

The Parish Church of St Matthew
Northampton

The Eighth Sunday after Trinity

Proper 12 Year A



*Parables about the kingdom –
a mustard seed, yeast, treasure, and a pearl of great price*

The Parish Mass

Sunday 26 July 2026

10.15 am

Welcome to St Matthew's Parish Church



Safeguarding St Matthew's is committed to providing a safe and welcoming environment for everyone. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

If you have any safeguarding concern, or are worried about the safety or wellbeing of a child, young person, or adult, please speak to the Parish Safeguarding Officer, a member of the clergy, or a churchwarden.

Parish Safeguarding Officer

Ben Drouet safeguarding@stmatthews-northampton.org.uk 01604 791251

Diocese of Peterborough Safeguarding Team

safeguarding@peterborough-diocese.org.uk 01733 887040

If someone is in immediate danger or needs urgent medical attention, please call 999.

Live Streaming and Recording Please note that some services are live-streamed or recorded. Filming is limited as far as reasonably possible to those leading or assisting with the service, including clergy, readers/intercessors, musicians, choir members, and servers. Holy Communion is not filmed.

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Toilet and Baby Changing Facilities Toilet and baby changing facilities are available at the base of the church tower. A small servery is also available.

For Younger Children In the north aisle (nearest to Collingwood Road), a carpeted children's area with age-appropriate Christian resources is available. Please feel free to make use of these facilities during 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 St Matthew’s 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 a very warm welcome to St Matthew's, whether you are a regular member of our congregation or visiting us today. It is a joy to welcome you as we gather around the Lord's altar on this Eighth Sunday after Trinity.

Today's scriptures invite us to reflect upon true wisdom, not simply knowledge or cleverness, but that gift which comes from God alone. King Solomon asks not for riches or power, but for an understanding heart; and in the Gospel, Jesus tells of those who discover a treasure beyond all price, a pearl of such beauty that everything else gladly becomes secondary.

As we prepare to celebrate these holy mysteries, we are invited to ask ourselves: what treasure do we seek? What has first claim upon our hearts? Christ offers us nothing less than the Kingdom of Heaven itself, a gift beyond measure and a joy beyond compare.

As is our custom at St Matthew's, let us now keep a few moments of quiet prayer as we prepare ourselves to worship Almighty God.

It is our custom to spend some time in quiet preparation before the liturgy begins, and save further conversation until we meet socially for refreshments afterwards. The following reflection, based on today's themes, may be found helpful:

Reflection

Lord God,
you alone are the source of all wisdom and the giver of every good gift.
Quieten our hearts,
open our minds to your word,
and draw us into the joy of your kingdom.
As we gather to celebrate these holy mysteries,
help us to recognise in Christ the treasure beyond all earthly riches,
and to offer ourselves afresh to your service and glory;
through the same Jesus Christ our Lord.

Setting

The Mass of St Thomas

David Thorne b.1950

Order of Service

¶ The Gathering

§ *At the sound of the bell, **all stand***

Hymn

§ *The procession enters*

All

ANGEL voices ever singing
Round thy throne of light,
Angel-harps, for ever ringing,
Rest not day nor night;
Thousands only live to bless thee,
And confess thee
Lord of might.

Thou who art beyond the farthest
Mortal eye can scan,
Can it be that thou regardest
Songs of sinful man?
Can we know that thou art near us,
And wilt hear us?
Yea, we can.

For we know that thou rejoicest
O'er each work of thine;
Thou didst ears and hands and voices
For thy praise design;
Craftsman's art and music's measure
For thy pleasure
All combine.

In thy house, great God, we offer
Of thine own to thee;
And for thine acceptance proffer
All unworthily
Hearts and minds and hands and voices,
In our choicest
Psalmody.

Honour, glory, might and merit,
Thine shall ever be,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
Blessèd Trinity.
Of the best which thou hast given
Earth and heaven
Render thee.

Words Francis Pott 1832-1909

Music Angel Voices
Edwin George Monk 1819-1900

† In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the 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

Invitation to Confession

Our Lord teaches that the kingdom of heaven
is the greatest treasure we can ever possess.
Yet so often our hearts are distracted by lesser things,
our priorities become confused,
and we fail to recognise the riches of God's grace.

