



FREEMEN AND GUILDS OF CHESTER



Guilds' Sunday

The Order of Service
Sunday 27th October 2024
(Last Sunday after Trinity)
10.30am

The Guild Church of St. Peter
The Church of the Mayor and Corporation of the City

The Arrival of the Civic Party

The congregation stands to face the west end of the church where the welcome will take place.

Warden: Reverend Jonathan, I present to you, Sara Smith, President of the Freemen and Guilds of this ancient City of Chester.

Vicar: Mr Warden, I thank you for your presentation. In the name of Almighty God I welcome you, President Sara, to this your Guild Church of St Peter.

President: Thank you Reverend Jonathan for your welcome and the welcome you have extended to our companies.

Warden: Reverend Jonathan, I present to you Councillor Alex Tate, the Sheriff of this ancient City of Chester.

Vicar: Mr Warden, I thank you for your presentation and in the name of Almighty God I welcome you, Sheriff, to this ancient Church of Chester, Church of the Corporation of Chester and may God bless you in your ministry to this City.

Sheriff: Thank you Reverend Jonathan for your welcome. It is with joy we greet you on this occasion of celebration for the life of our City.

Vicar: The Lord preserve both of you in your coming in and your going out from this time forth and for evermore.

Congregation stands to sing the hymn

Processional Hymn

1. Amazing grace! How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see.

2. 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed!

3. Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.

4. The Lord has promised good to me,
His Word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be,
As long as life endures.

5. Yea, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess, within the veil,
A life of joy and peace.

6. When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we'd first begun.

*During this hymn the Guilds' Standard and Mace is presented to Revd
Jonathan, to be placed on the table.*

Please sit for the Welcome and prayers of preparation.

Words of Welcome and Introduction

Revd Jonathan Phillips, Vicar

Prayers of Preparation

Vicar: Dearly beloved, we have come together as the Freemen and Guilds of this City, and Guilds from around the nation, gathering with St Peter's Church in the presence of God to hear and receive His Holy Word, to bring before Him the needs of this City and the world, to ask forgiveness of our sins, and to seek His grace, that through His Son Jesus Christ we may give ourselves to His service and the service of this City. The gospel calls us to turn away from sin and be faithful to Christ. As we offer ourselves to Him in penitence and faith, we renew our confidence and trust in His mercy.

**All: Lord God,
we have sinned against you;
we have done evil in your sight.
We are sorry and repent.
Have mercy on us according to your love.
Wash away our wrongdoing and cleanse us from our sin.
Renew a right spirit within us
and restore us to the joy of your salvation,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

The Absolution

Vicar: May the God of love and power
forgive *you* and free *you* from *your* sins,
heal and strengthen *you* by his Spirit,
and raise *you* to new life in Christ our Lord.
Amen.

First Reading – Luke 17.1-5

The Sheriff of Chester, Councillor Alex Taylor

1 Jesus said to his disciples: “Things that cause people to stumble are bound to come, but woe to anyone through whom they come. 2 It would be better for them to be thrown into the sea with a millstone tied around their neck than to cause one of these little ones to stumble. 3 So watch yourselves.

“If your brother or sister sins against you, rebuke them; and if they repent, forgive them. 4 Even if they sin against you seven times in a day and seven times come back to you saying ‘I repent,’ you must forgive them.”

5 The apostles said to the Lord, “Increase our faith!”

6 He replied, “If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, ‘Be uprooted and planted in the sea,’ and it will obey you.

This is the Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Please stand for our worship song

In Christ Alone

Please follow the hymn in Sign Supported English.

In Christ alone my hope is found,
He is my light, my strength, my song;
This Cornerstone, this solid Ground,
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm.
What heights of love, what depths of peace,
When fears are stilled, when strivings cease!
My Comforter, my All in All,
Here in the love of Christ I stand.

In Christ alone! – who took on flesh,
Fullness of God in helpless babe.
This gift of love and righteousness,
Scorned by the ones He came to save:
Till on that cross as Jesus died,
The wrath of God was satisfied –
For every sin on Him was laid;
Here in the death of Christ I live.

There in the ground His body lay,
Light of the world by darkness slain:
Then bursting forth in glorious day
Up from the grave He rose again!
And as He stands in victory
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me,
For I am His and He is mine –
Bought with the precious blood of Christ.

No guilt in life, no fear in death,
This is the power of Christ in me;
From life's first cry to final breath,
Jesus commands my destiny.
No power of hell, no scheme of man,
Can ever pluck me from His hand:
Till He returns or calls me home,
Here in the power of Christ I'll stand.

Congregation sits for the second reading

Second Reading – Psalm 130

President of the Freemen and Guilds, Sara Smith

A song of ascents.

1 Out of the depths I cry to you, Lord;

2 Lord, hear my voice.

Let your ears be attentive
to my cry for mercy.

