

Telephone Service 21May23

Welcome to our service on this 7th (and last) Sunday of Easter

Let's begin with an ancient Easter **confession of faith**:

Christ has died, Christ is Risen, Christ will come again. Allelujah, **Allelujah**

Prayer of invitation

Grant, we pray, almighty God, that as we believe your only begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ to have ascended in great triumph to your kingdom in heaven and from there would send your Holy Spirit to comfort and strengthen us, so we, in heart and mind, may also thither ascend, and with him continually dwell, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Hymn Crown him with many Crowns *by Matthew Bridges*

1. Crown him with many crowns, the Lamb upon the throne;
Hark! How the heavenly anthem drowns all music but its own;
Awake my soul and sing of him who died for thee,
And hail him as thy matchless King through all eternity
2. Crown him the Lord of love, behold his hands and side
Those wounds yet visible above, in beauty glorified
No angel in the sky can fully bear that sight
As downward bends his burning eye at mystery so bright
3. Crown him the Lord of Peace whose power a sceptre sways
from pole to pole what wars may cease and all be prayer and praise
His grace shall know no end, and round his pierced feet
fair flowers of paradise extend their fragrance ever sweet.
4. Crown him the Lord of Years, the potentate of time
Creator of the rolling years, ineffably sublime
All hail! Redeemer, hail! For thou hast died for me;
Thy praise shall never, never fail throughout eternity

Reading Acts 1:6-14

6 Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"

7 And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority.

8 "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

9 Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.

10 And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel,
11 who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."

12 ¶ *Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey.*

13 *And when they had entered, they went up into the upper room where they were staying: Peter, James, John, and Andrew; Philip and Thomas; Bartholomew and Matthew; James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot; and Judas the son of James.*

14 *These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.*

This is the Word of God **Thanks be to God**

1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11

12 Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you;

13 but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.

14 If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified.

5:6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time,

7 casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

9 Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.

10 ¶ But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.

11 To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

This is the Word of God **Thanks be to God**

Reflection

Do you have a dog or did you? Does it obey? Have you trained it?

We taught our Albanian dog, Roj, with a biscuit on nose and saying WAIT

One of the hardest things to learn, for a dog or humans, is waiting.

We taught our girls about something called 'delayed gratification' - that is: 'not yet ...wait'

Today I want to talk about Promises and Patience

Today is 43 days since Easter, the week before Pentecost & 3 days after the Ascension when Jesus promised his followers in Acts 1:8 that he'd send the presence and power of his Spirit. *You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.* so they'd returned to Jerusalem to wait

'Waiting' was not 'idling around' The angels had already warned against this in Acts 1:11 *"Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."*

Was Jesus really coming back in a few days time, or would he be sending his representative until he did?

Whatever, they had to wait. They had to wait in faith until they found out

For Christians waiting isn't being idle, it's an actively. It requires watching and waiting - like an alert waiter.

So the disciples went back to Jerusalem. They got down on their knees, humbling themselves under the mighty hand of God, and prayed: or as Peter in 1Pet 5:6 says: *casting all our cares on him*

And as they waited on God for his *due time* (his right moment) for the event that Jesus had promised, they warred against the Devil who tried to cast doubt and disbelief to submerge them like throwing a heavy cloak over them.

They resisted this oppressive roaring lion '*steadfast in the faith*' They resisted by not giving any ground to the Devil. Theirs was a resilient faith that held onto the promises of God. Waiting was warring.

But by now they had waited da -y-s and nothing had happened.

Having to wait with nothing happening is the always hardest time . They say the darkest hour is before the dawn.

But Christians have this advantage. We have the promise that Father is in charge, we are not alone, and we have one in heaven praying for us. In the Gospel reading in Jn 17 Jesus said *I pray for them. Holy Father, keep them - keep them steadfast, keep them holding on to the promises, keep them trusting, keep them in peace. keep them* Promises are powerful things, especially divine ones - they keep us in times of waiting.

Do we have a Bible promise, do we have something God has put on our hearts that we keep going back to?

Maybe we've got weary with waiting for something to happen.

At this time are we waiting for the power and presence of the Holy Spirit to come on us, our families, our nation, our churches, and our world? Are we waiting for Pentecost?

God has promised to those who pray a revival of spiritual life like renewing rain after a dry season, but so far there's not a wisp of a cloud.

