



Anglican Diocese of Wangaratta
Wangaratta West and The Warbys

The Sixth Sunday after Epiphany

16th February 2025

11.00 a.m. Ante Communion

GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

The Acclamation

Open our lips, O Lord,
and we shall declare your praise.

This is the day that the Lord has made,
we will rejoice and be glad in it.

The Sentence

Blessed are you when people hate you on account of the Son of man. Rejoice and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven.

Luke 6. 23

Opening Hymn: TiS 101. Tune, Omni Dei.

- 1. Come, you people, come adore him
God in Holy Trinity,
God the Father, Son and Spirit,
ever blessed unity.**
- 2. All your glory, God almighty,
to the Son and Spirit given,
ere upon the world's creation
dawned the newborn light of heaven:**
- 3. holy, holy, we adore you
one in power, in nature one;
God the Father, God the Spirit,
God the co-eternal Son.**
- 4. By your Son the wide creation
rose where chaos held its sway;
by the Spirit, God Almighty
swept eternal night away.**

**5. Son, the Father's love revealing,
Son, through whom the Spirit came,
blessed Godhead, endless glory
be to your exalted name!**

Hymn from the Russian Church
tr. John Brownlie 1859–1925 alt.

The 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.**

The Two Great Commandments

‘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.’

Kyrie eleison is said or sung

Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**
Christ, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**
Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

God is steadfast in love and infinite in mercy, welcoming sinners and inviting them to the Lord's table.

Silence may be kept.

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.**

The minister stands and declares God's forgiveness

God desires that none should perish,
but that all should turn to Christ, and live.
In response to his call we acknowledge our sins.
God pardons those who humbly repent, and truly
believe the gospel.
Therefore we have peace with God, through Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

The minister may read this sentence of Scripture

Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present,
nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth,
nor anything in all creation,
will be able to separate us from the love of God
in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8.38–39

All stand. The minister says

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.
His steadfast love endures for ever!

The minister greets the people, who may greet one another.

Grace and peace be with you
and also with you.

The Hymn of Praise, Gloria in excelsis (said or sung)

**Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to God's people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.**

**For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

The Collect

Let us pray

Righteous God,
you challenge the powers that rule this world
and you show favour to the oppressed:
instil in us a true sense of justice,
that we may discern the signs of your kingdom
and strive for right to prevail;
for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

A reading from the prophecy of Jeremiah [17.5-10]

Thus says the Lord:

Cursed are those who trust in mere mortals
and make mere flesh their strength,
whose hearts turn away from the Lord.
They shall be like a shrub in the desert,
and shall not see when relief comes.

They shall live in the parched places of the wilderness,
in an uninhabited salt land.

Blessed are those who trust in the Lord,
whose trust is the Lord.

They shall be like a tree planted by water,
sending out its roots by the stream.
It shall not fear when heat comes,
and its leaves shall stay green;
in the year of drought it is not anxious,
and it does not cease to bear fruit.

The heart is devious above all else;
it is perverse—
who can understand it?

I the Lord test the mind
and search the heart,
to give to all according to their ways,
according to the fruit of their doings.

Hear the Word of the Lord,
thanks be to God.

Psalm 1

**Blessed are they
who have not walked in the counsel of the ungodly:
nor followed the way of sinners,
nor taken their seat amongst the scornful.**

**But their delight is in the law of the Lord:
and on that law will they ponder day and night.**

**They are like trees planted beside streams of water:
that yield their fruit in due season.**

**Their leaves also shall not wither:
and look, whatever they do, it shall prosper.**

**As for the ungodly, it is not so with them:
they are like the chaff which the wind scatters.**

**Therefore the ungodly shall not stand up
at the judgement:
nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.**

**For the Lord cares for the way of the righteous:
but the way of the ungodly shall perish.**

A Reading from the First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians [15. 12-20]

If Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead? If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation has been in vain and your faith has been in vain. We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified of God that he raised Christ—whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised. If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have died in Christ have perished. If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied. But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died.

Hear the Word of the Lord,
thanks be to God.

Gradual Hymn: TiS 437. Tune, Liebster Jesu.

