

**Communion Service with Revd. Peter Widdess  
10<sup>th</sup> October 2021  
The Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost**



**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**

In the name of the Father,  
and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.  
**Amen.**

Grace, mercy and peace  
from God our Father  
and the Lord Jesus Christ  
be with you  
**and also with you.**

**Song: ACF 31 Father, hear the prayer we offer**

1. Father, hear the prayer we offer:  
Not for ease that prayer shall be,  
But for strength that we may ever  
Live our lives courageously.

2. Not for ever in green pastures  
Do we ask our way to be;  
But by steep and rugged pathways  
May we tread rejoicingly.

3. Not for ever by still waters  
Would we idly rest and stay;

But would smite the living fountains  
From the rocks along our way.

4. Be our strength in hours of weakness,  
In our wanderings be our guide;  
Through endeavour, failure, danger,  
Father, be thou at our side.

CCLI Song # 1596000  
Love Maria Willis | Ralph Vaughan Williams  
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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.

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith.  
Father eternal, giver of light and grace,  
we have sinned against you and against our neighbour,  
in what we have thought,  
in what we have said and done,  
through ignorance, through weakness,  
through our own deliberate fault.  
We have wounded your love,  
and marred your image in us.  
We are sorry and ashamed,  
and repent of all our sins.  
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,  
who died for us,  
forgive us all that is past;  
and lead us out from darkness  
to walk as children of light.  
**Amen.**

Almighty God,  
who forgives all who truly repent,  
have mercy upon you,  
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,  
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,  
and keep you in life eternal;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

### The Collect

O God, forasmuch as without you  
we are not able to please you;  
mercifully grant that your Holy Spirit  
may in all things direct and rule our hearts;  
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 forever.

### The reading is taken from the Letter to the Hebrews Chapter 4

Let us prepare ourselves for the word of God

**Our hearts and our minds are open.**

For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

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

### **Song: ACF 13 Bless the Lord, my soul (Taizé)**

Bless the Lord, my soul, and bless God's holy name.  
Bless the Lord, my soul, who leads me into life.

© Jacques Berthier  
Presses et Ateliers de Taizé

### **Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark. Glory to you, O Lord.**

As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. "Good teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

"Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good—except God alone. You know the commandments: 'You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, you shall not defraud, honour your father and mother.'"

"Teacher," he declared, "all these I have kept since I was a boy."

Jesus looked at him and loved him. "One thing you lack," he said. "Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

At this the man's face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth.

Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!"

The disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said again, "Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God."

The disciples were even more amazed, and said to each other, “Who then can be saved?”

Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God.”

Then Peter spoke up, “We have left everything to follow you!”

“Truly I tell you,” Jesus replied, “no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age: homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields—along with persecutions—and in the age to come eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last first.”

This is the gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ**

### Homily

On Monday morning my wife and I read a review of a novel set in the USA in the last 50 years. We have not read the novel, nor can we judge whether the reviewer is accurate in his description and analysis, but one passage in the review gave us food for thought and discussion.

The reviewer describes what for him is a very important part of the novel. A female person describes how she went to Hollywood with the desire to become a film actress and finished up with a job as the receptionist of a garage. She has a passionate affair with one of the car salesmen and becomes pregnant, gets a child which she did not really want. The woman suffers for many years under the feeling of shame and sinfulness and eventually gets treatment from a psychologist. The psychologist tries to counter the weight of conviction of sinfulness over many years with the answer that she is not a sinner, but rather she is a victim. The woman, says the reviewer, could not accept this suggestion.

Now this is all my wife and I know about the plot of the novel. Indeed, what actually happens in the novel and whether the reviewer is just in his analysis was not relevant to our discussion. We were speculating about the situation in which a person feels great shame and sinfulness and a person from outside sees something very different, the woman as a victim of her circumstances, misused by another or other persons, not responsible for her own situation, a victim. We were discussing questions about the borders of passionate love affairs, where responsibility lies in sexuality for one's own body and the body of the other. We were talking about blindness and self-deception as against lust and ecstasy, power and domination.

We were discussing this theoretical situation against a background of many years as ministers of parishes and hospital chaplains entrusted with the pastoral care of many people. We have known only too well the individuals who have suffered dreadfully under what they feel to be their sinfulness, but at the same time carry their sin as an item of clothing to protect themselves from a feeling of nakedness, the paradoxical situation in which it is more acceptable to see oneself as a sinner than to take responsibility for one's actions.

