

The Parish Church of St Matthew
Northampton

The Twelfth Sunday after Trinity

Proper 18 Year C



The cost and rewards of following Jesus

All-age Mass for the Parish Family
with Welcome of the Recently Baptized

Sunday 7 September 2025

10.15 am

Welcome to St Matthew's Parish Church



Safeguarding St Matthew's is committed to providing a safe environment for all who come. If you have any concerns, please speak with one of our welcomers or a churchwarden who may be identified by their lanyard. They will be happy to help you.

Live streaming Please note that this service is being streamed. You may sit where you wish. If, however, you prefer not to be seen online, please sit in a side aisle. The administration of Holy Communion will not be shown.

GDPR Some of St Matthew's services (most Sunday mornings and some special services) are live-streamed or recorded for those who cannot attend church in person. Under GDPR, the church must gain the consent of anyone whose image may be captured, as this constitutes collection of "personal data". This includes clergy, readers/intercessors, musicians and congregation. Whilst every attempt is made not to capture the faces of members of the congregation, this may occasionally happen if people turn around or move around the church during the service. The exception is communion, when the congregation is not filmed. The side aisles and back of the nave are so far as possible film-free areas not covered by the camera. Any-one whose personal data is collected must give their consent. Consent forms are available both in church and on the website. The full policy can be read on our parish website or on the noticeboards in church.

Toilet and baby changing facilities may be found at the base of the church tower. There is also a small servery.

For younger children In the north aisle (nearest to Collingwood Road), a carpeted area equipped with age-related Christian resources is provided for those not yet able to participate in the service.



Collection - 'Building a Generous Church'



Our response to God's generosity

We believe in a generous God, who longs for us to share his generosity with others. A generous life is therefore a hallmark of our faith and a testament to it, as the more generous we are, the more we reflect the generous God we believe in. Generosity is, therefore, at the heart of our faith, and our own generosity is a sure sign of our faith in action. Generosity is a spiritual gift, and we need to encourage people to seek this gift as they grow in their faith. The ministry and mission of The Church of England is largely funded through the incredible generosity of those who give to it.

We invite you to make a monetary offering towards the ministry and mission of St Matthew's Church. You may do so using any of the following methods:

Cash, cheques, stewardship envelopes - using the receptacle provided at the back of church. If you are a taxpayer please use the envelopes in the chairs, and fill out the details in order that our parish may also benefit from the Gift Aid (an extra 25p for every pound given) associated with your giving.

Contactless giving - using the terminal provided. Just press the button for the amount you wish to give - £5, £10, or £20, and then hold your bank card over the reader.

Giving on your smart phone - using the QR code printed below. It gives you the option of any amount, Gift Aid, and making a regular payment.

Giving online - click the donate button on the parish website or Facebook page and follow the instructions.

Your generosity is gratefully received. Thank you.



Good morning and welcome

This morning's readings invite us to think about what it really means to follow Jesus - not just in words, but in the choices we make and the way we treat each other.

In our first reading from St Paul's letter to Philemon, we hear about Onesimus, a runaway slave whom Paul now calls his "own heart." Paul asks Philemon to welcome him back not as a servant, but as a beloved brother. It's a story about forgiveness, reconciliation, and seeing each other with new eyes because of Christ.

In the Gospel, Jesus speaks to the crowds about the cost of being his disciple. He uses strong words to remind us that following him isn't just about fitting faith into our lives - it's about letting him shape everything we do, even when it's hard.

For all of us, young and old, these readings are a challenge and an encouragement: Jesus calls us to put him first, to love each other as family, and to trust that living his way is worth everything. As we gather for this celebration, let's open our hearts to hear his voice and be ready to follow.

Prayers related to this morning's themes

God, you are strong and loving.

We are always in your hands.

You hold on to us even when we are in trouble
and you still love us.

You help us to begin again and to do new things.

Thank you, God. Amen.

Dearest Lord, teach me to be generous;
teach me to serve you as you deserve;
to give and not to count the cost,
to fight and not to heed the wounds,
to toil and not to seek any reward,
save that of knowing that I do your will.

St Ignatius Loyola 1491-1556

Order of Service

¶ Gathering to Worship God

S Stand at the sound of the bell

Call to Worship

Priest As a family of faith, we know we are in the hands of God
and that he can restore and renew us.
We all face difficulties, and following Jesus is expensive -
it costs everything, but it's worth it!

Hymn

All **CHRIST is the one who calls,
The one who loved and came,
To whom by right it falls
To bear the highest name:
 And still today
 Our hearts are stirred
 To hear his word
 And walk his way.**

**Christ is the one who seeks,
To whom our souls are known.
The word of love he speaks
Can wake a heart of stone;
 For at that sound
 The blind can see,
 The slave is free,
 The lost are found.**

Christ is the one who died
Forsaken and betrayed;
Who, mocked and crucified,
The price of pardon paid.
Our dying Lord,
What grief and loss,
What bitter cross,
Our souls restored!