- 1. Blessed Jesus, at your word
we are gathered all to hear you;
let our hearts and minds be stirred
now to seek and love and fear you;
by your gospel pure and holy
teach us, Lord, to love you solely.**
- 2. All our knowledge, sense and sight
lie in deepest darkness shrouded,
till your Spirit breaks our night
with your beams of truth unclouded;
you alone to God can win us,
only you work good within us.**
- 3. Glorious Lord, yourself impart,
light of light from God proceeding;
open lips and ears and heart,
help us by your Spirit's leading;
hear the cry your church now raises;
Lord, accept our prayers and praises.**

Tobias Clausnitzer 1619–84
tr. Catherine Winkworth 1827–78 alt.

The Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ According to Luke [6. 17-26]
Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ

He came down with them and stood on a level place, with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea, Jerusalem, and the coast of Tyre and Sidon. They had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases; and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. And all in the crowd were trying to touch him, for power came out from him and healed all of them.

Then he looked up at his disciples and said:

‘Blessed are you who are poor,
for yours is the kingdom of God.

‘Blessed are you who are hungry now,
for you will be filled.

‘Blessed are you who weep now,
for you will laugh.

‘Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice on that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets.

'But woe to you who are rich,
for you have received your consolation.

'Woe to you who are full now,
for you will be hungry.

'Woe to you who are laughing now,
for you will mourn and weep.

'Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is what their ancestors did to the false prophets.

For the Gospel of the Lord,
praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Affirmation of Faith

Let us declare our faith in God.

**We believe in God the Father,
from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son,
who lives in our hearts through faith,
and fills us with his love.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens us with power from on high.**

**We believe in one God;
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**

cf Ephesians 3

A time of reflection may follow

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

The priest says

Let us pray for the world and for the Church.

We pray for the peace of the world. Give wisdom to those who have responsibility and authority in every land, that we may work together in trust.

Disturb our minds and turn our hearts to you, that we may hear the cries of the dispossessed and learn to share our abundance.

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

We pray for Australia. We give thanks for this land and the diversity of its peoples. Grant that we may so honour one another that all may be enriched by our common heritage.

Disturb our minds and turn our hearts to you, that we may create a society where all are recognised and valued and our diversity is celebrated.

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

We pray for the welfare of your holy Church, for Bishop Clarence and Michelle, and for all clergy and people. Today we pray for the Diocese of Newcastle, for Bishop Peter Stuart (*Nicki*).

Assistant Bishops Sonia Roulston, Charlie Murry (*Melissa*)

Clergy and people. Society of .St Francis, Stroud.

In our Diocese we pray for the Parochial District of Numurkah/ Nathalia. Locum Gunnar Rippon (*Margaret*). The Parish leaders and communities at St George's Numurkah, Holy Trinity, Nathalia.

We pray for our parishes that the Co-operating Ministry between the Cathedral and Wangaratta West and the Warbys Parishes may be guided by the Holy Spirit.

Disturb our minds and turn our hearts to you, that we may be a community of faith which proclaims your reign of justice and peace.

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

We pray for those in need.

We give thanks that you are the God who brings mercy and wholeness. Comfort and heal, we pray, all who are in sorrow, need, sickness or any other trouble. We bring before you those who have asked for our prayers. Sharon W. Warren Gould. Mark Heaton. Gwen Benstead. Shirley Cameron. Bp Garry Weatherill. Josef. Wayne. Michael E. Kaye McKenzie.

Give to those who care for them wisdom, patience and gentleness.

Disturb our minds and turn our hearts to you, that we may bring comfort, compassion and care to the needy.

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

We give you thanks for your servants in every age. When we ignore the challenge of your teaching, disturb our minds and turn our hearts to you, that with Christ and all the saints we may be raised to everlasting life. We remember Ernest Hughes whose Years' mind occurs at this time.

**Rest eternal grant unto them O Lord,
And may light perpetual shine upon them.**

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.**

Offertory Hymn—TiS 254. Tune, St Botolph.

