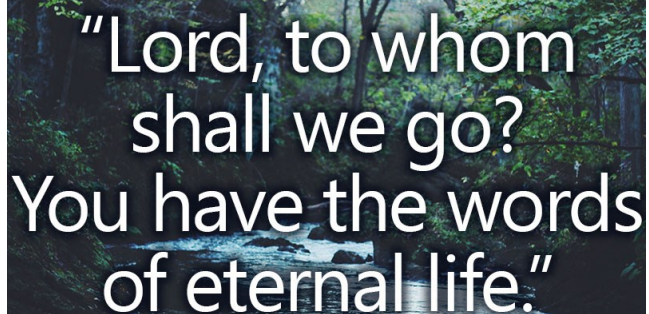


HOLY TRINITY CUCKFIELD

Joyfully serving Jesus



“Lord, to whom
shall we go?
You have the words
of eternal life.”

Weekly devotions, prayers and news
The Twelfth Sunday after Trinity
22nd August 2021

Simon Peter answered him, ‘Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life.’

Dear Friends,

I do hope that you are finding some opportunity for refreshment during this season, even if home-based or home-spun! Many will know that I have been fortunate to spend several days away travelling the south coast, reaching the Scilly Isles on a glorious day which I spent in the Abbey Gardens on Tresco. As I told several people, the last time I visited the Scillies was when I was about seven years old - so long ago that it was on a paddle-steamer!

Such restorative opportunities play an important part of Our Lord’s journey through his ministry, when the Gospel writers often describe his retreating to a quiet place to be refreshed both physically and spiritually. We are in good company. I am often struck by the large number of people either sitting in church or the churchyard.

Whether in our holy spaces or elsewhere, I hope that you, too, will allow God to sustain you in love within your quiet times. Amidst the trials and turmoils of modern life, and so many situations here and around the world, we are called to allow God to abide, as the psalmist eloquently posits in Psalm 46: ‘Be still, and know that I am God!’

With love,

Michael (Vicar)

Church website: www.holytrinitycuckfield.org

Twelfth Sunday after Trinity (22 August 2021)

8.00 Holy Communion (in church) Reader: Roger Edmonston

9.45 Family Eucharist (in church and online - see website to book)

Readers: Eileen & Jim Knight; Intercessor: Isobel Simmonds

12noon Holy Baptism Grace Autumn Iris Saunders

1pm Holy Baptism Eliza Sage Holman

Services during the week:

Wednesday: 10.30 Holy Communion (C. Worship) (in church & online)

Readings: 1 Thessalonians 2: 9-13; Matthew 23: 27-32

Thursday: 9.00 Holy Communion (Iona/Celtic) (online only)

Readings: 1 Thessalonians 3: 7-end; Matthew 24: 42-end

Friday: 11.00 Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer) Readings: Twelfth Sunday after Trinity (online only)

Next Sunday: Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity (29th August 2021)

8.00 Holy Communion (in church)

9.45 Family Eucharist (in church and online - see website to book)

12noon Holy Baptism Isabelle Grace Harris

Most services live on Zoom: Click the blue link on the front page of the church website before services, entering a waiting ‘area’ before joining everyone.

The Collect for Twelfth Sunday after Trinity

God of constant mercy,
who sent your Son to save us:
remind us of your goodness,
increase your grace within us,
that our thankfulness may grow,
through our Saviour Jesus Christ.
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen

The Post Communion Prayer:

God of all mercy,
in this eucharist you have set aside
our sins and given us your healing:
grant that we who
are made whole in Christ
may bring that healing
to this broken world,
in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

Joshua 24: 1-2a, 14-18

Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel; and they presented themselves before God. And Joshua said to all the people, 'Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: Long ago your ancestors—Terah and his sons Abraham and Nahor—lived beyond the Euphrates and served other gods. 'Now therefore revere the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. Now if you are unwilling to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.'

Then the people answered, 'Far be it from us that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods; for it is the Lord our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight. He protected us along all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed; and the Lord drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the Lord, for he is our God.'

Ephesians 6: 10-20

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. Put on the whole armour of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

Therefore take up the whole armour of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints. Pray also for me, so that when I speak, a message may be given to me to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak.

John 6: 56-69

Jesus said, 'Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live for ever.' He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum.

When many of his disciples heard it, they said, 'This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?' But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, 'Does this offend you? Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. But among you there are some who do not believe.' For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe, and who was the one that would betray him. And he said, 'For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father.'

Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. So Jesus asked the twelve, 'Do you also wish to go away?' Simon Peter answered him, 'Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.'

A thought

This Sunday finally brings us to the end of this long chapter of St John's Gospel, and the reflection that Jesus is the Bread of Life. We are invited to decide our own responses to the claims Christ makes for himself, and the extraordinary language in which he expresses himself. The way Jesus speaks is 'hard'. This is quite understandable: we have been told that we must eat the flesh of Jesus and drink his blood, or we cannot have life in us. Sharing in his body is life-giving because he himself is sent by the Father and draws life from the Father (verse 56). This encapsulates the central mystery of Christ's identity. He is at once absolutely flesh and blood, as we are; living and breathing; sweating and thirsting when it's hot; bleeding when he is pierced and dying when he is hung on the tree. Yet at the same time he is absolutely united to the Father, eternally proceeding from him and with him and the Holy Spirit - the Trinity - the source of all life, all existence. Most extraordinary is that he invites all people to share in his union with God through the most intimately physical act of eating and drinking the participation of his human life, death and rising from the dead. This invitation given in this sermon recorded by St John gives us words both beautiful and horrifying, wonderful and appalling. Yet, paradoxically, these hard words of Jesus are, as St Peter says, 'the words of eternal life'. So, too, for us. To whom then can we go, if not to the one who is indeed the Bread of Life.

A prayer for this time of anxiety:

God of all compassion, your love never fails. Help us to listen to the tranquillity of your presence within our lives, so that we may grow in the knowledge that your Son, Jesus Christ, walks beside us, and your Holy Spirit comforts us at the heart of our being; for you are One God, world without end. Amen

Please remember those for whom we pray:

Immediate need: Barbara Booth, Wendy Boys, Carla Spear, Wendy Hibling, Justine, Sheila Mitchell, John Bernardi (priest), Kate Malby, Becky Parker, Keith Thompson, Carole Wooldridge, Garry Diprose, Trevor, Yvonne Godsmark

Long Term Need: Young Georgia, Young Joshua, Young Reggie, Anne Greenhill, Ros Ayling, Wendy, Ann Went, Dave Cox, Julie Sadler, Mark Parker, Tony Burbidge, Christopher, Janet Card, George Snashall, Eileen Knight, Mary Todd, Gracie & Lucy Neiff,

Those in Care Homes: Alan Prebble, Stephanie Gilpin, Jill Rockey, Jean Simmons, Mary Watts, Ruth Baker

Please remember the recently departed and their families: Amy Fielder, Veronica Ross, Anne Norris, Yvonne Ford

In our Book of Remembrance this week we remember: 22nd John McNamara, Dennis Glaister, George Morrison, Dorothy Long, Kenneth Manvell, 23rd Max Laing, Ann Berry, Margaret Williams, 26th Richard Lindsey, 27th Peggy Higginson, Barry Heath, Marjorie Church, John Knight, Nicholas Bennett, Wendy Grover, 28th Hilda Saunders