



WELCOME TO ST PETER'S ASH



THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY AT ST PETER'S IS CALLED TO CELEBRATE, LIVE AND REFLECT THE LOVE OF GOD IN JESUS CHRIST

10th MAY 2020

EASTER 5

READINGS FOR TODAY

Acts 7 v 55 - end; 1 Peter 2 v 2 - 10;
John 14 v 1 - 14

PARISH OFFICE: Closed until further notice.

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**ALLELUIA, CHRIST IS RISEN!
HE IS RISEN INDEED, ALLELUIA!**



FROM THE RECTORY

I was fortunate enough to have grown up in the very beautiful city of Bath. My love of architecture today, does, I'm sure, come from those surroundings of my childhood. The crescents and terraces, the squares and the Circus – all triumphs of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, give the city an orderliness and rationality. That, too, is reflected, I realise now, in my outlook on life. (Although my study doesn't always bear witness to that, in the chaos of papers on my desk!)

In the late 1950's of my childhood, however, Baths' beauty was still marred by the results of the Blitz. Like missing teeth, many of the terraces had gaps. At the top of our road there was a bomb crater where an air-raid shelter had had a direct hit - we were told never to play there. In the city, where a new Woolworth's was later built, there was a gap where the church that my grandmother had got married in, had once stood. As a child, of course, the significance of all this was not readily apparent. Then, I didn't fully understand why my parents were not great fans of 'war films', now I do. Having lived through the horror and deprivations of war, they didn't need to be constantly reminded of it on TV or at the cinema. What, to a child, seemed exciting, to them was nothing to be celebrated, and certainly not glorified in any way.

As I grew up and developed my love of travel, visiting different countries around Europe, seeing the graves and the war memorials, (and turning my nose up at the indifferent architecture of reconstruction of the 50's and 60's) - only then did I begin to understand my parents' attitude to war. Not long before my mother died, I made a pilgrimage to the grave of her brother, who was killed, aged just 21, just outside Faenza in northern Italy. The rows and rows of graves of young men, and women, really brought home to me the utter wastefulness of armed conflict. So many hopes and dreams snuffed out, so much potential lost. Yes, it was all in the necessary cause of defeating an evil that needed extinguishing, but, surely, a horror that we must always be working hard to see is never repeated. Buildings can be rebuilt or replaced, the lives of the, mainly young people in those graves, never can, in this world.

This weekend we, rightly, honour and give thanks for those who gave their all for us in the Second World War. We show our gratitude for the peace which finally came on 8th May 1945. But, the continuation of that peace is in our hands and it can never be taken for granted. We can only maintain it by dialogue, fostering bonds of friendship and cooperation, working together across our world for the common good. As Jesus said 'Love one another, as I have loved you'. Keeping the peace is a work in progress.

COLLECT FOR EASTER 5

Almighty God,
who through your only-begotten Son Jesus Christ
have overcome death and opened to us
the gate of everlasting life:
grant that, as by your grace going before us
you put into our minds good desires,
so by your continual help
we may bring them to good effect;
through Jesus Christ our risen Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.

A PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord God our Father,
we pledge ourselves to serve you and all humankind, in
the cause of peace,
for the relief of want and suffering,
and for the praise of your name.
Guide us by your Spirit;
give us wisdom;
give us courage;
give us hope;
and keep us faithful now and always. Amen.

DON'T FORGET OUR ST PETER'S PRAYER CHAIN

If you would like emergency prayer for yourself or
somebody else please phone: 01252 322292 or 01252
323037 – this is a confidential service.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, has launched a free
national phone line 'Daily Hope' to bring worship and
prayer into people's homes while church buildings are
closed. It offers music, prayers and reflections as well as
full worship services. The line is available 24 hours a day
on 0800 804 8044

Morning Prayer to share at 10 am on Sunday

If there is more than one person present, someone may wish to read the parts marked (L), everyone says the rest together. You can say alternate verses in the Psalm and in the Benedicite. Have a Bible to hand.

(L) Alleluia, Christ is risen!
All: He is risen indeed, Alleluia!

(L) O Lord, open our lips
All: and our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

(L) In your resurrection, O Christ
All: let heaven and earth rejoice. Alleluia.

You may wish to light a candle at this point

(L): The night has passed, and the day lies open before us;
let us pray with one heart and mind:

All: As we rejoice in the gift of this new day, so may the light of your presence, O God, set our hearts on fire with love for you; now and for ever. Amen.