- 1. O changeless Christ, for ever new,
who walked our earthly ways,
still draw our hearts as once you drew
the hearts of other days.**
- 2. As once you spoke by plain and hill
or taught by shore and sea,
so be today our teacher still,
O Christ of Galilee.**
- 3. As wind and storm their master heard
and his command fulfilled,
may troubled hearts receive your word,
the tempest-tossed be stilled.**
- 4. And as of old to all who prayed
your healing hand was shown,
so be your touch upon us laid,
unseen but not unknown.**
- 5. In broken bread, in wine outpoured,
your new and living way
proclaim to us, O risen Lord,
O Christ of this our day.**

**6. O changeless Christ, till life is past
your blessing still be given;
then bring us home, to taste at last
the timeless joys of heaven.**

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Offertory prayer

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation.
Through your goodness we have these gifts to share.
Accept and use our offerings for your glory
and for the service of your kingdom.

Blessed be God for ever.

THE SENDING OUT OF GOD'S PEOPLE

Notices

the following, or a similar prayer, is said,

Eternal God and Father,
**by whose power we are created,
and by whose love we are redeemed:
Guide and strengthen us by your Spirit,
that we may give ourselves to your service,
and live this day in love to one another
and to you;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Hymn: TiS 732. Tune, Sing Alleluia.

- 1. Lift up your hearts unto the Lord,
lift up your hearts unto the Lord.
Sing alleluia, sing alleluia;
lift up your hearts unto the Lord!**
- 2. In Christ the world has been redeemed,
in Christ the world has been redeemed.
Sing alleluia, sing alleluia;
in Christ the world has been redeemed!**
- 3. His resurrection sets us free,
his resurrection sets us free.
Sing alleluia, sing alleluia;
his resurrection sets us free.**

4. **Therefore we celebrate the feast,
therefore we celebrate the feast.
Sing alleluia, sing alleluia;
therefore we celebrate the feast.**
5. **Sing alleluia to the Lord,
sing alleluia to the Lord.
Sing alleluia, sing alleluia;
sing alleluia to the Lord!**

Linda Stassen-Benjamin 1951.

The minister says

May the Lord bless us and keep us;
May the Lord make his face to shine upon us,
and be gracious to us.
May the Lord lift up his countenance upon us,
and give us peace. **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord:
In the name of Christ. Amen

Blessings and woes: the upside-down world of the gospel, addressing, as Jeremiah had done, the heart's self-deceptions, and allowing YHWH to test the mind and search the heart.

The woes read like a list of contemporary media-starring role models. The rich: well, obviously. Those who are filled: if not rich, at least their next meal is assured, probably larger than they actually need. Those who laugh: the careless amusement of those for whom the world is not really a tragedy, merely a joke. Those praised by all: the day I write these words, another Honours List is published, giving welcome recognition to some unsung heroes and heroines, but mostly adding one more trophy to already glittering names.

Woe to them! They are probably false prophets, and will receive their reward. Jesus sounds, not for the last time, like Jeremiah himself. His agenda is designed to shock; nothing less will jolt devious hearts into thinking straight about what really matters. The blessings, equally startling, tell us, again in Jeremiah's language, how to find the stream beside which our roots will stay watered, our leaves green, and our fruit fresh. The poor; those who mourn and weep; those who are hated, reviled, and cast out because of the Son of Man. Blessings on them! We hear the words, but most of us find that our devious heart refuses to take them seriously.

Jesus' teaching did not come out of the blue. He did not simply arrive in a town and start talking. He arrived with a previous reputation as a healer; it is historically probable that crowds gathered because of his healings, and stayed to listen to his strange oracles. This teaching was designed not simply to give generalized advice, however extraordinary, about the nature of life in God's kingdom, but to explain the secret of Jesus' power.

A church that deceives itself on such basic matters is likely also to deceive itself when it comes to the resurrection. Paul speaks of the rich/poor divide earlier in the letter. We cannot be sure that it was the rich who doubted the resurrection and the poor who believed it, though some such correlation seems at least plausible. That is how self-deceit often works.

The belief in question—not a general belief in immortality or 'survival', but the specific belief that God will give to all Christ's people a new bodily life corresponding to the transformed body of Jesus' resurrection—puts all present wealth, power and posturing into a totally different light. What passes for contemporary thought about ethics often only asks what it may be allowed to get away with: how far it can go. More self-deception. A genuinely Christian ethic would ask: granted that God is going to create a new world, and give us a newly embodied life, in the future, what sort of life is appropriate in the present? Suddenly Jesus' blessings and woes look remarkably appropriate. Easter un masks the heart's greatest deceptions.