

Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

August 18, 2024

Welcome

Opening Song: "Sweet hour of prayer"

Video prepared in 2023 by Rachel Behrens

Opening Verse, Confession & Absolution

Officiant Send out your light and your truth, that they may lead me, and bring me to your holy hill and to your dwelling. **Amen.**

Officiant Let us examine our lives in the presence of God, humbly confessing our sins and opening our hearts. I invite you to bow your head, or take some other posture of humility before God.

A brief silence for reflection follows.

Officiant Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone.

People **Lord, have mercy.**

Officiant We have not loved you with our whole hearts. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry, and we humbly repent.

People **Christ, have mercy.**

Officiant For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your name.

People **Lord, have mercy.**

Officiant Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life. **Amen.**

The Invitatory and Psalter

Officiant Lord, open our lips.

People **And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.**

Glory to the holy and undivided Trinity, one God;

As it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever. Amen.

Psalm 130

Out of the depths have I called to you; O God, hear my voice; *

let your ears consider well the voice of my supplication.

If you were to note what is done amiss, *

O God, who could stand?

For there is forgiveness with you, *

therefore you shall be feared.

I wait for you, O God; my soul waits for you; *

in your word is my hope.

My soul waits for you, more than sentries for the morning, *

more than sentries for the morning.

O Israel, wait upon God, *

for with God there is mercy.

With God there is plenteous redemption; *

God shall redeem Israel from all their sins.

Glory to the Holy and Undivided Trinity, one God;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

The First Reading: 2 Samuel 11:26-12:13a

Continuity and context for today's reading...

As we heard last week, the prophet Nathan told David, "The sword shall never depart from your own household." Some years after that, David's oldest son, Amnon, did something terrible to his half-sister Tamar. David was angry, but he didn't do anything to Amnon. So Tamar's full brother, Absalom, plotted for two years, and finally murdered Amnon in revenge. Absalom had to flee into exile, but was finally allowed to return to Jerusalem, and reconciled with his father.

We are told that Absalom was a beautiful man, with really great hair: "Now in all Israel there was no one to be praised so much for his beauty as Absalom; from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him. When he cut the hair of his head (for at the end of every year he used to cut it; when it was heavy on him, he cut it), he weighed the hair of his head, two hundred shekels by the king's weight." (2 Sam 14: 25-26)

However, despite the reconciliation, Absalom was still angry, and started to stir up dissent against David. After a time, Absalom and those close to him started to plot to declare Absalom king instead of David. David had to flee from Jerusalem, with most of his household and his guards. Once again, David had to flee from place to place in the countryside, to stay away from Absalom's army, just as he had fled from Saul when he was a young man. At last he gathered his troops for a final battle with Absalom and his army.

Reader A reading from the second book of Samuel.

The king, David, ordered Joab and Abishai and Ittai, saying, "Deal gently for my sake with the young man Absalom." And all the people heard when the king gave orders to all the commanders concerning Absalom. So the army went out into the field against Israel; and the battle was fought in the forest of Ephraim. The men of Israel were defeated there by the servants of David, and the slaughter there was great on that day, twenty thousand men. The battle spread over the face of all the country; and the forest claimed more victims that day than the sword.

Absalom happened to meet the servants of David. Absalom was riding on his mule, and the mule went under the thick branches of a great oak. His head caught fast in the oak, and he was left hanging between heaven and earth, while the mule that was under him went on. And ten young men, Joab's armor-bearers, surrounded Absalom and struck him, and killed him.

Then Joab sounded the trumpet, and the troops came back from pursuing Israel, for Joab restrained the troops. They took Absalom, threw him into a great pit in the forest, and raised over him a very great heap of stones. Meanwhile all the Israelites fled to their homes...

The Cushite messenger said to David, "Good tidings for my lord the king! For the Lord has vindicated you this day, delivering you from the power of all who rose up against you." The king said to the Cushite, "Is it well with the young man Absalom?" The Cushite answered, "May the enemies of my lord the king, and all who rise up to do you harm, be like that young man." The king was deeply moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept; and as he went, he said, "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would I had died instead of you, O Absalom, my son, my son!"

Reader Hear what the Spirit is saying to the people.