(L): Christ died to sin once for all, and now he lives to God. Let us renew our resolve to have done with all that is evil and confess our sins in penitence and faith.

(Pause for reflection)

All: Almighty God, our heavenly Father, we have sinned against you and against our neighbour in thought and word and deed, through negligence, through weakness, through our own deliberate fault. We are truly sorry and repent of all our sins. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, who died for us, forgive us all that is past and grant that we may serve you in newness of life to the glory of your name. Amen.

All say The Gloria

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.

Say the Collect for Easter 5 (see previous page)

Read Acts 7 v 55 – 60 followed by Psalm 31 v 1 – 5 & 15 - 16 ending with:

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning is now and shall be for ever. Amen.

Read 1 Peter 2 v 2 – 10

All: Alleluia, alleluia. Jesus said, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.' Alleluia.

Now read John 14 v 1 - 14. Here are some thoughts from Fr. Keith on today's readings:

Philip said to Jesus 'Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied'. As on many occasions, the disciples of Jesus were slow in understanding who Jesus is and His true significance. In my mind I have a picture of Jesus' face

showing utter frustration when he replies 'Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.'

Perhaps our sympathies can be with Philip a little though. Even for us, who know all about Jesus' divine power manifested in the Resurrection, the fact that Jesus is 'in the Father and the Father is in Him' is not an easy truth to take on board. Many people still find it difficult to regard Jesus as God. In their minds there is a kind of hierarchy, with God at the top and Jesus further down the ladder – not quite God. But, this is not the picture that Jesus gives of Himself here in John's gospel. To have seen Jesus, is to have seen God Himself in action. It is, in fact, what sets Christianity apart from all other religions. Grasping this truth is crucial to our understanding of who God really is, and how we are called to worship Him and witness to Him.

The first verses of this morning's gospel reading are often used at funerals. It is a reassurance that there is life beyond death, but, also that the God we worship is not just 'up there' calling us from on high, but has been down here with us, leading us on to the place he has prepared for us. Our God is not remote, he has experienced all the joys and sorrows, the pleasures and pains of human life for Himself. When we turn to Him, He really does fully understand us. Jesus goes before us from this world so that we can be like Him in eternity. Like the picture of the Good shepherd from last week, he takes the lead, we follow in his footsteps.

In Jesus we also learn how God wants us to deal with whatever life throws at us. When we read about Jesus making time for the poor, the sick and the outcasts, we are seeing God Himself in action here on earth. We know that what Jesus does is what God expects us to do too. We can have no excuses! He expects us to follow His example and reach out to those around us with the same love, compassion and generous forgiveness that Jesus did when He was here on earth. If we do that we shall be making a reality of the prayer that He taught us to pray – 'Your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven'.

Stephen, the first of Jesus' followers to suffer martyrdom, was granted a vision of the reality of who Jesus really is just before his death. 'I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God' he told the high priest and the council. For them, this was the last straw and immediately they took him out and stoned him to death. They knew precisely what Stephen was saying, that Jesus and God were on equal terms, and, to them this was blasphemy. His final words 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit', only compounded this perceived sin. To them only God could receive a person's spirit, not this son of a humble carpenter from Nazareth, as they saw Jesus!

Jesus was rejected by the religious establishment partly because he was a threat to the fragile peace they had made with the Romans. But, mainly, because He claimed an equal relationship with God that seemed to them to fly in the face of the Shema, the words said by all devout Jews to this day: 'The Lord our God, the Lord is one.' God's oneness is at the very heart of Judaism, so how then could Jesus be his equal, God's Son? How could Jesus be God too? It is a question, of course, that was to be debated even among Christians in the centuries to come. Even today, some people are prepared only to acknowledge Jesus as a good man or a prophet, but not as God.

Peter, in his letter, tells us 'to long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation'. We will never be able to fully understand the nature of God. As human beings we just don't have that capacity. But, by being in tune with Him through our prayer life and the study of scripture He will reveal more and more of Himself to us, as we grow spiritually. Jesus Himself promised us that 'the Spirit of Truth will lead us into all the truth'. As Pentecost approaches, we look forward to celebrating that.

Pause for your own reflections, and then we say:

The Benedicite – a Song of Creation

All: The Lord is risen from the tomb who for our sakes hung upon the tree. Alleluia.

