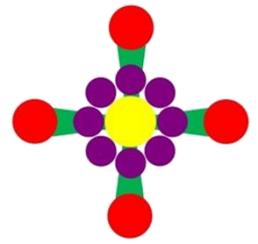


**The Benefice of
Harden, Wilsden, Cullingworth, Denholme
15 May 2022
The Fifth Sunday of Easter**



Our Service today was put together by Anna

The Preparation

Greeting

We meet in the name of God:
**God the Father,
God the Son,
God the Spirit:
God is one.**

Opening Response

Let everything be said and done in the name of the Lord Jesus,
giving thanks to God through Jesus Christ.

Sing psalms, hymns and sacred songs:
let us sing to God with thankful hearts.

Open our lips, Lord:
and we shall praise your name.

In the name of the Father,
and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Opening Prayer

Faithful one, whose word is life:
come with saving power
to free our praise,
inspire our prayer
and shape our lives
for the kingdom of your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

St Paul says

'Be imitators of God; love as Christ loved;
do not grieve the Holy Spirit; put away all anger and bitterness,
all slander and malice.'

So let us confess our sins to God, who forgives us in Christ.

Confession

Lord God, our maker and our redeemer,
this is your world and we are your people:
come among us and save us.

We have wilfully misused your gifts of creation;

Lord, be merciful:

forgive us our sin.

We have seen the ill-treatment of others
and have not gone to their aid;

Lord, be merciful:

forgive us our sin.

We have condoned evil and dishonesty
and failed to strive for justice;

Lord, be merciful:

forgive us our sin.

We have heard the good news of Christ,
but have failed to share it with others;

Lord, be merciful:

forgive us our sin.

We have not loved you with all our heart,
nor our neighbours as ourselves;

Lord, be merciful:

forgive us our sin.

Absolution

May the God of love and power
forgive us and free us from our sins,
heal and strengthen us by his Spirit,
and raise us to new life in Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

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**

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

New Testament Reading: Acts 11. 1-18

The apostles and the believers throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God. So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticised him and said, 'You went into the house of uncircumcised men and ate with them.'

Starting from the beginning, Peter told them the whole story: 'I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision. I saw something like a large sheet being let down from heaven by its four corners, and it came down to where I was. I looked into it and saw four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, reptiles and birds. Then I heard a voice telling me, "Get up, Peter. Kill and eat." 'I replied, "Surely not, Lord! Nothing impure or unclean has ever entered my mouth."

'The voice spoke from heaven a second time, "Do not call anything impure that God has made clean." This happened three times, and then it was all pulled up to heaven again.

'Right then three men who had been sent to me from Caesarea stopped at the house where I was staying. The Spirit told me to have no hesitation about going with them. These six brothers also went with me, and we entered the man's house. He told us how he had seen an angel appear in his house and say, "Send to Joppa for Simon who is called Peter. He will bring you a message through which you and all your household will be saved."

'As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came on them as he had come on us at the beginning. Then I remembered what the Lord had said: "John baptised with water, but you will be baptised with the Holy Spirit." So if God gave them

the same gift he gave us who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could stand in God's way?'

When they heard this, they had no further objections and praised God, saying, 'So then, even to Gentiles God has granted repentance that leads to life.'

Thanks be to God for the gift of his word.

Gospel Reading: John 13.31-35

When he was gone, Jesus said, 'Now the Son of Man is glorified and God is glorified in him. If God is glorified in him, God will glorify the Son in himself, and will glorify him at once.'

'My children, I will be with you only a little longer. You will look for me, and just as I told the Jews, so I tell you now: where I am going, you cannot come.'

'A new command I give you: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.'

Simon Peter asked him, 'Lord, where are you going?'

Jesus replied, 'Where I am going, you cannot follow now, but you will follow later.'

Peter asked, 'Lord, why can't I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you.' Then Jesus answered, 'Will you really lay down your life for me? Very truly I tell you, before the cock crows, you will disown me three times!'

Thanks be to God for the gift of his Holy Word.

Reflection from Richard

My journey reading a chapter of the Bible each day since I arrived here has brought me now towards the end of Mark's Gospel. As the story has progressed I've been really struck by the way that God's love expands.

At the beginning of the Bible we read how God makes the world and then creates Adam and Eve. As the story develops he loves the people of a chosen family, caring for them and leading them amid the population of the world.

