

**OPENING PRAYERS AND HOLY COMMUNION ARE AVAILABLE AS A VIDEO ON OUR ONLINE SUNDAY SERVICES PAGE HERE OR ON OUR YOUTUBE PAGE HERE**

**PART 1 – OPENING PRAYERS**

**GREETING**

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.  
His steadfast love endures for ever!  
Grace and peace be with you  
and also with you.

**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.

**CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION**

My brothers and sisters, believing God is faithful to forgive, let us rid ourselves of what we need to carry no longer.

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.

Almighty God,  
who has promised forgiveness to all who turn to him in faith:  
pardon you and set you free from all your sins,  
strengthen you in all goodness  
and keep you in eternal life,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

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.

**PLEASE PAUSE THE VIDEO – PRESS THE SPACEBAR TO PAUSE**

**PART 2** — AN ALL AGE VIDEO *CHRIST THE KING* — *A crown, a palm, a donkey, a bowl, a towel...* AND DOWNLOADABLE MATERIAL FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN [HERE](#)

**PART 3** — LOOK UP AND READ THROUGH THE READINGS, LISTEN TO THE [SERMON PODCAST](#) (READ ALONG IF YOU WISH) BY REV JENNIE SAVAGE, AND PRAY THE INTERCESSIONS, TODAY BY SAM WHITE.

READINGS (NRSV preferred)

Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24

Psalm 100

Matthew 25:31-46

**SERMON BY REV JENNIE SAVAGE**

**Available to listen online and/or download – access via Pentecost 2020 link and notice also a reasonable library of past sermons for you to listen to as you exercise or meditate...**

Matthew 25:31-46

*Let us pray,  
In the name of the Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier. Amen.*

A Sunday School teacher was talking about the parable of the sheep and the goats.  
“If all the bad people in the world were painted green and all the good people painted red,” she said, “what color would you be?”  
A small hand went up. “Striped,” came the response.  
Out of the mouth of babes ...

I came across this sermon title which was: *"How Jesus Gets Your Goat!"*  
Quite a good title I thought.  
I like to think of myself as a good sheep, and then find myself acting as a goat.  
Is this about identity crisis?  
Is there a dividing line upon which I might fall on the wrong side?

The theme of separation threads throughout Matthew's gospel.  
Fish are sorted out.  
Weeds and wheat are divided.  
Now there's sheep and goats.

And in all of these illustrations, the separation has not been able to happen until a certain time.  
With the sheep and goats, it is when the Son of Man comes in his glory.  
For the weeds and wheat, it is harvest time.  
The fish caught in the net have to be drawn ashore before they can be sorted.

There's much waiting, requiring much patience in all this.  
I could see myself on the boat wanting to sort the fish and throw bad ones back in the sea, at least on the trip back so that I could save some time, and when I get home throw some shrimps on the “barby” and the rest of the fish in the freezer!  
Or I'd walk around the garden or field and think, how dare those weeds grow between my petunias!  
Out with you!

Perhaps God is not in so much of a hurry to denounce a goat, or a sheep that acts like a bit of a goat.  
And there may be some goats who have aspirations to be more sheep like.  
There's that movie about the pig, Babe, who is really keen to be a sheep-pig to the annoyance of the farm dogs.

If I'm sounding confused, that's the point!  
Did you notice that all the people, all those sheep and all those goats were surprised and confused by what the Son of Man who at one moment is a shepherd, and then a king said to them?  
Both the sheep on the right and the goats on the left said, ‘Lord, when did we *see you?*’

It suggests to me that we don't really know how to ensure what side we fall on.  
We cannot stack the cards, or accumulate the brownie points to book our seat in heaven.  
For it seems that we will not have any advantage in knowing where or *in whom* Christ comes to us.

It seems from this parable, that we are more likely to get caught out, or caught unawares of what we have done, or not done.

I was intrigued to read Jim Taylor's reflection upon the words of Jesus:

**"As you did it to one of the least of these..."** Taylor wrote:

'Is "one of the least" limited to human beings?

How far down the plant/animal chain are your people willing to take their concern:

to polar bears? dolphins? groundhogs? mice? spiders? cockroaches? bacteria? goats?

Some other religions take this much more seriously than Christianity (with the exception of the Franciscans).

Jains carry a whisk broom to sweep aside bugs that they might otherwise step on.

By contrast, many Christians tend not to trust one another.

One time, said Taylor, I played a seedy-looking Fagin in a chancel drama.

As I awaited my grand entry in the narthex, not just one but two ushers came out to check up on me. They didn't trust someone who looked like "one of the least..."

Do we?

Well that's not a comfortable question because there's always some person or type of person that we would readily say is not deserving of any pity, or help, or even forgiveness.

Yet it is those sorts of people whom the Son of Man precisely sought out.