1 Bless the Lord all you works of the Lord: ♦ sing his praise and exalt him for ever.

2 Bless the Lord you heavens: ♦ sing his praise and exalt him for ever.

3 Bless the Lord you angels of the Lord: ♦ sing his praise and exalt him for ever.

4 Bless the Lord all people on earth: ♦ sing his praise and exalt him for ever.

5 O people of God bless the Lord: ♦ sing his praise and exalt him for ever.

6 Bless the Lord you priests of the Lord: ♦ sing his praise and exalt him for ever.

7 Bless the Lord you servants of the Lord: ♦ sing his praise and exalt him for ever.

8 Bless the Lord all you of upright spirit: ♦ bless the Lord you that are holy and humble in heart.

All: Bless the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit: ♦ sing his praise and exalt him for ever.

All: The Lord is risen from the tomb who for our sakes hung upon the tree. Alleluia.

We now have prayers of intercession, written today by Fr Keith:

At this time of celebration for the ending of the second world war, we give thanks for all those who fought and died in the cause of freedom and justice. May they find rest and peace with you for ever.

Lord hear us, Lord graciously hear us

We pray for those who still face the horrors of war and terrorism today, that you will be with them in danger and bring them safely through conflict. May the leaders of the nations continue to work tirelessly for peace and reconciliation, and have compassion on refugees.

Lord hear us, Lord graciously hear us

We pray for this nation, for Elizabeth our Queen and all those involved in government. May they pursue all that is necessary for the common good, and serve others selflessly and in a spirit of humility.

Lord hear us, Lord graciously hear us

We pray for all who are trying to cope with the effects of the pandemic. We remember those who have lost their jobs or whose jobs are under threat; those who are facing financial difficulties; those whose relationships are under strain; those who are anxious and lonely; those who cannot clearly see a way ahead. Be with them and guide them towards a happy and secure future.

Lord hear us, Lord graciously hear us

We pray for our local schools and our pre-school trying to help vulnerable children at this time. We pray for your guidance as they seek to keep staff and children safe both now, and, when they are called to re-open for all.

Lord hear us, Lord graciously hear us

We pray for all who are sick and those who care for them, at home or in hospital. We give thanks for those who are working to bring relief and hope to the dying and the bereaved. May they be strengthened in their service.

Lord hear us, Lord graciously hear us

We pray for all who have died recently, and for those whose anniversary of death occurs at this time. Rest eternal grant to them O Lord, and may light perpetual shine upon them.

Lord hear us, Lord graciously hear us

Heavenly Father we know that your love for us is unending, help us all to live in peace and harmony with each other, and to work for that day when your will is truly done on earth as it is already done in heaven. Bless all who have to make difficult decisions at this time and may we move forward together trusting in your wisdom alone. We ask these prayers through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord and Saviour. Amen.

As Jesus taught us, so we pray: Our Father in heaven....

This hymn may then be said or sung:

Jesus is Lord! Creation's voice proclaims it,
For by His pow'r each tree and flower
was planned and made.

Jesus is Lord! The universe declares it;
Sun, moon and stars in heaven cry, 'Jesus is Lord!'

Jesus is Lord! Jesus is Lord!
Praise Him with hallelujahs, for Jesus is Lord!

Jesus is Lord! Yet from His throne eternal
In flesh He came to die in pain on Calv'ry's tree.
Jesus is Lord! From Him all life proceeding,
Yet gave His life a ransom thus setting us free. Chorus

Jesus is Lord! O'er sin the mighty conqueror
From death He rose, and all His foes shall own His name.
Jesus is Lord! God sent His Holy Spirit
To show by works of power that Jesus is Lord! Chorus

Let us pray:

Eternal God, whose Son Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life: grant us to walk in his way, to rejoice in his truth, and to share his risen life; who is alive and reigns, now and for ever. Amen.

May the God of peace,
who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus,
that great shepherd of the sheep,
make us perfect in every good work to do his will;
and the grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with us and all who we love, today and always. Amen.

(L) Let us bless the Lord. Alleluia, alleluia.

All: Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

All: May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace, and rise with Christ in glory. Amen.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SOULS OF THE RECENTLY DEPARTED,
ESPECIALLY:

JUNE LARBY; FREDDIE JONES; JUDY ASTBURY;
BETTY WRIGHT; ROY LAMB; CALEB PERFECT
ANNIE TYLER (Annie was a member of our Flower Guild for many years, and a great supporter of St Peter's)

READINGS FOR NEXT WEEK – EASTER 6

Acts 17 v 22 - 31; 1 Peter 3 v 13end; John 14 v 15 - 21

HAPPY BIRTHDAY THIS WEEK TO: DAVID PIPER (16TH)

'To live joyfully and passionately in the present moment is the goal and summit of the Christian life... It is an echo and a foretaste of the eternity that awaits us' (Bp. Stephen Cottrell)



Evening Prayer for the Easter Season (4)

O Lord open our lips,
and our mouth shall show forth your praise.