That love then expands to embrace a whole nation of Israel as Jacob walks with God. And God saves the nation from their slavery in Egypt and establishes them in the Promised Land.

As the Journey continues into the New Testament we see God come to be with us in Jesus and we recognise his death for the people of the whole world.

Peter gets that same message in our reading today. God makes it clear that his message of salvation is not only for the Jewish people, but is for all people. And it is wonderful that this reading is paired with Jesus command that we “Love one another.”

This is a reminder that we do not only love those closest to us, or those that we know, or those that we like! But rather God’s commission to us and his great challenge and joy is that we have a responsibility to love our neighbour, to love everyone.

Today marks the start of Christian Aid Week. This is one way that, in our support for Christian Aid, we can show our love for people who we will never meet or know.

Christian Aid work in many places across the world, helping us to live out our faith in action and enabling us to love one another.

Take time to pray for their work this week, perhaps find out more about some of the things that they are doing across the world. And seek to follow God’s command, loving those far away, those we will never meet or know.

And let us not forget too, to love those closer to us, our family and friends, our neighbours, those we like and even those we find it very hard to love!

Profession of Faith

**We believe in God the Father,
from whom every family
in heaven and on earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son,
who lives in our hearts through faith,
and fills us with his love.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens us
with power from on high.**

**We believe in one God;
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession led by Beverly Hurst

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the Father,
give us wisdom and faith to trust in you.
When we cannot see your presence,
when the way is full of darkness and doubt,
increase our faith and help us to know that you will never leave
us or forsake us,
for you are ever with us, Jesus Christ our Lord,
to whom with the Father and the Holy Spirit
be all honour and glory, now and forever.
Amen.

Lord, we rejoice that we abide in you and in your great love;
you accept us when we find it hard to accept ourselves or each other.
We pray that you will strengthen the fellowship of your people,
that you will sustain us in our unity and help us to know we are one in you.
We pray for all who are striving to realise the unity that you
give to your church.
We pray for inter-church relationships and all groups that help
to break down barriers.

Lord, lead us from despair to hope,
from division to wholeness.

Lord, we remember before you all areas of ethnic violence and racial hatred,
for all places where there is division, strife and animosity.

We remember and continue to pray for the peoples of Ukraine:
We pray for those living in terror of death
For those people fleeing to find safety
For those who cause violence to others
We pray that the truth of the situation is made clear to everyone
We pray for the courage to speak out where changes can be made
We pray for the Russian Church that they will find the courage to challenge the Russian leaders.

We pray for the United Nations, European Leaders and all leaders of the world to speak out and make Herculean efforts to end the war in Ukraine and to find peace in all areas of conflict across the world.

Lord, lead us from despair to hope,
from division to wholeness.

We give thanks for our own homes and their love.
We give thanks for those who are opening their homes to all peoples fleeing war and violence, we thank them for their care and compassion.
We pray for homes of strife and discord, homes where there is neglect, abuse or violence.
We remember homes where there is no love or where love is betrayed.
We pray for all families suffering from a breakdown in their relationships.

Lord, lead us from despair to hope,
from division to wholeness.

We pray for all who are ill at this time, for all those in hospital or being cared for at home.
We pray for all who are living in Care or Nursing homes and for all those who care and look after them.
We ask your blessing on loved ones and friends who are suffering at this time.

Lord, lead us from despair to hope,
from division to wholeness.

We look forward to the day when we will share fully in the communion of saints, when we will be one in the Spirit and one in the Lord.

We pray for loved ones departed, for all who have gone before us in the faith,
and for the day when we will share with them in your kingdom.

Merciful Father,
**accept these prayers,
for the sake of your Son,
Our Saviour, Jesus Christ, Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray
**Our Father in heaven
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come your will be done
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us,
lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.**

Song of Praise

The love of God has been poured into our hearts
through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.
We dwell in him and he in us.
Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his name,
make known his deeds among the peoples.
Sing to him, sing praises to him,
and speak of all his marvellous works.
Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God almighty,
who was and is and is to come.

The Blessing

**God of power,
may the boldness of your Spirit transform us,
may the gentleness of your Spirit lead us,
may the gifts of your Spirit equip us to serve and worship you
now and always.**

Sending Out

Go in peace to love and to serve the Lord
In the name of Christ. Amen