People **Thanks be to God.**

The Second Reading: Ephesians 5:15-20

Reader A reading from the letter to the church in Ephesus

Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people but as wise, making the most of the time, because the days are evil. So do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts, giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Reader Hear what the Spirit is saying to the people.

People **Thanks be to God.**

The Gospel Reading: John 6:51-58

Reader A reading from the Gospel according to John.

Jesus said, "I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh." The Jewish leaders then disputed among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" So Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day; for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever."

Reader Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

The Rev. Miranda Hassett

The Prayers

Officiant We now continue in prayer. You may wish to bow your head, open your hands, or prepare your body for prayer in some other way.

Officiant The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Officiant Now, let us pray as God's beloved children, using the prayer Jesus taught us.

**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 Prayers of the People

Send prayer requests to to prayers@stdunstans.com.

Officiant Let us continue in prayer. We will hold up our needs and blessings to God. You can speak your prayers out loud, type them into the Chat area, or hold them in your heart. As you are able, please hold others' prayer requests before God in your heart as well.

Officiant Let us pray for all churches and their leaders, and for all God's people everywhere.
The people may offer their prayers aloud.

Officiant Let us pray for all those in authority.
The people may offer their prayers aloud.

Officiant Let us pray for all nations and peoples.
The people may offer their prayers aloud.

Officiant Let us pray for the earth and the whole created order.
The people may offer their prayers aloud.

Officiant Let us pray for our local communities.
The people may offer their prayers aloud.

Officiant Let us pray for those in any need or trouble, especially those on our parish prayer list: ... You are invited to name others in need of prayer, and to hold up your own struggles to the light of God's love.
The people may offer additional names.

Officiant Let us pray for all who have died, and for those who mourn.
The people may offer additional names.

Officiant Let us pray for our common life and work as God's people.
The people may offer their prayers aloud.

The Collect of the Day

Officiant

Let us pray. Almighty God, you have given your only Son to be for us a sacrifice for sin, and also an example of godly life: Give us grace to receive thankfully the fruits of his redeeming work, and to follow daily in the blessed steps of his most holy life; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The Officiant may read one of the following Collects as well:

A Collect for Peace

O God, it is your will to hold both heaven and earth in a single peace. Let the design of your great love shine on the waste of our wraths and sorrows, and give peace to your Church, peace among nations, peace in our homes, and peace in our hearts. **Amen.**

A Collect for Grace

Lord God, almighty and everlasting One, you have brought us in safety to this new day: Preserve us with your mighty power, that we may not fall into sin, nor be overcome by adversity; and in all we do, direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

A Collect for Guidance

O God, our Creator and Sustainer, in whom we live and move and have our being: We humbly pray you so to guide and govern us by your Holy Spirit, that in all the cares and occupations of our life we may not forget you, but may remember that we are ever walking in your sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Sharing of Blessings

Officiant Does anyone have any other blessings or thanksgivings they'd like to share with the assembly today?...

The Peace

Officiant The peace of the Lord be always with you!

All **And also with you!**

We greet one another, wishing one another the peace of Christ.

Announcements

The General Thanksgiving

Officiant As we conclude our time together this morning, let us say the Prayer of General Thanksgiving. Our Voice of the People will lead us; you are invited to read along at home while muted.

All:

**Almighty God, Father of all mercies,
we your unworthy servants give you humble thanks
for all your goodness and lovingkindness
to us and to all whom you have made.
We bless you for our creation, preservation,
and all the blessings of this life;
but above all for your immeasurable love
in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ;
for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.
And, we pray, give us such an awareness of your mercies,
that with truly thankful hearts we may show forth your praise,
not only with our lips, but in our lives,
by giving up our selves to your service,
and by walking before you
in holiness and righteousness all our days;**

**through Jesus Christ our Lord,
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,
be honor and glory throughout all ages. Amen.**

You may wish to trace the sign of the cross on your body during the blessing.

Officiant May God make us strong in faith and love, defend us on every side, and guide us in truth and peace; and may the blessing of God, the One who creates, the One who befriends, the One who inspires, the Holy and Undivided Trinity, be among us and remain with us always. **Amen.**

The Dismissal

Officiant Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God!**