O God make speed to save us.
O Lord, make haste to help us.

In your resurrection, O Christ,
let heaven and earth rejoice. Alleluia.

Blessed are you, Sovereign Lord
the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
to you be glory and praise for ever.
From the deep waters of death
you brought your people to new birth
by raising your Son to life in triumph.
Through him dark death has been destroyed
and radiant life is everywhere restored.
As you call us out of darkness into his marvellous light
may our lives reflect his glory
and our lips repeat the endless song.
Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

This hymn may be said or sung:

The day thou gavest, Lord, is ended;
The darkness falls at Thy behest;
To Thee our morning hymns ascended,
Thy praise shall sanctify our rest.

We thank Thee that Thy church unsleeping,
While earth rolls onward into light,
Through all the world her watch is keeping,
And rests not now by day or night.

As o'er each continent and island
The dawn leads on another day,
The voice of prayer is never silent,
Nor dies the strain of praise away.

The sun that bids us rest is waking
Our brethren 'neath the western sky,
And hour by hour fresh lips are making
Thy wondrous doings heard on high.

So be it, Lord! Thy throne shall never,
Like earth's proud empires, pass away;
Thy kingdom stands, and grows for ever,
Till all Thy creatures own Thy sway.

We pray:

As our evening prayer rises before you, O God,
so may your mercy come down upon us
to cleanse our hearts
and set us free to sing your praise
now and for ever Amen.

*A Psalm is said: Mon 105; Tue 97; Wed 99; Thurs (St
Matthias) 80; Fri 66; Sat 118, ending with:*

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now and shall be for ever.
Amen.

Scripture Readings:

Monday – Deuteronomy 16 v 1 – 20, 1 Peter 1 v 1 - 12

Tuesday – Deuteronomy 17 v 8 - end, 1 Peter 1 v 13 - end

Weds – Deuteronomy 18 v 9 - end, 1 Peter 2 v 1 - 10

Thurs – 1 Samuel 16 v 1 – 13a, Matthew 7 v 15 - 27

Fri - Deuteronomy 21 v 22 to 22 v 8, 1 Peter 3 v 1 - 12

Sat – Deuteronomy 24 v 5 – end, 1 Peter 3 v 13 – end

Blessed are you, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus
Christ, for you have blest us in Christ Jesus with every
spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.

You chose us to be yours in Christ before the foundation
of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before
you.

In love you destined us for adoption as your children,
through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of your
will, to the praise of your glorious grace, which you freely
bestowed on us in the Beloved.

In you, we have redemption through the blood of
Christ, the forgiveness of our sins, according to the riches
of your grace, which you have lavished upon us.

Gospel Canticle: The Magnificat (The Song of Mary)

The stone which the builders rejected has become the
chief cornerstone. Alleluia.

1) My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit
rejoices in God my Saviour; he has looked with favour on
his lowly servant.

2) From this day all generations will call me blessed; the
Almighty has done great things for me and holy is his
name.

3) He has mercy on those who fear him, from generation
to generation.

4) He has shown strength with his arm and has scattered
the proud in their conceit,

5) Casting down the mighty from their thrones and lifting
up the lowly.

6) He has filled the hungry with good things and sent the
rich away empty.

7) He has come to the aid of his servant Israel, to
remember his promise of mercy,

8) The promise made to our ancestors, to Abraham and
his children for ever.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now and shall be for ever.
Amen.

The stone which the builders rejected has become the
chief cornerstone. Alleluia.

*Prayers of thanksgiving are made for the day that is
ending. Intercessions are offered for the church, the world
and for individuals, the sick and the departed.*

Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us:
Our Father, who art in heaven ...

Risen Christ, your wounds declare your love for the world
and the wonder of your risen life: give us compassion and
courage to risk ourselves for those we serve, to the glory
of God the Father. Amen.

Lighten our darkness, Lord, we pray, and in your great
mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night,
for the love of your only Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all
evermore. Amen.

May the risen Christ grant us the joys of eternal life.
Amen.

Let us bless the Lord. Alleluia, alleluia.

Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy
of God, rest in peace. Amen.

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