

# The Order of Service for Home Worship

## THE THIRD SUNDAY after TRINITY



Hymn: Faithful Shepherd, feed me

- 1 Faithful Shepherd, feed me  
in the pastures green;  
faithful Shepherd, lead me  
where thy steps are seen.
- 2 Hold me fast, and guide me  
in the narrow way;  
so, with thee beside me,  
I shall never stray.
- 3 Daily bring me nearer  
to the heav'nly shore;  
may my faith grow clearer,  
may I love thee more.
- 4 Hallow ev'ry pleasure,  
ev'ry gift and pain;  
be thyself my treasure,  
though none else I gain.
- 5 Day by day prepare me  
as thou seest best,  
then let angels bear me  
to thy promised rest.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**  
Grace and peace be with you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Father of glory, holy and eternal, look upon us now in power and mercy. May your strength overcome our weakness, your radiance transform our blindness, and your Spirit draw us to that love shown and offered to us by your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

As we come into the presence of our heavenly Father let us seek his forgiveness of our sins that we may know his peace is our hearts.

Lord Jesus, you have shown us the way to the Father. **Lord, have mercy.**  
Lord Jesus, you have given us knowledge of your truth. **Christ, have mercy.**  
Lord Jesus, you are the Good Shepherd leading us to life. **Lord, have mercy.**

May almighty God have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

**Alleluia, alleluia, glory be to God on high;  
Alleluia, to the Saviour who has gained the victory;  
Alleluia to the Spirit, fount of love and sanctity;  
Alleluia, Alleluia, to the Triune Majesty.**

**Collect of the Day:** Almighty God, you have broken the tyranny of sin and have sent the Spirit of your Son into our hearts whereby we call you Father: give us grace to dedicate our freedom to your service, that we and all creation may be brought to the glorious liberty of the children of God; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

**A reading from the Book of Ezekiel**

**17. 22-24**

Thus says the Lord GOD: I myself will take a sprig from the lofty top of a cedar; I will set it out. I will break off a tender one from the topmost of its young twigs; I myself will plant it on a high and lofty mountain. On the mountain height of Israel I will plant it, in order that it may produce boughs and bear fruit, and become a noble cedar. Under it every kind of bird will live; in the shade of its branches will nest winged creatures of every kind. All the trees of the field shall know that I am the LORD. I bring low the

high tree, I make high the low tree; I dry up the green tree and make the dry tree flourish. I the LORD have spoken; I will accomplish it.  
This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

### **Psalm 92. 1-8**

**Response: How great are your works O Lord.**

It is good to give thanks to the Lord,  
to sing praise to your name, O Most High  
to declare your steadfast love  
in the morning, and your  
faithfulness by night,  
to the music of the lute and the harp,  
to the melody of the lyre. **(R)**

For you, O Lord,  
have made me glad by your work;  
at the works of your hand I sing for joy.  
How great are your works, O Lord!  
Your thoughts are very deep! **(R)**

The dullard cannot know,  
the stupid cannot understand this:  
though the wicked sprout like grass  
and all evil doers flourish,  
they are doomed to destruction for ever,  
but you, O Lord, are on high for ever. **(R)**

**A reading from Paul's second letter to the Corinthians. 5. 6-10, [11-13,] 14-17**

So we are always confident; even though we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord - for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yes, we do have confidence, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. For all of us must appear before the judgement seat of Christ, so that each may receive recompense for what has been done in the body, whether good or evil. Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we try to persuade others; but we ourselves are well

known to God, and I hope that we are also well known to your consciences. We are not commending ourselves to you again, but giving you an opportunity to boast about us, so that you may be able to answer those who boast in outward appearance and not in the heart. For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. For the love of Christ urges us on, because we are convinced that one has died for all; therefore all have died. And he died for all, so that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised for them. From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God**

**The Gospel Acclamation:**

**Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it;

**Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

**Listen to the Gospel of Christ according to Saint Mark**

4. 26-34

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

He also said, 'The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground, and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how. The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. But when the grain is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle, because the harvest has come.' He also said, 'With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.' With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it; he did not speak to them except in parables, but he explained everything in private to his disciples.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Meditation:**

In today's Gospel, Jesus recommends that we look carefully at the small things of life. For Jesus, paying attention to small things is not a way to keep a grip of our money or material goods rather it is because in the little things we can see God's kingdom.

