



St George's Anglican Church | Malvern

Fifth Sunday of Easter

24 April 2016

Sentence 'I give you a new commandment,' says the Lord, 'that you love one another. As I have loved you, you also should love one another.'
John 13.34

Collect

We behold your glory, O God,
in the love shown by your Son,
lifted up on the cross and exalted on high:
be glorified anew in the love we have for one another
as disciples of the risen Lord Jesus,
who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Peter must defend his decision to associate with baptised Gentiles who have not also become Jewish. Although it seems their joining the community of faith is settled, eating with them is controversial. The full inclusion of all the baptised – slaves, free, women and men, Jews and Gentiles – all on an equal footing will continue to surface for some time and is still debated in some parts of the Church today. It is always salutary to look around the assembly and ask 'who is missing?' It is often those who make us feel uncomfortable or who believe we would reject or judge them if they came along.

The apostles and the believers who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also accepted the word of God. So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him, saying, 'Why did you go to uncircumcised men and eat with them?' Then Peter began to explain it to them, step by step, saying, 'I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision. There was something like a large sheet coming down from heaven, being lowered by its four corners; and it came close to me. As I looked at it closely I saw four-footed animals, beasts of prey, reptiles, and birds of the air. I also heard a voice saying to me, "Get up, Peter; kill and eat." But I replied, "By no means, Lord; for nothing profane or unclean has ever entered my mouth." But a second time the voice answered from heaven, "What God has made clean, you must not call profane." This happened three times; then everything was

pulled up again to heaven. At that very moment three men, sent to me from Caesarea, arrived at the house where we were. The Spirit told me to go with them and not to make a distinction between them and us. These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man's house. He told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house and saying, "Send to Joppa and bring Simon, who is called Peter; he will give you a message by which you and your entire household will be saved." And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as it had upon us at the beginning. And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said, "John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit." If then God gave them the same gift that he gave us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could hinder God? When they heard this, they were silenced. And they praised God, saying, 'Then God has given even to the Gentiles the repentance that leads to life.'

Acts 11.1-18

Reader For the word of the Lord

All **Thanks be to God**

Psalm 148 at 8am APBA, page 378, at 10am Hymn Book 94

This psalm is a hymn of praise from heavenly beings as well as from the earth – humans and creatures and nature itself. Human prayer mirrors the worship of heaven. If we wrote a psalm like this today we would say something like this, 'praise God all gum trees and kangaroo; kookaburra and cold Southern ocean, praise the Lord!'

A reading from the book of Revelation

This is John the Seer's vision of the new heaven, the new earth, and the new Jerusalem. These "new things" have been established in principle through the resurrection, and they are anticipated in the life of the Church. Now God does indeed dwell with his people, though only in the veiled form of the word and the sacraments. Here there is a foretaste of that joy. But not until the end will all tears be wiped away from the eyes of his people. Mourning and crying and pain are certainly not unknown in the Church, but faith sees that even now all things are being made new.

I, John, saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,

prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,
'See, the home of God is among mortals.
He will dwell with them;
they will be his peoples,
and God himself will be with them;
he will wipe every tear from their eyes.
Death will be no more;
mourning and crying and pain will be no more,
for the first things have passed away.'
And the one who was seated on the throne said, 'See, I am making all things new.' Also he said, 'Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.' Then he said to me, 'It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life. *Revelation 21.1-6*

Reader May your word live in us,
ALL And bear much fruit to your glory.

Gospel Acclamation

ALL Alleluia! Alleluia!
Just as I have loved you,
you also should love one another.

ALL Alleluia! Alleluia!

Reader The Lord be with you.

ALL And also with you

Reader A reading from the holy gospel according to St John

ALL Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ

John seems to have in mind an early Christian hymn. It celebrated the enthronement of Christ as Son of man at his exaltation and looked forward to his coming in glory. John shifts from the past tense to the future and has Jesus say these words before his glory is revealed on the cross, resurrection and ascension to God, the heart of John's theology of glory. The command to love on another was not new; it is the Torah as a command from God through Moses. Jesus however, adds, 'as I have loved you.' He loved us more than he loved himself; we are to seek to be as loving as God's grace makes possible if we are to emulate him.

During the supper, when Judas had gone out, Jesus said, 'Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. Little children, I am with you only a little longer.

You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, "Where I am going, you cannot come." I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.'

John 13.31-35

Reader For the Gospel of the Lord

ALL Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

Bible Readings next week Sixth Sunday in Easter

Acts 16.9-15 Ps. 67 Revelation 21.10-14, 21.22-22.5

John 14.23-29

Prayer for the Week

Saving God, who called your Church to witness
that you were in Christ reconciling the world to yourself:
help us so to proclaim the good news of your live,
that all who hear it may be reconciled to you;
through him who died for us and rose again
and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Pray for the Faithful Departed

We remember before God: Arthur Clark, *Priest*, Florence Hale,
Leslie Clifton Blackman, Henry Sullivan, Constance Jean Sawyer,
Mary Frances Hewett, Edith Manning, George Bloom, Frank Oldfield,
George Granger, *whose anniversaries occur this week.*

Commemorations of the week

April 25 Anzac Day. April 25 Mark, evangelist, considered (not with certainty) as the author of Mark's Gospel and as the John Mark, whose mother's house was used by the apostles, and as the person mentioned in Mark.14.51. Later a disciple of Peter, Paul and Barnabas, and was with Paul in his Roman imprisonment. **April 29 Catherine of Sienna** (1347-1389), member of the Dominican Order, spiritual writer and teacher, worker for the sick in hospitals and a woman of great sanctity and influence in the Middle Ages.