3 If you, Lord, kept a record of sins,
Lord, who could stand?

4 But with you there is forgiveness,
so that we can, with reverence, serve you.

5 I wait for the Lord, my whole being waits,
and in his word I put my hope.

6 I wait for the Lord
more than watchmen wait for the morning,
more than watchmen wait for the morning.

7 Israel, put your hope in the Lord,
for with the Lord is unfailing love
and with him is full redemption.

8 He himself will redeem Israel
from all their sins.

This is the Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Sermon: 'Increase our faith!'

Rev Jonathan Phillips

Short time of discussion following three questions:

- 1) Can you remember a time when you were a child being forgiven and the 'relief' that came when it happened?
- 2) How can forgiveness make the relationships between guilds/churches stronger across the country/cities? What active ingredient of

forgiveness builds relationships? (The clue is in the phrase 'brother or sister'.)

3) What does faith in Jesus have to do with forgiveness?

Congregation stands to say the Creed

The Creed

Please follow the creed in Sign Supported English.

It may go slower than you expect.

**All: I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.
Amen.**

Intercessions

The Collect for the Last Sunday after Trinity

Blessed Lord,
who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning:
help us so to hear them,
to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them
that, through patience, and the comfort of your holy word,
we may embrace and for ever hold fast
the hope of everlasting life,
which you have given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

*Please follow the Lord's prayer in Makaton.
It may go slower than you expect.*

**All 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.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.**

Dedication of the Nation of Guilds

*The President of the Chester Freemen and Guilds and all guests to
Chester stand to receive blessing.*

Vicar: Members of the Freemen and Guilds of our nation and this ancient City of Chester, and you, the citizens of Chester, we are gathered within this House of God.

As Vicar of St Peter's Church Chester and Chaplain to the Freemen and Guilds of Chester, today I charge you to mark this solemn occasion and to consider, with careful thought and prayer, the reason for our gathering together and the true nature and lofty purpose of the Guilds. In that it is at all times our purpose to seek the highest welfare of our cities and nation. We are met now, before God, to pray for His blessing upon the purpose of our Guilds across the country.

I now bless you, in the name of God, charging you that as you have received the high calling of being members of the Freemen and Guilds with its privileges, you will discharge your duties for the well-ordering of our cities and nation, for the safety, prosperity and well-being of their citizens.

May you encourage due respect for virtue and religion, may you keep the laws and customs of your cities and may you keep the King's Peace both now and forever more. And may Almighty God Bless you, The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Please sit for the Guilds' prayer

The Guilds' Prayer

Vicar: Let us pray

All: O God our heavenly Father, who has taught us ever to bear one another's burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ, and in a spirit of comradeship to work together for the social welfare of your people. We humbly beseech You to let Your blessings rest upon our Freemen and Guilds. We pray this so that every member of the same may in the spirit of a dedicated life, devote themselves to further the objects of the Guilds, to promote their charities, and to preserve the highest traditions of this great City of Chester. We pray that we may learn to prepare ourselves for that better commonwealth and heavenly citizenship, which has already begun in this life and awaits us in eternity; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Closing Prayer & the Blessing of the Congregation

Vicar: Almighty Father, you are lavish in bestowing all your gifts, and we give you thanks for the favours you have given to us. In your goodness you have favoured our Freemen and Guilds and kept us safe in the past. We ask that you continue to protect our ancient City and to shelter us in the shadow of your wings. We ask this through Christ our Lord. May God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit bless, preserve and keep you this day and forever more. Amen.

Please stand. During the last verse the Freemen and Guildsmen will collect the Standard and the Mace.

The Hymn of the Freemen & Guilds of the City of Chester

All who're born of Guildsmen
Or prenticeship have served
The Freemanship of Chester
By Charter is reserved
As Chester City Guildsmen
We greatly ride that right
And will maintain that honour
With God's great strength and might.

They have a great tradition
So precious and so dear
Preserved throughout the ages
And kept from year to year
May God the Lord of all things
Enable us to build
Upon that long tradition
To strengthen every Guild.

We thank the Lord our Maker
For all his gifts bestowed
We always will remember
To him all life is owed
And by his grace endeavour
To use and to preserve
The wisdom and the blessings
He gives that we may serve.

The Blessing of the City of Chester

The Guilds and congregation leave the Church and muster at the Cross; then the President and the Civic Party led by the Vicar and wardens process through the West Door and standing at the entrance to the Church the Vicar will bless the City.

Vicar: Almighty God, Lord of the whole earth, pour out your blessing, we pray, upon this City of Chester, the County of Cheshire and the Diocese of Chester. Bind all who live here in goodwill and unity, give peace, prosperity and concord to every place, and may your will be proclaimed and performed by all your people; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen

Vicar: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit bless, preserve and keep you all, now and for ever.

All: Amen

The bell rings.

All Guilds, Freemen and members of St Peter's are invited to come back into St Peter's for a light lunch.

The Parish of Chester, St Peter



**Vicar of Chester St Peter and
Chaplain to the Freemen and Guilds of Chester**
Revd Jonathan Phillips

Warden
David Hobson

President of the Freeman and Guilds of Chester
Sara Smith

The Sheriff of the City of Chester
Councillor Alex Tate