Therefore, trusting in the mercy of God, let us acknowledge our sins,
and pray for the wisdom to seek first his Kingdom and his righteousness.

§ *Silence for reflection*

Confession

All **Most merciful God,
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
we confess that we have sinned in thought, word and deed.
We have not loved you with our whole heart.
We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.
In your mercy forgive what we have been,
help us to amend what we are,
and direct what we shall be;
that we may do justly;
love mercy, and walk humbly with you, our God. Amen.**

Kyries

Lord Jesus, eternal wisdom of the Father,
you call us to seek first the Kingdom of Heaven:
Lord, have mercy.
All **Lord, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, hidden treasure of all who believe,
you forgive the sins of all who turn to you:
Christ, have mercy.
All **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, pearl beyond all price,
you lead us into everlasting life:
Lord, have mercy.
All **Lord, have mercy.**

Absolution

Almighty God,
who in Jesus Christ has given us a kingdom that cannot be destroyed,
forgive † you your sins,
open your eyes to God's truth,
strengthen you to do God's will
and give you the wisdom and joy of his kingdom,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
All **Amen.**

Gloria in Excelsis

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 Collect

Let us pray.

**Almighty Lord and everlasting God,
we beseech you to direct, sanctify and govern
both our hearts and bodies in the ways of your laws
and the works of your commandments;
that through your most mighty protection, both here and ever,
we may be preserved in body and soul;
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.**

All **Amen.**

Brothers and sisters in Christ,
now that we have prepared for this encounter with God
in the holy scriptures,
let us be seated to receive into our hearts and minds
the living word of the Lord as it is proclaimed to us.

§ Sit

¶ The Liturgy of the Word

First Reading

Reader A reading from the First Book of the Kings.

At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, ‘Ask what I should give you.’

And Solomon said, ‘You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart towards you; and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love, and have given him a son to sit on his throne today.

And now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people, so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil; for who can govern this your great people?’

It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. God said to him, ‘Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches, or for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, I now do according to your word. Indeed I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you and no one like you shall arise after you.’

1 Kings 3.5-12

All This is the word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Psalm

Response



Christopher Tambling

Lead me, O Lord in the paths of your com - mand - ments.

Cantor Your testimonies are wonderful;
therefore my soul keeps them.
The opening of your word gives light;
it gives understanding to the simple. **Response**

I open my mouth and draw in my breath,
as I long for your commandments.
Turn to me and be gracious to me,
as is your way with those who love your name. **Response**

Order my steps by your word,
and let no wickedness have dominion over me.
Redeem me from earthly oppressors
so that I may keep your commandments. **Response**

Show the light of your countenance upon your servant
and teach me your statutes.
My eyes run down with streams of water,
because the wicked do not keep your law. **Response**

Psalm 119:129-136

Holy Gospel

§ Stand

Acclamation

1. Choir only
2. Choir and Congregation



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

All Jesus said, I have called you friends because I have made known to you
everything I have heard from my Father.
Alleluia.

§ We turn to face the Book of the Gospels

All The Lord be with you
 and also with you.

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

All

The musical notation is for a vocal line in 4/4 time, key of D major. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The melody starts on a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note D4, an eighth note E4, a quarter note F#4, and a quarter note G4. This is followed by a half note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note A4. The next measure contains a half note G4, a quarter note F#4, and a quarter note E4. The final measure consists of a half note D5, a quarter rest, and a double bar line. The lyrics 'Glo - ry to you, O Lord.' are written below the notes, with 'O' under the final G4 and 'Lord.' under the final D5.

f

Glo - ry to you, O Lord.

Jesus put before the crowd another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.'

He told them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.'

‘The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

‘Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

'Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

‘Have you understood all this?’ They answered, ‘Yes.’ And he said to them, ‘Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.’

Matthew 13.31-33, 44-52

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All

f

Praise to you, O Christ.