Small may not always be beautiful but it has been said that small is frequently either impressive or effective. If we look at the New Testament and think of St Paul, his name in Greek is Paulos, which means "small." If St Paul was small, the effectiveness of both his preaching and writing was enormous and as we know it largely accounts, in the beginning for the spread of the Gospel throughout the Roman Empire. We learn that the parable of the growing seed is found only in Mark and can be interpreted in the following way- the kingdom is like seed scattered on the ground which is tiny to start with and appears to do nothing at first. Eventually, if the farmer is patient, the seed grows into an abundant harvest or it may be that the kingdom is like an acorn which is hidden in the ground but given both time and patience, it grows into a huge oak tree. The second parable we heard was the parable of the Mustard Seed which pictures the growth of the kingdom from a beginning as small as a mustard seed to a tree or bush big enough for the birds to roost in. In other words, no one can judge by the initial size of anything, least of all the kingdom, how it will ultimately turn out at the final harvest. Just as the physical size of a person does not bear any relation to that person's quality or influence on the world, so the kingdom of God is not dependant on such things. As today's gospel comes to a close, we are introduced to an important principle in teaching. Jesus taught the people as they were able to hear it. He built upon their previous knowledge, giving time for them to understand one lesson before giving the next. Even though Jesus spoke to the crowds who came to hear him only in parables, he was careful to explain their meaning to his disciples when they were alone. In the parables and all that we learn, teaching and explanation have always been vital if we are to comprehend their full meaning. For many, these are familiar parables, perhaps so familiar that we forget the shock with which they may have been greeted by Jesus first listeners. During Jesus time, the king was Caesar, the Roman emperor, ruling from distant Rome through his governors. Caesar, was in their eyes, the equivalent of a god and at sometimes was even worshipped as a god and it is thought he lived in amazing palaces. This allowed the people of Jesus day to believe a kingdom was big, grand and powerful. The people probably wondered – if this is true of an earthly kingdom, how true would it be for the kingdom of God? When compared with the kingdom on earth, Jesus parables of the kingdom came as something of a surprise. The kingdom about which Jesus speaks of is quieter and smaller. It lies dormant in the ground waiting to produce a tiny sprout and it hides in all of us as we go about our everyday business. God's reign is present everywhere, hidden, tiny and ordinary. If we want to find it, we have to look very closely and very carefully at little things. Today we live in a world where size and success are important, we only need to think of businesses who have targets for growth and much of our world is ruled by huge multinational conglomerates. Amongst

this, Jesus encourages us to look for God at work in the little things such as the small acts of love and generosity that grow into warmth and community, the everyday kindness of people helping others. To see in these little things signs of God's reign takes commitment and patience. But it matters that we do. It is the task of all his people to look for the signs and to nurture them, until the whole world sees God's glory and God's love.

#### **Intercessions:**

In the power of the Holy Spirit and in union with Christ let us bring our prayers for the Church and for the world to our heavenly Father.

We pray for the Church throughout the world, for the leaders of the Church among them Mary our Bishop. We pray for the clergy and people of our diocese and for our own ministry area; may your Church be a beacon of light and hope to the world.

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

We pray for the people of the world, for the victims of violence and oppression among them the people of the Ukraine, Israel and Gaza, for all suffering the effects of natural disaster and for those suffering from famine or drought; May there be peace where there is conflict and reconciliation where there is division.

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

We pray for our own community, for our families, friends and neighbours. We give thanks for all who serve the needs of the vulnerable; may we live as faithful disciples bringing hope to those in need around us.

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

We pray for all who are in need, for those who are sick, for those who are bereaved, for the lonely and isolated and for all in any kind of need. We hold in our hearts before God those known to us who are in need at this time and all whose names are recorded in our intercession books; relieve them according to their need, strengthen them with your Holy Spirit and console them with the love of Christ.

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

We pray for all who have died. We remember before God our own departed loved ones and we pray for the recently departed and those whose anniversary of death falls at this time; welcome them and all the departed into the eternal joy and peace of your heavenly kingdom.

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

We bring all our prayers to our heavenly Father as we pray together:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name,  
thy Kingdom come, thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the Kingdom,  
The power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

**The Peace:**

The risen Christ came and stood among his disciples and said, "Peace be with you!" They were overjoyed on seeing the Lord. The peace of the Lord be with you and with all those whom you love.

**And also with you.**

Let us pray:

**Lord God our Father, through our Saviour Jesus Christ you have assured your children of eternal life and in baptism have made us one with him: deliver us from the death of sin and raise us to new life in your love, in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.**

**The Blessing:**

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

The peace of God which is beyond all understanding guard your hearts in the knowledge and love of God and of his Son Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

**In the name of Christ. Amen.**

**Hymn: Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us**

- 1 **Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us  
o'er the world's tempestuous sea;  
guard us, guide us, keep us, feed us,  
for we have no help but thee;  
yet possessing every blessing,  
if our God our Father be.**
- 2 **Saviour, breathe forgiveness o'er us:  
all our weakness thou dost know;  
thou didst tread this earth before us,  
thou didst feel its keenest woe;  
lone and dreary, faint and weary,  
through the desert thou didst go.**
- 3 **Spirit of our God, descending,  
fill our hearts with heavenly joy,  
love with every passion blending,  
pleasure that can never cloy:  
thus provided, pardoned, guided,  
nothing can our peace destroy.**