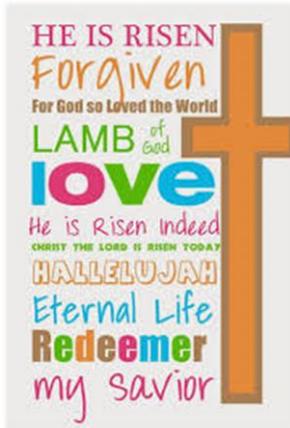


St Cuthbert's Church: Bulletin for Sunday May 17th

THE SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

ROGATION SUNDAY



Although the Prime Minister has informed us that there will be an easing of the lockdown, it is still unlikely that we shall be able to join others in worship at St. Cuthbert's in the near future. Thanks to the Internet, however, we are still able to participate, albeit in a limited way, in some form of communal worship.

If you click on the link:

<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/> you can find live streaming of church services and prayers from many churches, or you can go to the Church of England's website:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/> and find out what is happening nationally.

Whatever you choose to do, you can find the readings for this Sunday listed below. For copyright reasons, we will not be printing the full texts of the readings, so if you have not got your own Bible, you can get all the texts from the Bible Gateway website. You can even choose which version of the Bible you prefer! Here is the link:

[BibleGateway.com](https://www.biblegateway.com/)

Readings for the sixth Sunday of Easter

First reading

Acts 17. 22-31

The Epistle

1 Peter 3. 13 to end.

The Gospel

John 14. 1-11



Collect for the sixth Sunday of Easter

God our redeemer,
you have delivered us from the power of darkness
and brought us into the kingdom of your Son:
grant, that as by his death he has recalled us to life,
so by his continual presence in us he may raise us to eternal joy;

through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Today is Rogation Sunday

Rogation Sunday is the day when the Church has traditionally offered prayers for God's blessings on the fruits of the earth and the labours of those who produce our food.

The word "rogation" is from the Latin *rogare*, "to ask." Historically, the Rogation Days (the three days before Ascension Day) were a period of fasting and abstinence, asking for God's blessing on the crops for a bountiful harvest. Even though fewer of us directly derive our livelihood from the production of food today, it is good to be reminded of our dependence upon those who do and our responsibility for the environment.

Traditionally, when maps were less accurate or not easily available, a common feature of Rogation days was the ceremony of beating the bounds, in which a procession of parishioners, led by the minister and churchwardens would proceed around the boundary of their parish and pray for its protection in the forthcoming year. Some parishes still do this, but not of course, this year. More of us may be attempting to grow food for ourselves in our own gardens during lockdown so we might like to use the following prayer:



A prayer for Rogationtide:

Remember, Lord, your mercy and
loving-kindness towards us.
Bless this good earth and make it
fruitful.

Bless our labour and give us all
things needed for our daily lives

Ascension Day, Thursday 21st May



The festival of the Ascension takes place on the 40th day after Easter and traditionally marks the end of Easter.

Ascension Day is one of the earliest Christian festivals dating back to the year 68 CE. According to the New Testament, Jesus Christ met several times with his disciples during the 40 days after his resurrection to instruct them on how to carry out his teachings. Christians believe that on the 40th day he took them to the Mount of Olives, where they watched as he ascended to heaven.

Ascension Day marks the end of the Easter season and occurs ten days before Pentecost.

Read the story in *The Acts of the Apostles*.

Chapter 1, verses 1 to 11.

The Collect for Ascension Day

Risen Christ,
you have raised our human nature to the throne of heaven:
help us to seek and serve you,
that we may join you at the Father's side,
where you reign with the Spirit in glory,
now and for ever.

A prayer for all those affected by coronavirus

Keep us, good Lord, under the shadow of your mercy.
Sustain and support the anxious, be with those who care for the sick,
and lift up all who are brought low; that we may find comfort knowing that
nothing can separate us from your love in Christ Jesus our Lord.
Amen.

A reflection on this Sunday's Gospel reading from Canon Peter Bristow

And I will ask the Father and he will give you another Counsellor"
(John 14:16)

It is many years since I watched Rumpole of the Bailey, that dogged defender of the underdog and tubby imbibor of port. The television series enjoyed great popularity. With his evident distrust of the judge's intelligence, his strong sense of honour and even stronger sense of humour, Rumpole won many fictional cases and real-life fans. Moreover, his passionate, entertaining and often ingenious defence of his clients in court has shaped many people's understanding of the work of a barrister. Barristers like Rumpole defend the accused, counselling them, speaking on their behalf, arguing their case, while the defendants themselves nervously sit and watch. The accused rely heavily on the skills and legal knowledge of their barrister in the fight to prove their innocence.

Rumpole of the Bailey and the real-life barristers like him act as counsellors, or advocates, in a court of law. Jesus uses these terms, depending upon which translation of the Gospels we read, to describe the role that the Holy Spirit will play in the life of his followers after his Ascension. Does this mean that the Holy Spirit will speak for us and get us out of trouble while we sit and watch like the nervous defendants? Or is there more to being an advocate or counsellor than speaking on someone's behalf?