It also occurs to me that the very least are standing among the crowd before the throne as well.

It is all the nations with all their people from the most important to the very least.

Are they sheep or goats?

You've probably realised by now that I'm not overly into black and white, that I have more questions than I do answers.

For me, sheep and goats are the two realities which coexist in every person, that we all have realized goodness and past failures.

Bishop Tom Wright states, 'the dividing line between good and evil runs through the middle of each one of us.'

And I believe it is our life's work to discern the sheep like and the goat like behaviors, in one's own self, one from the other.

Perhaps we can even be good goats!

It is our life's work to learn how to love God

which is done by loving and serving the least of our neighbours.

How interesting that loving God and following Jesus may come down to this.

Well it is tempting to sign off now in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Goats!

But this new version of the Serenity Prayer I came across I think is better:

***God grant me the serenity to accept the people I cannot change,  
the courage to change the one I can,  
and the wisdom to know it's me.***

***Amen.***

(Lana Fong, Curtis, Nebraska)

## **INTERCESSIONS BY SAM WHITE**

Almighty God, your Son Jesus Christ, the King, has promised that you will hear us when we ask in faith: receive the prayers we offer.

We give thanks for our communities and the signs of hope and resilience we see around us and in the wider world.

We pray for all people around the world, particularly those communities still ravaged by war, famine, pandemic and political instability. Lord, as we realize how small our world is and how closely connected we all are, we pray that humanity might come together and find new ways to be community.

We pray especially where there is suffering, danger and persecution that people may turn to you and deepen their faith in you.

We pray for the Anglican Church of Australia; the Diocese of Melbourne, Philip our archbishop and Paul our regional bishop; this parish, Jennie and all those in positions of leadership who are having to make decisions and bring people back together.

Strengthen your people for their witness and work in the world. Fill your ministers with your Spirit, that they may live your gospel truths and preach your word to others either in person or via other means. Unite in the truth all who confess your name, that we may live together in love and proclaim your glory in all the world.

We pray for all who have responsibility, all men and women in their daily work. Give wisdom to those in authority in every land, and give to all peoples a desire for righteousness and peace, with the will to work together in trust, to seek the common good and to share with justice the resources of the earth,

Lord we remember. now of all who have gone before us and especially those whose anniversary falls at this time. Lord, give deep peace to those who have experienced loss, that they might rest in you and know that death is not the end, just the start of a new chapter.

We give thanks for one another; our local community; those caring for people in need; those trying to provide goods or services to others during these trying times. We commend to your keeping, Father, ourselves and each other, our families, our neighbours, and our friends. Enable us by your Spirit to live in love for you and for one another.

Loving God, you have taught us that the power of the heart is greater than the power of wealth and might. Hear us as we pray for the fulfilment of your reign. We ask this through Jesus Christ our King;  
to him be glory and power for ever. Amen.

Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ 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.

**GREETING OF PEACE**

We are the body of Christ.  
His Spirit is with us.  
The peace of the Lord be always with you.  
And also with you.

**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.

**OPENING (GREAT THANKSGIVING)**

The Lord be with you.  
And also with you.  
Lift up your hearts.  
We lift them to the Lord.  
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

**COMMUNION**

You are worthy, our Lord and God,  
to receive glory and honour and power,  
for you created all things,  
making us in your own image.

We praise you for your Son,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ,  
who by his death on the cross  
and rising to new life  
offered the one true sacrifice for sin  
and obtained an eternal deliverance for his people.

Therefore, we lift our voices to praise you, saying,

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

And now we thank you for these gifts of bread and wine; may we who receive them, as Jesus said,  
share his body and his blood.

On the night he was betrayed, he took bread  
and gave you thanks. He broke the bread and gave it to his friends, and said,  
'Take and eat. This is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'

After supper he took the cup and gave you thanks. He shared the cup with them and said,  
'This is my blood poured out so that sins may be forgiven. Do this in remembrance of me.'

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

**You have gathered us together to feed on Christ  
and to remember all he has done for us:  
Fill us with your Spirit that we may follow Jesus in all we do and say, working for justice and  
bringing your peace to this world that you have made.  
Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Blessing and honour and glory and power,  
are yours forever and ever. Amen**

**THE BREAKING AND SHARING OF THE BREAD AND WINE.  
As this broken bread was once many grains,  
which have been gathered together and made one bread:  
so may your Church be gathered from the ends of the earth into your kingdom.**

**THE COMMUNION**

**POST COMMUNION PRAYER**

***Let us pray together:***

**We thank you, Lord,  
that you have fed us in this sacrament,  
united us with Christ,  
and given us a foretaste of the heavenly banquet  
prepared for all peoples.  
Amen.**

**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.**

**DISMISSAL**

**We go in peace to love and serve the Lord,  
In the name of Christ. Amen.**

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