



Sixth Sunday of Easter

21 May 2017

Sentence ‘Those who love me will keep my word,’ Jesus promises, ‘and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them’. *John 14.23*

Collect O God, you have prepared for those who love you joys beyond our understanding; pour into our hearts such love for you, that, loving you above all else, we may obtain your promises that exceed all we can desire; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Paul is seen here as a philosopher, able to speak of the good news to the Athenians in a way they can relate to. He does this by drawing on world views common to Greeks and Jews and then showing how God was doing a new thing in Jesus, risen Christ. Some scoffed but others believed.

Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, ‘Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way. For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, “To an unknown god.” What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. From one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him—though indeed he is not far from each one of us. For “In

him we live and move and have our being”; as even some of your own poets have said, “For we too are his offspring.” Since we are God’s offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.’

Acts 17.22-31

Reader Hear the word of the Lord

ALL Thanks be to God

Psalm 66.7-19 APBA page 286

This psalm brings together individual praise and that of the community and invited Gentiles to join in since God has not let us be excluded from God’s redemption.

A reading from the first letter of Peter

This passage is teaching about the divinity and humanity of Jesus. He died ‘in the flesh’ (humanity) and was raised to new life by God (divinity). So, resurrection is not a part of us that survives but the whole person raised to transformed life by God.

Finally, all of you, have unity of spirit, sympathy, love for one another, a tender heart, and a humble mind. Do not repay evil for evil or abuse for abuse; but, on the contrary, repay with a blessing. It is for this that you were called—that you might inherit a blessing. For

“Those who desire life

and desire to see good days,

let them keep their tongues from evil

and their lips from speaking deceit;

let them turn away from evil and do good;

let them seek peace and pursue it.

For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous,

and his ears are open to their prayer.

But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.’

Now who will harm you if you are eager to do what is good? But even if you do suffer for doing what is right, you are blessed. Do not fear what they fear, and do not be intimidated, but in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be ready to make your defence to anyone who demands from you an account of the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and reverence. Keep your conscience clear, so that, when you are maligned, those who abuse you for your good conduct in Christ may be put to shame. For it is better to suffer for doing good, if suffering should be God's will, than to suffer for doing evil. For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit, in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, who in former times did not obey, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight people, were saved through water. And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you—not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him. *1 Peter 3.8-22*

Reader May your word live in us
ALL **and bear much fruit to your glory.**

Gospel Acclamation

ALL **Alleluia! Alleluia!**
 All who love me will keep my words;
 and my father will love them and we will come to them.

ALL **Alleluia!**

Reader The Lord be with you

ALL **And also with you**

Reader A reading from the holy gospel according to John

ALL **Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ**

This reading continues last Sunday's portion and take us to the heart of John's gospel with its spirituality of abiding in Jesus, just as Jesus abides in God whom he calls 'father' to describe profound intimacy and common purpose.

Jesus said to his disciples, 'If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you for ever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you. 'I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them.'

John 14.15-21

Reader For the Gospel of the Lord
ALL **Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ**

Prayer for the Week Eternal God, whose Son Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life: grant that we may walk in his way, rejoice in his truth, and share his risen life; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Bible Readings this week and next Sunday

Thursday. Ascension Day Eucharist 10.15am

Acts 1.1-11 Psalm 47 Ephesians 1.15-23 Matthew 28.16-20

Seventh Sunday after Easter (Sunday after Ascension)

Acts 1.6-14 Ps 68. 1-10, 32-35 1 Peter 5 John 17.1-11

Pray for the Faithful Departed: We remember before God:

Ethel Cameron, Ian Harry (Toby) Cuming, Nancy Hillier, Elsie May Smith, Sabina Beatrice Victoria Westcott, Hilda (Peg) Payne, Elizabeth Armstrong, Janet Lloyd, Percival Philp (Peter) Jackson, Elwood (Ted) Chandler, Betty Cuming, Margaret Courtney and Jean Frances Cramer, *whose anniversaries occur this week.*

Commemorations of the Week: Thursday. Ascension Day

when the Church celebrates the teaching that, following the resurrection, Jesus ascended into heaven after 40 days. This is the 'timetable' presented in Luke-Acts. The teaching speaks of the significance of Jesus' place in God's purposes and that our humanity is taken into heaven with Jesus, who is and remains, truly human and truly divine.

May 31 The Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary to Elizabeth.

Recorded in Luke. 1.39-45, followed by Mary's Song of Praise, the Magnificat (Luke.1.46-55). The story is that Mary leaves Nazareth to journey to the hill country around Jerusalem to visit her cousin Elizabeth, who in old age is also surprisingly pregnant. Elizabeth's husband is serving in the Temple and thus residing nearby. The traditional site of this meeting is now called Ein Kerem where the village well can still be found and the event commemorated in a beautiful church. The two women embrace; each carries within her life the fulfilment of God's promise to visit and redeem God's people through the birth of the long awaited messiah and his forerunner, John Baptist.

Two images of the Visitation from Ein Kerem Church, Israel



