



Order of Service
29th May 2022

Introit: 72 (TiS) 'From all who dwell below the skies'

Acknowledgement:

Call to Worship:

The heavens proclaim his righteousness;
and all the peoples behold his glory.

All the worshippers of images are put to shame,
those who make their boast in worthless idols;
all gods bow down before him.

Zion hears and is glad,
and the towns of Judah rejoice,
because of your judgements, O God.

For you, O Lord, are most high over all the earth:
you are exalted far above all gods. (Psalm 97: 6-9)

Let us worship God!

Hymn: 132 (TiS) 'Holy, holy, holy! Lord God almighty'

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Confession:

Most blessed, most holy God, before the brightness of your presence the angels and archangels veil their faces.
Most blessed, most holy God, in silent reverence and with adoring love we behold your infinite glory.
We worship you, eternal Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
Blessing, and glory, and honour, and power are yours for ever and ever.

Merciful God, we have sinned in what we have thought and said, in the wrong we have done, and the good we have not done.

We have sinned in ignorance; we have sinned in weakness; we have sinned through our own deliberate fault.

We repent and turn to you.

Forgive us, we pray.

Free us for joyful obedience;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (UiW1)

Declaration of Forgiveness:

Doxology: 772 (TiS) 'Worship, honour, glory, blessing'

Time with the children: 'Bob the bird' – ppt/The Lost Sheep

Readings: Acts 16: 16-34, John 17: 20-26

Hymn: 147 (TiS) 'To God be the glory'



Sermon Brief:

- Today we celebrate the ascension of our resurrected Lord. Today, also we begin our week of prayer for Christian unity.
- The gospel reading for today, as we heard from John's gospel provides us with a part of the longest prayer Jesus ever offered in the gospels.
- Commentators seem to be divided about this prayer. There are those who believe that this is the Lord's prayer (John 17) and the so-called Lord's prayer in Mathew 6 and Luke 11 is a prayer that Jesus taught his disciples to use when they pray.
- I believe that they are both the Lord's prayer – taught (Mathew 6 & Luke 7) and prayed (John 17)
- It was on the night when Jesus was about to be betrayed by Judas. Jesus gathers with his disciples in the Upper Room and in their presence prays with them unto the Father.
- The first three verses of this prayer set the background from which the prayer is uttered, a background of danger and death.
 - The prayer is divided into three parts:
 - (i) Jesus prays for himself – that his Father would glorify him (vv. 1-5)
 - (ii) Jesus prays for his disciples. Knowing that he was to leave them, he prayed for protection and sanctification (vv. 6-19)
 - (iii) Jesus prays for us – “My prayer is not for them (disciples) alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message.”
 - The content of the prayer, especially in verse 20-26 is also three-fold:
 - (i) That we be one
 - (ii) To the glory of God
 - (iii) That are made perfect in that unity.
 - “That the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them as you have loved me”.
 - “That they may be where I am... that they may behold my glory which you have given me.”
 - “For you loved me before the foundation of the earth.”
 - When we hear Jesus wants his followers to be with him where he is so that they may behold the glory that the Father had given, we tend to picture golden thrones situated on lofty clouds in the heavens above. But considering that Jesus was within minutes of being arrested, tried, and crucified, is it not likely that the “where” of Jesus’ glory would very shortly be the cross itself? Is it not likely that Jesus is praying that his followers will not abandon him but will stay with him even at Golgotha to see the true measure of divine glory in reaching out to and saving a very fallen world?
 - It reminds us today that the church gains its unity with Christ and the Father not when it garners media attention and not when programming ministries become global in scope and not when it has to build bigger sanctuaries to accommodate hundreds or thousands who throng into popular megachurches.
 - No, glory shines through when the church is humble, doing quiet things to serve the poor and preach good news to the downtrodden.
 - The glory that the Father gave to the Son and that the Son gives to the church is not the glory of lights and media sizzle.
 - It's the glory of the Word of God becoming meat, being made flesh, dwelling here in the mud and muck of this world.
 - It's the glory of the One who came to serve and not to be served. It's the glory of the One who was, as Jesus said to Nicodemus in John 3, lifted up off the earth not on some high throne but on a cross of wood.
 - This is the glory the Father gave to the Son. That is the glory we display in the church.

Hymn: 349 (TiS) 'In the cross of Christ I glory'

Notices:

Joys and Concerns:

Offering:

O Christ, the one who always see the needs of the people, we pray that we will know how best to use these, our offerings, in your name. **Amen.**

Prayers of the People:

God of love and mercy, you know our thoughts before we speak them, and our hearts before we open them. This gives us confidence to pray to you may fill us with compassion and the desire to follow your way.

Loving God hear our prayer.

We pray for a world that is groaning with pain.

(silence to consider the pain in the world)

We pray for the sufferings of this present time.

(silence to consider all who suffer at this time)

Give us an eagerness, compassionate God, to reveal your glory in the midst of every circumstance;

bringing hope where there is none and light where darkness prevails.

Give us the courage to hope for what we cannot see:

renewal where there is destruction, reconciliation where there is enmity and restoration where there is brokenness.

Help us to follow you Jesus Christ in the way that glorifies God and hasten the time where all people may sit at the same table in peace, to share from the same abundance of your creation, and loving as you have loved.

Teach us, show us, and lead us in your way. Amen.

Hymn: 380 (TiS) 'Yours be the glory'

Blessing: 778 (TiS) 'Shalom to you now'