In the meanwhile, while we wait, hold on to promises like we read last Sunday in Is 40:30: *God promises even youths shall faint and be weary, And the young men shall utterly fall, BUT those who wait on the LORD Shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.* Scripture constantly calls us to wait

In Ps 27:14 David says **Wait on the LORD; Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart; wait, I say, on the LORD!**

In Ps 37:7 it says: *Do not fret (don't worry) Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him;*

Jesus said in Luke 12:36 *... be like men who wait for their master.*

Paul encouraged the Galatians in ch 5:5 *We through the Spirit eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.*

& to the Philippians in ch 3:20 *For our citizenship (our eternal home) is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ,*

He WILL return promised the angels in Acts 1. But meanwhile he promises that he will also give you his Spirit

So whatever our circumstances: Hold on, hang in there, help is coming. The night will end, the day will break. The Spirit of Hope and peace and blessing is near, Jesus is coming. So *watch and pray. Wait!*

Hymn Be still and know *Author unknown. Based on Psalm 46*

1. Be still and know that I am God, Be still and know that I am God, Be still and know that I am God
- 2 I am the Lord that leadeth thee, I am the Lord that leadeth thee, I am the Lord that leadeth thee,
- 3 In thee O Lord I put my trust, In thee O Lord I put my trust, In thee O Lord I put my trust,

Prayers

a) **Confession** of our sins

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, we confess that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed

Lord have mercy **Lord have mercy**

We have not loved you with all our heart, and have not loved our neighbour as ourselves

Christ have mercy **Christ have mercy**

In your mercy forgive what we have been, help us to amend what we are, and direct what we shall be

Lord have mercy **Lord have mercy**

May the Father forgive you by the death of his Son and strengthen you by his risen life in the power of his Spirit.

b) **Forgiveness for the faithful**

May the Father forgive you by the death of his Son and strengthen you to live his risen life by the power of his Spirit

Amen

c) **Collect** Eternal God, giver of love and power, your Son Jesus Christ has sent us into all the world to

preach the gospel of his kingdom; confirm and empower us by your Spirit in this mission, and help us to live the good

news we proclaim; through Jesus Christ our Lord Amen

d) Concerns for others

We pray for our World blighted with wars in Ukraine & Sudan, and violence in Palestine, Pakistan, & other places

We pray for those struggling with drought and floods, and those seeking to bring aid

Lord in your mercy **hear our prayer**

We pray for all those in leadership, in governments, in industry, in teaching, in transportation, and in health

Lord in your mercy **hear our prayer**

we pray for those trying to make ends meet in farming, fishing, in the hospitality quarter, in caring professions

Lord in your mercy **hear our prayer**

We pray for those suffering physically, mentally, and emotionally, and spiritually, through loss of health, loss of jobs, and loss of loved ones

Lord in your mercy **hear our prayer**

We pray for those who wait in hope and whose hopes have been dashed

Lord in your mercy **hear our prayer**

We pray for your church to be strong and faithful as we await the coming of Pentecost, and the Return of our Saviour. Make us to be a light in the darkness, a compass in confusion, and a rock in uncertainty when so much is failing and changing.

Lord in your mercy **hear our prayer**

Thank you Father, your mercies are new every morning, great is your faithfulness; thank you Jesus your grace is sufficient for all our needs; thank you Holy Spirit you are our comforter and counsellor leading us into all truth.

Great God, we give our hearts into your hands with waiting hope and confident trust

Lord in your mercy **hear our prayer**

and so we pray together (though maybe alone) with all Christ's family the prayer Jesus taught us to say

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread

And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that 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

Hymn O Breath of life *by Elizabeth Ann Porter Head*

1. O Breath of life, come sweeping through us, Revive thy church with life and pow'r

O Breath of life, come cleanse, renew us, and fit thy church to meet this hour;

2. O Wind of God, come bend us break us, till humbly we confess our need;

then, in thy tenderness remake us; revive, restore - for this we plead.

3. O Breath of Love, come breathe with us, Renewing thought and will and heart.

Come, love of Christ, afresh to win us; revive thy church in every part.

4. Revive us, Lord; is zeal abating while harvest fields are vast, and white?

Revive us Lord, the world is waiting - equip thy church to spread the light

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you

The Lord turn his face toward you and give you his peace and

The blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be with you this day, and until we see Jesus, and then for evermore **Amen**

Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England,

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John 17:1-11

- 1 ¶ Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You,
- 2 "as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him.
- 3 "And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.
- 4 "I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.
- 5 "And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.
- 6 ¶ "I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word.
- 7 "Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You.
- 8 "For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me.
- 9 "I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours.
- 10 "And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them.
- 11 ¶ "Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are.