**The 18th Sunday after Trinity.**

**Collect, Readings and Prayers.**

**Collect**

Almighty and everlasting God, increase in us your gift of faith that, forsaking what lies behind and reaching out to that which is before, we may run the way of your commandments and win the crown of everlasting joy; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

**Readings**

**Jeremiah 31:27-34**

**Individual Retribution**

27The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of humans and the seed of animals. 28And just as I have watched over them to pluck up and break down, to overthrow, destroy, and bring evil, so I will watch over them to build and to plant, says the Lord. 29In those days they shall no longer say:

‘The parents have eaten sour grapes,  
    and the children’s teeth are set on edge.’

30But all shall die for their own sins; the teeth of everyone who eats sour grapes shall be set on edge.

**A New Covenant**

31The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. 32It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord. 33But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, ‘Know the Lord’, for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

**2 Timothy 3:14 - 4:5**

314But as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it, 15and how from childhood you have known the sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 16All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.

4 In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I solemnly urge you: 2proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favourable or unfavourable; convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching. 3For the time is coming when people will not put up with sound doctrine, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own desires, 4and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander away to myths. 5As for you, always be sober, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, carry out your ministry fully.

**Luke 18:1-8**

**The Parable of the Widow and the Unjust Judge**

**18**Then Jesustold them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart. **2**He said, ‘In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor had respect for people. **3**In that city there was a widow who kept coming to him and saying, “Grant me justice against my opponent.” **4**For a while he refused; but later he said to himself, “Though I have no fear of God and no respect for anyone, **5**yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that she may not wear me out by continually coming.”’ **6**And the Lord said, ‘Listen to what the unjust judge says. **7**And will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long in helping them? **8**I tell you, he will quickly grant justice to them. And yet, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?’

**Prayers**

Hidden and mysterious God, we seek you in our darkness and our unknowing, so come to us with tender love as we raise before you our prayers of intercession and thanksgiving.

* Mighty God, we pray for all who carry civic and political responsibilities throughout the world. Help the leaders of the nations put aside all selfish ambition as they seek to be the instruments of your will for humanity and carry out your desire for the welfare of all people which will culminate in glory to you and in happier human lives.
* God of Love,

We are thankful for the work that has been done to secure a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas and pray that it may be fully implemented and lead to a lasting peace in the region.

With grateful hearts we celebrate the release of all the hostages and of many Palestinian prisoners and pray for their recovery and recuperation as they are reunited with family and friends.

We pray for the ongoing negotiations as to what a permanent peace will look like and how it will be implemented so that we never see such death and destruction in this region again. We pray too for workable plans to be drawn up to provide for all the needs of the Palestinians who are living where most of the buildings have been reduced to rubble, so that they may have adequate food and water, clothing, medical and educational support.

This we ask in the power of your Spirit.

* In the light of the atrocity which took place at the Heaton Park Synagogue, we continue to pray for those injured and the families and friends of those who died, for your presence and embrace. We pray for Jewish communities across our country, for those who are filled with fear and anxiety and those who encounter discrimination and victimisation. May the event be a wake-up call and lead to renewed efforts for tolerance and understanding between people of different cultural and religious backgrounds, and for a spirit of co-operation and generosity to pervade all our communities so that all our citizens may be able to live, to work, to play peaceably together.
* Compassionate God, your love for humanity was revealed in Jesus, whose earthly life began in the poverty of a stable and ended in the pain and isolation of the cross.  We hold before you those who are homeless and driven to beg and sleep rough on the street. Draw near and comfort them in spirit and bless those who work to provide for them
* We pray for those who are ill, in pain, bereaved or anxious, giving thanks for all who have responsibility for their professional care and treatment and we name before God those known to us who are in need of His healing presence.  We pray that God will draw near to them and give them his love and peace. Father, we call to mind also those we love who have died and pray that you will grant them the welcome of your love at their homecoming to your eternal kingdom.
* Faithful God, your word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path.  Thank you that we can live in Your light and walk in Your truth.  May the things that you have revealed and thoughts that we have shared dwell in our hearts and stir us to action. Let our faith in you, O Lord, be ever stronger, our life with you ever deeper, our praying ever more awake to your glory, our hold on you ever firmer and our love for you ever increasing.