

Fourth Sunday after Pentecost.

Yr B [11]

17 June 2018

Sentence

In Christ, God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us.

2 Corinthians 5.19

Prayer of the day.

O God, at whose bidding the seed will sprout
and the shoot grow towards full stature,
hear the prayer of your assembled people.

Make us trust in your hidden ways,
that we may pray with confidence
and wait for your kingdom now growing in our midst.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever.

Amen.

A reading from the book of the prophet Ezekiel.

Ezekiel wrote his prophecies in 6th century Babylon during the exile of the Jews from their homeland. Ezekiel's allegory of the cedar tree is a source of the imagery Jesus uses in the parable of the mustard seed.

Thus says the Lord GOD:
I myself will take a sprig
from the lofty top of a cedar;
I will set it out.
I will break off a tender one
from the topmost of its young twigs;
I myself will plant it

on a high and lofty mountain.
On the mountain height of Israel
I will plant it,
in order that it may produce boughs and bear fruit,
and become a noble cedar.
Under it every kind of bird will live;
in the shade of its branches will nest
winged creatures of every kind.
All the trees of the field shall know
that I am the LORD.
I bring low the high tree,
I make high the low tree;
I dry up the green tree
and make the dry tree flourish.
I the LORD have spoken;
I will accomplish it.

Ezekiel 17.22-24

Reader Hear the word of the Lord

ALL **Thanks be to God**

Psalm 92.1-4, 12-15 APBA, 320

This psalm reflects one strand of theology, that God rewards the righteous so that they are like fruitful trees. However, there is another strand that recognises that the righteous do not always prosper and the wicked sometimes flourish.

A reading from the second letter of Paul to the Corinthians.

For Paul, 'being in Christ' is already to be in the new creation which is reversing the harm done to the old creation through Christ's love for us which urges Christians to deeds of love.

Brothers and sisters, we are always confident; even though we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord— for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yes, we do have confidence, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. So

whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. For all of us must appear before the judgement seat of Christ, so that each may receive recompense for what has been done in the body, whether good or evil. For the love of Christ urges us on, because we are convinced that one has died for all; therefore all have died. And he died for all, so that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised for them. From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!

2 Cor. 5.6-10, 14-17.

Reader May your word live in us

ALL **And bear much fruit to your glory**

Gospel Acclamation

ALL **Alleluia, alleluia!**

With many parables Jesus spoke to them,
and they were able to hear it.

ALL **Alleluia, alleluia!**

Reader The Lord be with you

ALL **And also with you**

Reader A reading from the holy gospel according to Mark

ALL **Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ**

These two parables invite us to see that God's kingdom is already growing, its seed 'hidden' in the life of Jesus. The contrast between the tiny seed sown in the earth which emerges to become a large plant, is like the tiny beginnings of God's redemptive work which has already and will yet of cosmic effect.

Such a large crowd gathered around Jesus that he got into a boat and began to teach them using many parables. Jesus said, "The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground, and would sleep

and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how. The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. But when the grain is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle, because the harvest has come.' Jesus also said, 'With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.' With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it; he did not speak to them except in parables, but he explained everything in private to his disciples.

Mark 4.26-34

Reader For the Gospel of the Lord

ALL Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ

Bible Readings next week 24 June 2018

Peter and Paul, apostles & martyrs *transferred*

Acts 12.1-11 Ps 87 2 Timothy 4.6-8, 17-18 John 21.15-22

Pray for the Faithful Departed

We remember before God: Iain Courcoux, Judith McMullen, Harry Hewett, Kristina Smith, Edward Butler, Colin Wilkinson, Nicholas Sanderson, Frederick Blundell Preston Minchin, Ada Mavis Phillips, T. Harvey Barnett and Myra McSpedden *whose anniversaries occur this week.*

Prayer of the Week

Lord, we beseech you to keep your family, the Church, in continual godliness, that through your protection it may be free from all adversities, and devoutly given to serve you in good works, to the glory of your name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Commemorations of the Week

June 22 Alban, the first British martyr (d. c.209). Few details are known about him; he is thought to have been a Roman soldier, who sheltered a priest and was converted and baptised by him. Alban was arrested and martyred for refusing to sacrifice to the pagan gods. The site of his martyrdom is near the city of St Alban's in Hertfordshire, where the Cathedral (with the longest nave of any in the world) is dedicated in his name. He is commemorated in a window in the North transept of St George's.