Christ is the one who rose
In glory from the grave,
To share his life with those
Whom once he died to save.
He drew death's sting
And broke its chains,
Who lives and reigns,
Our risen King.

Christ is the one who sends,
His story to declare;
Who calls his servants friends
And gives them news to share.
His truth proclaim
In all the earth,
His matchless worth
And saving name.

Words Timothy Dudley-Smith 1926-2024

Music Love Unknown
John Nicholson Ireland 1879-1962

† In the name of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
All Amen.

The Greeting

Welcome in the name of Christ.
God's grace, mercy, and peace be with you
All **and also with you.**

The service is introduced

Saying Sorry to God

Lord God, you have taught us that love
is the fulfilment of the law,
but we have not obeyed its demands.
Let us ask the Lord's forgiveness for the way we allow
fear and selfishness to weaken our commitment to him.

We keep silence for reflection

Confession

Your law demands that we do not harm our neighbours
but love them as ourselves.
For damage done, through careless words and selfish actions:
All **We are sorry and seek your forgiveness.**
Lord, forgive and renew us.

Your law demands that we do not covet or steal anything
belonging to our neighbour.
For paying more attention to our own well-being
than to the needs and concerns of others:
All **We are sorry and seek you forgiveness.**
Lord, forgive and renew us.

Your law demands that we put aside the deed of darkness
and walk in your light.

For trying to disguise our sins
and pretend we can hide them from you and each other:

All **We are sorry and seek your forgiveness.
Lord, forgive and renew us.**

God's Forgiveness

Priest God, whose laws are trustworthy and perfect,
 have mercy on you,
 forgive † all your sins and bring you to newness of life,
 that you may no longer live to self
 but to the glory of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

All **Amen.**

Glory to God

All **Glory to God in the highest,
 and peace to his 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 Opening Prayer

Priest Let us pray:

God of constant mercy,
who sent your Son to save us:
remind us of your goodness,
increase your grace within us,
that our thankfulness may grow,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

S Sit

¶ Hearing and Responding to the Word of God

First Reading

Reader A reading from the Letter of Paul to Philemon.

I would rather appeal to you on the basis of love—and I, Paul, do this as an old man, and now also as a prisoner of Christ Jesus. I am appealing to you for my child, Onesimus, whose father I have become during my imprisonment. I am sending him, that is, my own heart, back to you. I wanted to keep him with me, so that he might be of service to me in your place during my imprisonment for the gospel; but I preferred to do nothing without your consent, in order that your good deed might be voluntary and not something forced. Perhaps this is the reason he was separated from

you for a while, so that you might have him back for ever, no longer as a slave but as more than a slave, a beloved brother—especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

So if you consider me your partner, welcome him as you would welcome me.

Philemon vs. 9-10 and 12-17

This is the word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

S Stand

Today's Gospel

Acclamation

1. Choir
2. Choir and Congregation

Fintan O'Carroll

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Choir I call you friends, says the Lord, because I have made known to you everything I have learnt from my Father.

All Alleluia ...

S We turn to face the Book of the Gospels

The Lord be with you
All and also with you.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

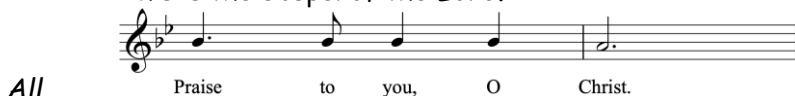
All Glo - ry to you, O Lord.

Large crowds were travelling with Jesus; and he turned and said to them, 'Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my

disciple. Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it will begin to ridicule him, saying, "This fellow began to build and was not able to finish." Or what king, going out to wage war against another king, will not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to oppose the one who comes against him with twenty thousand? If he cannot, then, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for the terms of peace. So therefore, none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions.

Luke 14.25-33

This is the Gospel of the Lord.



All

Hymn

§ *The choir come and sit in the Nave*

All

**SPIRIT of the living God, fall afresh on me;
 Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me;
 Break me, melt me, mould me, fill me;
 Spirit of the living God, fall afresh in me.**

*Words and music Daniel Iverson 1890-1977
 arranged by Peter Moger b. 1964*

Talk / Presentation

§ *Sit*

The themes of the day are briefly explored

We Believe

S Stand

Priest Let us declare our faith in God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

All 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. Amen.

Our Prayers to God

Priest Let us pray that we may become more committed disciples
of Christ.

S Kneel

Intercessor We come as a Church broken by divisions and factions and
seek your healing.
Sometimes we have broken faith with you and with each other.
We pray for all who strive to bring unity to the Church.
We ask your blessing upon churches that are struggling to
survive or are faced with violent opposition.