There are many aspects to the role of the Holy Spirit. Counselling, defending and comforting are all elements contained in what the Holy Spirit is to us in our lives. The Holy Spirit **counsels**, enables us to evaluate and decide what is best and gives us confidence to take the right path. The right path is to follow Christ's commandments and the beatitudes (Matthew 5: 1-12) for that is how we show our love for him and for the Father. But it is not easy for us, as individuals and as a Church, to know how best to put Christ's commandments and the beatitudes into action. In prayer and meditation we open ourselves to the counsel of the Spirit, advising us how we can know and serve God.

The Holy Spirit **defends** — speaks on our behalf and comes to our help in situations where we feel helpless and hopeless. The Spirit helps us to pray to the Father, to express our feelings, our needs and our hopes. As well as counselling and defending, the Spirit also **comforts** and this gift is much needed at the present time. Jesus knew that his disciples would miss him more than a child would miss a departed parent, but he makes a promise: *"I will not leave you as orphans"*. A counsellor is someone who is on your side, someone to stand beside you in the face of uncertainty and threat. The Holy Spirit is a powerful and reassuring **presence** in our lives, giving us strength to do the will of the Father even though we have never seen him. Jesus explains that rather

than simply being with us, the Holy Spirit is *in* us. Not only does the Spirit speak for us, he speaks to us in the silence of our hearts, counselling and guiding us. Jesus promises that the Holy Spirit will be one of Truth, revealing the meaning of life to those who believe, something which the world is unable to understand without help.

There is a key word in today's Gospel: it is 'another' counsellor that Jesus promises to his disciples, "another" because Jesus himself had so faithfully stood beside the disciples. Protecting them during the storm on the Sea of Galilee. Counselling them by his teaching and being their source of strength, inspiration and comfort as he shared the joys and sorrows of their lives.

The Holy Spirit works in us to **continue** the work of Jesus himself. We are now the mouths, hands and feet of Jesus. The Spirit speaks to us through others and we too can be channels of God's Word and God's truth for others. The Spirit who dwells in us enables us to share in God's work by acting as counsellors, advocates and comforters to those in need, as Christ himself did. We employ the Spirit's energy in us as we defend the defenceless, by working for justice and searching for the truth. We are inspired by the Holy Spirit when we help others by our counsel to live out Christ's commandment of love and we bring God's comfort when we share our lives, encouraging others to live by faith. Let us pray, then, that we may receive the gift of the Spirit, our Counsellor, that we too may become advocates of God's truth.

Canon Peter.

Money (again!)

Why wait until services restart again at St Cuthbert's before resuming your weekly offerings? It is really easy to donate regularly by standing order.

Ian our treasurer writes:

With the Church closed for all Services **we have no income**, apart from the members of our congregation who make their Planned Giving donations by Standing Order. The church still must be maintained and secured and unless things change, we still need to pay our Freewill offer to York Diocese each month (£2,750.00 per month). We still have many bills to pay. If you go back to the **Home Page** you will find all the information and easy to complete forms that you will need to make regular contributions to St. Cuthbert's without leaving the house.

Safeguarding

A few words from Denise Lewis, our safeguarding officer.

Reminder week.

I had a total panic this week when my debit card was refused. Why was it refused? Where was the money from the account? Were my other accounts affected? Had I been scammed? Well, no I hadn't, panic over. I had used the "contact only" to pay too many times, it was an automatic check to ensure it was me using the card. It made me think about the scams that are about. So, this is a **reminder** week. Be aware these scams are still here and being used. Never give your pin number or password to anyone. Check e mails very carefully. Among others I've had texts, telephone calls and emails to say my bank account has been hacked, my Amazon account has been hacked and I'm due a tax rebate. None were true. Be alert to these scams.

Remember to take the online safeguarding training courses while you have the time.

Remember to watch out for others.

Useful telephone numbers:

Childline: 08001111

Women's Aid: 08088029999

Samaritans: 116123

Mind: 03001233393

Remember to look after yourself.

Denise

What's happening in the Parish during the crisis.

All our regular church - based activities have come to a standstill of course, but happily it is still possible to carry on caring for others, albeit in a limited way. Read on to find out what's going on at St. Cuthbert's.

Food Bank

Janet would like to thank people for their contributions to the foodbank.

Get in touch with Deacon Janet if you want to donate items.

If in these days when shopping is difficult, you may prefer to give money rather than food, click on these links to see how you can do it. These websites will also tell you what the food banks need at the moment (no more baked beans!).

<https://middlesbrough.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/>

<https://redcararea.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-food/>

Telephone Service

While we are self-isolating the church is running a telephone service. This is a means of keeping in touch with the congregation, especially those who do not have regular contact with others. We are telephoning as many as possible. Inevitably there are those who slip through the net. If you have not had a call or know someone who would appreciate a call, contact the church mobile phone leaving details, on **07715298711** (voice message or text), we will get back to you. If you cannot leave your home and need a prescription or shopping let us know. We can help you. Perhaps you just need a chat, it's always good to hear a friendly voice.