We have also known the churches or ministers who have misused feelings of sinfulness as mechanisms of power and control over their congregation. Sermons full of sin and very little grace. To see myself as a sinner or to be seen by others as a sinner can have a paralysing effect. It is like a needle stuck in a groove of an LP, the same little bit of music comes again and again and again.

It is very difficult to talk with people in this situation. Regardless of what I may say, the same little portion of melody repeats itself. Even if I say, like the psychologist in the novel, you are not sinful, you are the victim of what others have done to you, the answer is quickly there: the others did this to me because I am sinful. The melody can repeat itself again.

The reading from the letter to the Hebrews can help us to find a way out of this dilemma. We do not know who wrote this letter. But the letter is addressed to people who know and understand the practice of worship in the Jewish temple, more especially the role of the high priest in sacrificing animals at the altar before the Holy of Holies. The overarching line of argument in the letter is to see Jesus both as the high priest and as the sacrificial animal united in one being.

Today's reading begins with a reflection on the word of God, sharper as a double-edged sword. Double-edged swords have very largely gone out of use, but the point is obvious. God sees us as we are. We are in God's eyes transparent. God can see where we have sinned and where we have been victims. The author writes: "Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account." "Nothing in all creation" includes the fox in the chicken coop in a killing orgy and also the covid 19 virus spreading beyond its normal habitat. God sees only too clearly whether, when we give account of ourselves, we are honest or not, whether we understand what we have done or not done, or whether we are simply naively blind.

The author says that Jesus, as high priest, has empathy with us. Empathy, the art of listening and understanding, nearness without disgust or judgement, is the most difficult part of pastoral care. Jesus sees, hears, understands not from outside, not from up above. Jesus is here where I am, where you are, sharing with us as one of us, experiencing the same situations, the same temptations. But he sees the dangers before him. He sees the borderline distinction between love and sin. He takes responsibility for his own actions and remains sinless. Later in the letter to the Hebrews the sinlessness of Jesus is interpreted in the context of the sacrifice on the cross. Here however the sinless Jesus is the guarantee that we can "approach God's throne of grace with confidence."

Please note that the author here doesn't write about a judgement throne, or fear and trepidation, but rather God, the two-edged sword, who sees and know us as

we are, welcomes us with grace, with love and understanding. We may trust God. We may take off the clothes of sinfulness and stand naked before God in joy, without fear or shame. God gives us mercy and grace in our need. The needle stuck in its groove may jump out, move on and play new music.

Perhaps this was the problem between the woman and the psychologist. The psychologist wants to help and says you are not a sinner, as you think you are. You are a victim. The woman hears this as a judgement. She doesn't feel that the psychologist understands her or knows who she is. Nothing has happened to change her situation.

This is the difference to Jesus. In today's Gospel we heard how the young rich man makes a naïve claim to have obeyed all the laws and commandments. Jesus doesn't say: "you fool, you with all your wealth have it easy in life." Mark simply writes: "Jesus looked at him and loved him." This is the Jesus who says on another occasion, "Come to me all who are heavily laden. I will give you rest."

We may approach God's throne of grace with confidence.

### **The 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 from 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 from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary  
and was made man.  
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 worshipped 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 of intercessions**

We pray for the world,  
for the Church,  
and all those in need.  
And thank God for his goodness.

In peace, let us pray to Jesus our Lord,  
who ever lives to make intercession for us.

Saviour of the world,  
be present in all places of suffering, violence and pain,  
and bring hope even in the darkest night.  
Inspire us to continue your work of reconciliation today.

Lord, in your mercy  
**hear our prayer.**

Lord of the Church,  
empower by your Spirit all Christian people,  
and the work of your Church in every land.  
Give us grace to proclaim the gospel joyfully in word  
and deed.

Lord, in your mercy  
**hear our prayer.**

Shepherd and Guardian of our souls,  
guide and enable all who lead and serve this  
community  
and those on whom we depend for our daily needs.  
Grant that we may seek the peace and welfare of this  
place.

We bring before you the visa procedure for our new  
minister.  
Strengthen Vinod, Molly, Dorothy and Giji and us  
in this time of waiting and uncertainty.