Silence

All Lord, we come to you:
only you can make us whole.

We ask that we may be used as instruments of peace.
We ask your blessing
upon all who seek to heal the troubles between nations
and peoples.
We pray for all agencies of reconciliation
and ask you blessing upon the work of the United Nations, the
aid and humanitarian organisations.

Silence

All Lord, we come to you:
only you can make us whole.

We give thanks for our homes and our loved ones.
We ask you to bless and protect them always.
We pray for families
that are suffering from broken relationships.
We pray for all those with broken hopes and broken dreams.

Silence

All Lord, we come to you:
only you can make us whole.

We give thanks that you are our strength and salvation.
We remember all who are broken by illness.
For the acutely ill ...
We pray for those struggling with a nervous breakdown
and all who feel their lives are on the edge of collapse.
We ask your blessing upon all who are no longer able
to care for themselves.

Silence

All Lord, we come to you:
only you can make us whole.

Lord, you make all things new
and you are the giver of life and life eternal.
We ask you to bless our loved ones departed from us,
that they may rejoice in the fullness of life.
For those who have died recently ...,
and those whose anniversary of death occurs this week ...
We commend them and ourselves to your unfailing love.

Silence

Lord, we come to you:
All **only you can make us whole.**

Priest Merciful Father,
All **accept these prayers for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.**

S Sit

¶ Preparing to meet Jesus in Bread and Wine

*S Zayla is brought forward by her parents, Constantia and Ryan,
and her godparents to the dais step*

Welcome of the newly Baptized

There is one Lord, one faith, on baptism:
Zayla Anne Claire,
by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body.
All **We welcome you into the fellowship of faith;
we are children of the same heavenly Father;
we welcome you.**

S The Certificate of Baptism is presented

Hymn

S Stand

- S A monetary collection is taken. Please give as you are able using any of the ways indicated at the front of this booklet. Your generosity is much appreciated. Thank you.*
- S After the censuring, the children are welcome to stand either side of the altar in order that they may better see.*

All

**BROTHER, sister, let me serve you.
Let me be as Christ to you;
Pray that I may have the grace
To let you be my servant too.**

**We are pilgrims on a journey,
And companions on the road;
We are here to help each other
Walk the mile and bear the load.**

**I will hold the Christ-light for you
In the night-time of your fear;
I will hold my hand out to you,
Speak the peace you long to hear.**

**I will weep when you are weeping;
When you laugh, I'll laugh with you;
I will share your joy and sorrow
Till we've seen this journey through.**

**When we sing to God in heaven,
We shall find such harmony,
Born of all we've known together
Of Christ's love and agony.**

**Brother, sister, let me serve you,
Let me be as Christ to you;
Pray that I may have the grace
To let you be my servant too.**

*Words and music Richard Gillard b. 1953
arranged by Betty Pulkingham b. 1926*

Offering the Gifts of Bread and Wine

O God, you give us the gift of true prayer and of peace.
Grant that this offering of bread and wine
may be worthy of your majesty
and, by sharing in the mystery of your body and blood,
we may be united with you in mind and heart.
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

Prayer over the Bread and Wine

All The Lord be with you
 and also with you.

All Lift up your hearts.
 We lift them to the Lord.

All Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
 It is right to give thanks and praise.

Children Why is it right to give thanks and praise?
Adults **Listen, and we will hear.**

Lord of all life,
you created the universe,
where all living things reflect your glory.

You give us this great and beautiful earth,
to discover and to cherish.

You give us sun and moon and star-lit sky,
everything that gives us light,
light for our eyes, our hearts, our minds.

You made us all, each wonderfully different,
to join with the angels and sing your praise:

All sing

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

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

We thank you, loving Father,
because, when we turned away,
you sent Jesus, your Son.
He gave his life for us on the cross
and shows us the way to live.

Send your Holy Spirit that these gifts of bread and wine
may be for us Christ's body and his blood.

*Children
All*

**Why do we share this bread and wine?
Listen, and we will hear.**

On the night before he died,
when darkness had fallen, Jesus took bread.
He gave thanks, broke it,
and shared it with his disciples, saying:
'This is my body, given for you.
Do this to remember me.'

After they had eaten, he took the cup of wine,
gave thanks, and shared it with his disciples, saying:
'This is my blood, poured out for you and for many,
for the forgiveness of sins.'

So Father, with this bread and this cup
we celebrate his love, his death, his risen life.
As you feed us with these gifts,
send your Holy Spirit,
and change us more and more to be like Jesus our Saviour.

Children How do we follow Jesus Christ?

Adults **Listen, and we will hear.**

Help us, Father, to love one another,
as we look forward to that day when suffering is ended,
and all creation is gathered in your loving arms.
And now with Mary and Matthew and all your saints
we give you glory,
through Jesus Christ,
in the strength of the Spirit,
today and for ever.

