and preserve us from all evil,
and keep us in eternal life.
Amen.

Let us bless the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Postlude

It is well with my soul

When peace, like a riv-er, attend-eth my way,
when sor-rows like sea – bil-lows roll;
what-ev-er my lot, thou hast taught me to say
It is well, it is well, with my soul

Women: It is well, Men: It is well
Women: With my soul, Men: With my soul
All: It is well, it is well – with my soul

Though Sa-tan should buf-fet, tho' tri-als should come,
let this blest as-sur-ance con-trol,
that Christ has re-gard-ed my help-less es-tate,
and hath shed His own blood for my soul.

Women: It is well, Men: It is well
Women: With my soul, Men: With my soul
All: It is well, it is well – with my soul

My sin - O the bliss of this glo-ri-ous thought
my sin - not in part but the whole,
Is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more,
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul.

Women: It is well, Men: It is well
Women: With my soul, Men: With my soul
All: It is well, it is well – with my soul

Women: It is well, Men: It is well
Women: With my soul, Men: With my soul
All: It is well, it is well – with my soul

Philip P. Bliss, CCLI: 25376