Homily

§ Sit

The Nicene Creed

§ Stand

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

All **We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is,
seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

*All may
bow* ***For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and was made man.***

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come.
Amen.**

Solomon prayed for an understanding heart,
and God answered him generously.
Trusting in that same generous love,
let us bring before our heavenly Father the needs of the Church
and of the world.

§ *Kneel*

The response to each petition

Intercessor

Lord, grant us your wisdom,

All

and establish your kingdom among us.

After the final petition

Priest

Heavenly Father,
you know our needs before we ask and our ignorance in asking.
Grant us the wisdom to recognise the treasure of your Kingdom,
the courage to seek it above all else,
and the grace to live as faithful disciples of your Son;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All

Amen.

§ *Stand*

¶ The Liturgy of the Sacrament

Sign of Peace

Christ is our peace.
In him we discover the treasure that neither time nor circumstance
can ever take away.
As members of his kingdom, let us share with one another
the peace that comes from him alone.

All

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

Let us offer each other a sign of Christ's peace.

The Offertory

§ *The bread and wine are brought forward and given to the presiding priest.
The altar is prepared.*

Hymn

§ *A monetary collection is taken. Please give as you are able. Your generosity is much appreciated. Thank you.*

All

**JESU, lover of my soul,
Let me to thy bosom fly,
While the hearer waters roll,
While the tempest still is nigh:
Hide me, O my Saviour, hide
Till the storm of life is past;
Safe into the haven guide,
O receive my soul at last.**

**Other refuge have I none,
Hangs my helpless soul on thee;
Leave, ah, leave me not alone,
Still support and comfort me.
All my trust on thee is stayed,
All my help from thee I bring;
Cover my defenceless head
With the shadow of thy wing.**

**Thou, O Christ, art all I want,
More than all in thee I find:
Raise the fallen, cheer the faint,
Heal the sick, and lead the blind.
Just and holy is thy name,
I am all unrighteousness;
False and full of sin I am,
Thou art full of truth and grace.**

**Plenteous grace with thee is found,
Grace to cover all my sin;
Let the healing streams abound,
Make and keep me pure within.
Thou of life the fountain art,
Freely let me take of thee,
Spring thou up within my heart,
Rise to all eternity.**

Words Charles Wesley 1707-1788

*Music Aberystwyth
Joseph Parry 1841-1903*

Invitation to Prayer

Pray, my brothers and sisters,
that our sacrifice may be acceptable to God,
the almighty Father.

All **May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands
for the praise and glory of his name,
for our good, and the good of all his holy Church.**

Prayer over the Gifts

Lord God,
all that we have comes from your generous hand.
Receive these gifts, together with the offering of our lives.
By the working of your Holy Spirit,
may this bread and wine become for us the bread of life
and the cup of salvation,
and may we who seek the treasure of your Kingdom
be transformed into the likeness of Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

The Eucharistic Prayer

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.

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,
always and everywhere to give you thanks,
holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

From sunrise to sunset this day is holy,
for Christ has risen from the tomb
and scattered the darkness of death with light that will not fade.
This day the risen Lord walks with your gathered people,
unfolds for us your word,
and makes himself known in the breaking of the bread.
And though the night will overtake this day
you summon us to live in endless light,
the never-ceasing sabbath of the Lord.

And so, with choirs of angels
and with all the heavenly host,
we proclaim your glory
and join their unending song of praise:

All **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.**

Lord, you are holy indeed, the source of all holiness;
grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit,
and according to your holy will,
these gifts of bread and wine
may be to us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ;

who, in the same night that he was betrayed,
took bread and gave you thanks;
he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way, after supper
he took the cup and gave you thanks;
he gave it to them, saying:

Drink this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

Christ is the bread of life:

All

The musical score is written for two staves in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It contains the melody for the first line of the hymn. The second staff continues the melody and includes a change in time signature to 4/4 for the final two measures. Dynamics include *mf* (mezzo-forte) at the start of the first staff, *cresc.* (crescendo) above the second staff, and *f* (forte) above the final measure of the second staff. The lyrics are written below the notes.

When we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we pro-claim your death, Lord Je - sus, un - til you come in glo - ry.