Lord, in your mercy  
**hear our prayer.**

Great Physician,  
stretch out your hand to bring comfort, wholeness and  
peace  
to Margaret and Beth all who suffer in body, mind, or  
spirit.  
Fill us with compassion, that we may be channels of  
your healing love.

Lord, in your mercy  
**hear our prayer.**

Conqueror of death,  
remember for good those whom we love but see no  
longer.  
Help us to live this day in the sure and certain hope of  
your eternal victory.

Lord, in your mercy  
**hear our prayer.**



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

Accept our praises, heavenly Father,  
through your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ,  
and as we follow his example and obey his command,  
grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit  
these gifts of bread and wine  
may be to us his body and his blood;  
who, in the same night that he was betrayed,  
took bread and gave 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.

In the same way, after supper  
he took the cup and gave you thanks;  
he gave it to them, saying:  
Drink this, all of you;  
this is my blood of the new covenant,  
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness  
of sins.  
Do this, as often as you drink it,  
in remembrance of me.

Therefore, heavenly Father,  
we remember his offering of himself  
made once for all upon the cross;  
we proclaim his mighty resurrection and glorious  
ascension;  
we look for the coming of your kingdom,  
and with this bread and this cup  
we make the memorial of Christ your Son our Lord.

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

Accept through him, our great high priest,  
this our sacrifice of thanks and praise,  
and as we eat and drink these holy gifts

in the presence of your divine majesty,  
renew us by your Spirit,  
inspire us with your love  
and unite us in the body of your Son,  
Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Through him, and with him, and in him,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
with all who stand before you in earth and heaven,  
we worship you, Father almighty,  
in songs of everlasting praise:

**Blessing and honour and glory and power  
be yours for ever and ever.**

Amen.

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray  
Our Father in heaven .....

We break this bread  
to share in the body of Christ.  
**Though we are many, we are one body,  
because we all share in one bread.**

**We do not presume  
to come to this 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 our sinful bodies may be made clean by his  
body  
and our souls washed through his most precious  
blood,**

**and that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us.**

Amen.

**Song during the reception of communion**  
**ACF 19 Come as you are, that's how I want you**

1. 'Come as you are; that's how I want you.  
Come as you are; feel quite at home,  
close to my heart, loved and forgiven.  
Come as you are: why stand alone?'

2. 'No need to fear, love sets no limits;  
no need to fear, love never ends;  
don't run away, shamed and disheartened,  
rest in my love, trust me again.'

3. 'I came to call sinners, not just the righteous;  
I came to bring peace, not to condemn.  
Each time you fail to live by my promise,  
why do you think I'd love you the less?'

4. 'Come as you are: that's how I love you;  
come as you are, trust me again.  
Nothing can change the love that I bear you;  
all will be well, just come as you are.'

CCLI Song # 1504731  
Words and music: Deirdre Browne  
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Holy and blessed God,  
you have fed us with the body and blood of your Son  
and filled us with your Holy Spirit:  
may we honour you,  
not only with our lips  
but in lives dedicated to the service  
of Jesus Christ our Lord.



## Blessing

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.**

## Announcements

(see below)

Go in the peace of Christ.  
**Thanks be to God.**

## Postlude

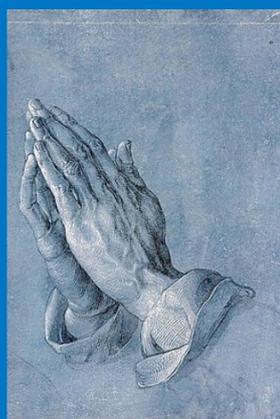
Look forward to our Communion Service

with Gerhard Ruisch

17th October 2021

Twentyfirst Sunday after Pentecost /  
Twentieth Sunday after Trinity

**12:00 hrs**, Zoom link see website  
and in person in the church 😊



**Evening Prayer on  
Wednesdays**

13th October 2021  
9pm (for 20-30min)

(Please use the usual  
Sunday service link.)



Thursday, 14th October 2021  
at 7:30 pm  
Bible study with  
Revd. Vinod Victor  
(Please use the usual Sunday service link.)



The Anglican Church in Freiburg is entirely dependent on voluntary donations to pay stipends, for all activities and the upkeep of its programmes.

Donations can be made directly to the church account:  
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