Denise Lewis



Telephone prayer group

Anyone afraid, lonely or in need of fellowship can join me in prayer daily/weekly as preferred. Just because we are isolated as Christians, we should never feel we are abandoned.

Best Wishes

Elizabeth **07807416007**

Elizabeth Furnell

Cuthbert Bear's Corner



***The Bible reading for today is from
John 14 verses 15 – 21***

(If you haven't got a children's Bible, you might like to ask a grownup to read the story to you.)

Jesus tells his disciples that his Father will send something to help them when he is gone from the world, the spirit of truth. Jesus says, "Who keeps my commands loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father and I too will love them."

Activities

1. How do you show your love for God? Do something every day to show your love for God.
2. Think about the people you love. We don't always say in words that we love them but show our love in other ways. How do you show your love for them?



3. Find how to say 'I love you' in at least two other languages. Say it to the people you love.
4. Do something to show your love for those people close to you
Denise

More stuff for kids

Together at Home

Children in lockdown may well not be getting any religious education. Janet C. found a website which concerned parents might find both useful and fun

<https://www.tath.co.uk/>

This offers children's activities. Some of them are lectionary based and in age appropriate language. It also uses Facebook, including putting some of their worksheets in pdf on it. If you have children at home, you might like to try it; it looks good.



Readers' Contributions

Coronavirus seems to have been the cause of some of you getting creative or dusting off your old poetry books, so this week we have two poems for you.

From Marie Tombs

A poem for all.

If we all said a prayer for each other every day,
What a wonderful world it would be
I would ask God to guide you and bless you each day
Knowing you would say the same for me.
The world would be joyful and peaceful
Earth would change to heaven you see
If we all said a prayer for each other every day,
What a wonderful world it would be.

Thank God for the visits and dedication of the members of St Cuthbert's church. Life would be very lonely at times,

all my love

Marie.

Carol Sunley has also sent us a poem.

Written in 1869 by Kathleen O'Mara after the Irish potato famine and reprinted during the 1919 'flu Pandemic.

And the People Stayed at Home

And the people stayed at home
And read books, And
listened
And they rested
And did exercises
And made art and played
And learned now ways of being
And stopped and listened

More deeply
Some meditated, some prayed
Some met their shadow
And people began to think differently And
people healed.
And in the absence of people who
Lived in ignorant ways
Dangerous, meaningless and heartless,
The earth began to heal
And when the danger ended and
People found themselves
They grieved for the dead
And made new choices
And dreamed of new visions
And created new ways of living
And completely healed the earth

*Will we learn from our experiences this time
round? We shall have to wait and see.*

**Janet Danks has been reflecting on
this year's VE Day commemorations**

We were all looking forward to great celebrations for VE Day but alas these were scuppered by a very different war that we are fighting at present----the coronavirus war.



Nevertheless, our country, with true British spirit, made the most of it by hanging flags & bunting out, having tea in our front gardens & dressing in red, white & blue. A stay at home street party, but nonetheless enjoyable. Isolation has given us all a whole new perspective on family & friends, a world where human contact is but a fond memory. We are all giving up many things at present but we have adjusted & united we stand in a

world in which we are all related---for many of us this experience has been more of a life lesson than a war.

The past few weeks have only emphasised how, as social beings, we all have a need for each other.

The commandment "Love thy neighbour as thyself "

has come very much to the forefront,



human kindness comes out in many ways & there is a lot of love out there.

Regardless of whether we are relatives, friends or neighbours, we are definitely more aware & appreciative of each other.

United we will stand, as in all times of hardship, buckling down until the time



comes that we can all be together again.

Love & God Bless,

Janet

A joke from Deacon Janet's ursine friend Cuthbertina (well known to Facebook readers)

A bear walks into a bar and says "Give me a whiskey and-----""----- cola.

"Why the big pause" asks the bartender.

The bear shrugged
"Dunno guess I was born with them.

***Have you any more jokes Cuthbertina?
Can we bear to hear them? (sorry, couldn't resist!)***



Cooking with Denise

I was checking my freezer and found a packet of smoked mackerel and wondered what I could do with them. 💡 Pâté!

Smoked Mackerel Pâté

Put into a blender two skinned smoked mackerel (check for bones). Add 2tsp horseradish, juice and zest of a small lemon, 2 tbsp crème fraîche, 100g softened butter and a couple of fronds of dill (remove stalks). Blend to a paste.

Serve with cucumber slices and your favourite bread. Will keep in the fridge for 3 days. Freezes.

Denise

Is there anyone else out there who would like to contribute recipes? Please email them to:

carolmbruce@yahoo.co.uk

Contributions wanted!

If you would like to contribute material, write us a letter, or comment on any of the subjects raised in the bulletin, please email any suggestions and/or copy for the bulletin to me at: carolmbruce@yahoo.co.uk

Do you agree that it would be good to have a letters page?

If you know someone who might like to read the bulletin, but hasn't got a computer, would you be able to print one out for them and put it through their letterbox? Or email me at the above address and I will arrange to have one delivered.