And so, Father, calling to mind his death on the cross,
his perfect sacrifice made once for the sins of the whole world,
rejoicing in his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension,
and looking for his coming in glory,
we celebrate this memorial of our redemption.
As we offer you this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving,
we bring before you this bread and this cup
and we thank you for counting us worthy
to stand in your presence and serve you.

Send the Holy Spirit on your people
 and gather into one in your kingdom
 all who share this one bread and one cup,
 so that we, in the company of Mary the Virgin Mother of God,
 St Matthew and all the saints,
 may praise and glorify you for ever,
 through Jesus Christ our Lord;
 by whom, and with whom, and in whom,
 in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
 all honour and glory be yours, almighty Father,
 for ever and ever.

All



A- men.

The Blessed Sacrament is elevated and bells are rung

§ Kneel

The Lord's Prayer

A close relationship with God is a real treasure.
 Let us pray with confidence to our heavenly Father
 in the words our Saviour 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.**

Breaking of the Bread

The bread which we break is a sharing in the body of Christ:
All **We being many are one body,
for we all share in the one bread.**
Into one body we were all baptized,
All **and one Spirit was given us all to drink.**

Agnus Dei

All **Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
grant us peace.**

Invitation to Communion

Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.
Blessed are those who are called to his supper.
All **Lord, I am not worthy to receive you,
but only say the word, and I shall be healed.**

Communion Antiphon

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.

Spiritual Communion – *for those 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.

Hymn

All **BREAD of heaven, on thee we feed,
 For thy flesh is meat indeed;
 Ever may our souls be fed
 With this true and living bread,
 Day by day with strength supplied
 Through the life of him who died.**

**Vine of heaven, thy blood supplies
This blessed cup of sacrifice;
Lord, thy wounds our healing give;
To thy cross we look and live:
Thou our life! O let us be
Rooted, grafted, built on thee.**

Words Josiah Conder 1789-1855

Music Bread of Heaven
William Dalrymple MacLagan 1826-1910

§ *We sit for a time of silent reflection and thanksgiving*

Prayer after Communion

Let us pray.

§ *Stand*

Strengthen for service, Lord,
the hands that have taken holy things;
may the ears which have heard your word
be deaf to clamour and dispute;
may the tongues which have sung your praise be free from deceit;
may the eyes which have seen the tokens of your love
shine with the light of hope;
and may the bodies which have been fed with your body
be refreshed with the fullness of your life;
glory to you for ever.

All

Amen.

**We thank you, Lord,
that you have fed us in this sacrament,
united us with Christ,
and given us a foretaste of the heavenly banquet
prepared for all peoples.
Amen.**

Hymn

All **FROM** glory to glory advancing, we praise thee, O Lord;
Thy name with the Father and Spirit be ever adored.
From strength unto strength we go forward on Sion's highway,
To appear before God in the city of infinite day.

**Thanksgiving and glory and worship and blessing and love,
One heart and one song have the saints upon earth and above.
O Lord, evermore to thy servants thy presence be nigh;
Ever fit us by service on earth for thy presence on high.**

Words Greek, tr Charles William Humphreys 1840-1921
from the Liturgy of St James

Music Sheen
Gustav Theodore Holst 1874-1934

Notices for the Community

§ Sit

¶ Sending Out

§ Stand

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

Solemn Blessing

All May God grant you the wisdom of Solomon,
that you may discern what is good and seek first his kingdom.
Amen.

All May Christ, the priceless treasure of heaven,
fill your hearts with joy and strengthen you in faithful service.
Amen.

All May the Holy Spirit guide your steps each day,
so that your lives may bear lasting fruit for the glory of God.
Amen.

And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son †, and the Holy Spirit,
be upon you and remain with you always.

All **Amen.**

The Dismissal

The Mass is ended, go in peace.

All **Thanks be to God.**

Organ Voluntary

Exsultate

Stanley Vann 1910-2010

§ *Please remain standing until the procession has departed*

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

§ *Refreshments are served in church, please do join us*

§ *If you are a newcomer to the parish or area please introduce yourself to one of the clergy or speak to a member of our Welcome Team.*

This evening at 5.30 pm

Congregational Evensong

Our thanks are due to Anonymous Donor 16
who has 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.**

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