All **Amen.**

S If you are able, please remain standing

The Lord's Prayer

Let us pray with confidence in the words Jesus taught us:

All **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.

Sign of Christ's Peace

Grace to you and peace from God the Creator.
Goodness to you and peace from Christ the Redeemer.
Guidance to you and peace from the Holy Spirit of God.

All The peace of the Lord be always with you
and also with you.

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

S The children and their leaders return to their seats

S Sit

Breaking of the Bread

All We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.
**Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.**

Invitation to Communion

God's holy gifts for God's holy people.

All **Jesus Christ is holy, Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.**

The clergy, eucharistic ministers and servers receive Holy Communion

Giving of Communion

Jesus said, I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.

§ If you are baptized, and a communicant member of another church you are most welcome to receive Holy Communion.

§ Alternatively, if you would like to receive God's blessing please bring this booklet with you. Thank you

Spiritual Communion - *for those watching at home*

Act of Reception

All In union, blessed Jesus,
with the faithful gathered at every altar of your Church
where your blessed Body and Blood are offered this day,

(and remembering particularly my own parish ...)

I long to offer you praise and thanksgiving,
for creation and all the blessings of this life,
for the redemption won for us by your life, death,
and resurrection,
for the means of grace and the hope of glory.

(and particularly for the blessings given me ...)

I believe that you are truly present in the Holy Sacrament,
and, since I cannot at this time receive communion,
I pray you to come into my heart.

I unite myself with you and embrace you with all my heart,
my soul, and my mind.

Let nothing separate me from you;

let me serve you in this life until, by your grace,

I come to your glorious kingdom and unending peace.

Amen.

The choir sing Agnus Dei

Motet

The Call

Richard Lloyd

§ All sit for a time of personal reflection and thanksgiving

Prayer after Communion

Let us pray:

§ Stand

All **God of mercy,
in this eucharist you have set aside our sins
and given us healing:
grant that we who are made whole by Christ
may bring that healing to this broken world,
in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

Hymn

S The flags are returned to their bearers

All

O JESUS, I have promised
To serve thee to the end;
Be thou for ever near me,
My Master and my friend;
I shall not fear the battle
If thou art by my side,
Nor wander from the pathway
If thou wilt be my guide.

O let me hear thee speaking
In accents clear and still,
Above the storms of passion,
The murmurs of self-will;
O speak to reassure me,
To hasten or control;
O speak, and make me listen,
Thou guardian of my soul.

O Jesus, thou hast promised
To all who follow thee,
That where thou art in glory
There shall thy servant be;
And Jesus, I have promised
To serve thee to the end;
O give me grace to follow,
My Master and my friend.

O let me see thy footmarks,
 And in them plant mine own;
 My hope to follow duly
 Is in thy strength alone;
 O guide me, call me, draw me,
 Uphold me to the end;
 And then in heaven receive me,
 My Saviour and my friend.

Words John Ernest Bode 1816-1874

Music Wolvercote
 William Harold Ferguson 1874-1950

Notices for the Community

Sit

¶ Going out to Serve God

The Lord be with you
All **and also with you.**

God's Blessing

God give you grace and guide you,
 that you may work with Christ,
 and so do the will and the wonderful works of God;
 and the blessing of God almighty,
 the Father, the Son †, and the Holy Spirit,
 be upon you and remain with you always.
All **Amen.**

Sending Out

Go in the peace of Christ.

All **Thanks be to God.**

Organ Voluntary

Tuba Tune

Norman Cocker 1889-1953

S Please remain standing until the procession has departed

*S Those leaving immediately are asked to be aware of those
who wish to listen to the organ voluntary*

S Do please join us for refreshments in church.

This evening at 5.30 pm

Congregational Evensong

Next Sunday at 4.00 pm

Choral Evensong

sung by St Matthew's Choir and 'Pop-Up' Choir
at Holy Cross Church, Pattishall

(Please note there is no evening service at St Matthew's)

Our next All Age Mass
Sunday 5 October at 10.15 am

Harvest Thanksgiving

Our thanks are due to 32nd St Matthew's Guides,
Brownies and Rainbows who have generously financed
the production of this week's service booklet.

**Please take this booklet home
as an aid to prayer and reflection during the week,
and then re-cycle it.**

Copyright © The Archbishops' Council of the Church of England.
All of the official *Common Worship* publications are being published by Church House Publishing.
Church Copyright Licence No. 248548. Streaming Licence No. 93626.

St Matthew's Parish Church, The Parish Office, 27A The Drive, Kingsley, Northampton NN1 4RY
Tel: 01604 791251 www.stmatthews-northampton.org.uk office@stmatthews-northampton.org.uk