



COLLECT, READINGS AND REFLECTION
SUNDAY 5 JULY 2026 – Trinity 5

COLLECT

Almighty and everlasting God,
by whose Spirit the whole body of the Church
is governed and sanctified:
hear our prayer which we offer for all your faithful people,
that in their vocation and ministry
they may serve you in holiness and truth
to the glory of your name;
through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Psalm 145. 8-15

- 8 The Lord is gracious and merciful, ♦
long-suffering and of great goodness.
- 9 The Lord is loving to everyone ♦
and his mercy is over all his creatures.
- 10 All your works praise you, O Lord, ♦
and your faithful servants bless you.
- 11 They tell of the glory of your kingdom ♦
and speak of your mighty power,
- 12 To make known to all peoples your mighty acts ♦
and the glorious splendour of your kingdom.
- 13 Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; ♦
your dominion endures throughout all ages.
- 14 The Lord is sure in all his words ♦
and faithful in all his deeds.
- 15 The Lord upholds all those who fall ♦
and lifts up all those who are bowed down.

A reading from the letter to the Romans, chapter 7, verses 15-25a.

I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. But in fact it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me.

So I find it to be a law that when I want to do what is good, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God in my inmost self, but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind, making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!

So then, with my mind I am a slave to the law of God, but with my flesh I am a slave to the law of sin.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

At Morning Prayer, the Gospel is simply the second reading, people sit to hear it and is introduced in the same way as the first:

The second reading is from Matthew, chapter 11, verses 16-19, 25-30

and then at the end:

For the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

For Eucharists/ Communion people stand to hear the Gospel. Everywhere except Fitz introduces it with an Acclamation (the blue bit), and then we all use the introduction and ending (the green bit):

Alleluia. **Alleluia.**

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

Alleluia.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Matthew, Chapter 11, verses 16-19, 25-30.

Glory to you, O Lord

And then at the end:

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

'But to what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the market-places and calling to one another,

*"We played the flute for you, and you did not dance;
we wailed, and you did not mourn."*

For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, "He has a demon"; the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, "Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax-collectors and sinners!" Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds.'

At that time Jesus said, 'I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

'Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.'

A Reflection from Hannah

Can't do right for wrong??! Both of our readings this week have a bit of that going on. Jesus talks about how the abstemious John the Baptist was accused of having a demon because he *didn't* eat much; and Jesus was accused of being a glutton because he *did*! It's a common problem- especially for those of us who have to make decisions that we know aren't going to please everyone. I very much felt for people in that position during the heatwave- what should be cancelled, what should continue?

The reason it's so difficult is because we are imperfect, and we are functioning in communities that are imperfect. St Paul's lament over this is almost comical- 'I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate'. I can certainly relate to that! When she was little, my daughter once explained her behaviour in this way 'Well, I was going to go and help Molly, but my legs just started walking the other way'. I think that sums a recurring situation up pretty well! We are our own worst enemy. Why? Because of sin- which is simply alienation from the good things of God, and alienation from our true selves. We are diminished, less than we could be, and that is inevitable.

And because of this, trying to please everyone, all of the time, is a doomed endeavour. Jesus makes that observation, and it is the outplaying of the complexities of our own fallenness that St Paul describes so vividly. If we make our yardstick one another, we will always find disappointment and stress. But all is not lost...

The wonder of the Gospel is that there *is* somewhere we can go where the burden is light and there is rest for our souls. As we read:

'Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.'

Amazing words that nourish our souls and bring hope to the downcast and tired. Christ is the one who can satisfy all our longings and bring true life. Staying close to Jesus in prayer, in community, in the rhythms of each day gives us a new perspective, in which we can all flourish.

And sometimes Christ uses us in that work of grace. This week saw the first of our meet-ups for those whom we had supported through funeral ministry over the past year. It was a real privilege to welcome them to Shrawardine Church for an afternoon tea and (what we hoped would be) rest for their souls. Some came in trepidation and dread- worried about what might be asked of them. We hope it was a blessing to them to discover that nothing was asked- and in fact, their heavy burdens were lifted a bit by the peace of the space-peace that flows from the heart of Christ, who is gentle and humble and gives us rest.