

## Readings for 6<sup>th</sup> September, Trinity 13

### Introduction and Call to Worship

*Today's theme invites us to consider how we treat those with whom we disagree. Even those who offend us are held within the circle of Christ's love and we are invited to love them as we love our neighbour.*

### COLLECT

Almighty God, who called your Church to bear witness that you were in Christ reconciling the world to yourself: help us to proclaim the good news of your love, that all who hear it may be drawn to you; through him who was lifted up on the cross, and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

### OLD TESTAMENT READING Ezekiel 33:7-11

*Ezekiel learns from God that he shares responsibility for the sin of the people. It is his duty to speak of their transgressions and call them to repentance.*

The word of the Lord came to me: <sup>7</sup>So you, mortal, I have made a sentinel for the house of Israel; whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. <sup>8</sup>If I say to the wicked, 'O wicked ones, you shall surely die,' and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but their blood I will require at your hand. <sup>9</sup>But if you warn the wicked to turn from their ways, and they do not turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but you will have saved your life.

<sup>10</sup>Now you, mortal, say to the house of Israel, Thus you have said: 'Our transgressions and our sins weigh upon us, and we waste away because of them; how then can we live?' <sup>11</sup>Say to them, As I live, says the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from their ways and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways; for why will you die, O house of Israel?

### NEW TESTAMENT READING Romans 13:8-end

*Paul encourages his readers to live new lives in Jesus, reminding them of his command to love one another.*

<sup>8</sup>Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. <sup>9</sup>The commandments, 'You shall not commit

adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet'; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' <sup>10</sup>Love does no wrong to a neighbour; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.

<sup>11</sup>Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; <sup>12</sup>the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armour of light; <sup>13</sup>let us live honourably as in the day, not in revelling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarrelling and jealousy. <sup>14</sup>Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

### GOSPEL Matthew 18:15-20

*A passage falls between the parable of the lost sheep and Peter's question about how many times he should forgive. Jesus tells his disciples that desire for the restoration and forgiveness of sinners is part of church life.*

Jesus spoke to his disciples. <sup>15</sup>'If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one. <sup>16</sup>But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. <sup>17</sup>If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax-collector. <sup>18</sup>Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. <sup>19</sup>Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. <sup>20</sup>For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.'

### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God our creator, you feed your children with the true manna, the living bread from heaven: let this holy food sustain us through our earthly pilgrimage until we come to that place where hunger and thirst are no more; through Jesus Christ our Lord.