

25th April 2021

WELCOME

Easter 4

to

ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST



Collect

Almighty God, whose Son Jesus Christ is the resurrection and the life: raise us, who trust in him, from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, that we may seek those things which are above, where he reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

9.45 a.m. FAMILY EUCHARIST

Hymns

- Praise my soul. The King of heaven (555)
- Lord, thy word abideth (515)
- God the Father, name we treasure (337)
- Loving Shepherd of thy sheep (517)
- All for Jesus, all for Jesus (277)

Psalm **23** (Page 372 in the red prayer book)

Readings

Acts 4 vv 5-12

The Jewish rulers, elders, and scribes assembled in Jerusalem, with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family. When they had made the prisoners stand in their midst, they inquired, 'By what power or by what name did you do this?' Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, 'Rulers of the people and elders, if we are questioned today because of a good deed done to someone who was sick and are asked how this man has been healed, let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that this man is standing before you in good health by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead. This Jesus is "the stone that was rejected by you, the builders; it has become the cornerstone." There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved.'

1 John 3 vv 16-end

We know love by this, that the Son of God laid down his life for us – and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help?

Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. And by this we will know that we are from the truth and will reassure our hearts before him whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness before God; and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we obey his commandments and do what pleases God. And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. All who obey his commandments abide in him, and he abides in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit that he has given us.

John 10 vv 11-18

'I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away – and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father.'

Although there is no evening service today please do read through the following

EVENING PRAYER (First Evening Prayer of St. Mark)

Psalm 19

Hymns

- The eternal gifts of Christ the King
- Give us the wings of faith to rise (216)

Readings

Isaiah 52 vv 7-10

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns.' Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices, together they sing for joy; for in plain sight they see the return of the Lord to Zion. Break forth together into singing, your ruins of Jerusalem; for the Lord has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

Mark 1 vv 1-15

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, 'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,"' John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, 'The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.' In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.' And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him. Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.'

Reflection - Anthony Bloom (1914-2003)

A Russian called Anthony Bloom was an atheist when he was a university student in Paris. Simply to please someone, he attended a meeting to which a Russian priest had been invited. He hated the thought of going to the meeting and grew more annoyed at what he heard about Christ and Christianity. When he got back home he asked his mother for a copy of the Gospels, because he wanted to prove that the priest had been lying.

Anthony decided to read quickly one of the Gospels. He realised that the shortest was that of St. Mark (he didn't want to waste too much time reading what he thought was rubbish!).

Before he reached the third chapter of St. Mark's Gospel, he became aware of a Presence on the other side of the table. He became so sure that the Presence was the Risen Jesus, that his life changed forever. He became a Christian, and later a priest. He then an archbishop in the Russian Orthodox Church.

From having hated all that he thought Christianity was about, Anthony Bloom's life changed when he had some kind of experience that Jesus was alive and was beside him. It was St. Mark's Gospel that he had read and tomorrow is the feast day of St. Mark (transferred from 25th April).

'Thy Kingdom Come'

Once again this year we shall join in the Prayer Initiative – 'Thy Kingdom Come'. It is a global prayer movement inviting Christians to pray during the nine days between Ascension Day (13th May) and Pentecost. Canon Elaine has 10 booklets available now either a donation or £2.00. Once they have gone she will order

further copies. The booklet offers a complete prayer selection for Morning and Evening Prayer, day time and night time prayer for you to use as suits your daily life commitments – you may choose to use just one or all 4 throughout the day.

St. John's Patronal Festival – next Sunday 2nd May 9.45 a.m.

We are delighted to welcome Bishop Malcolm, Bishop of Repton, who will preside over the service and also preach to us. Although we are unable to offer our usual hospitality on this day because of Covid restrictions, it is hoped you will do your best to attend and to give him a warm St. John's welcome especially as he has only just been consecrated as a bishop. Ours will be the first service he will conduct wearing his bishop's mitre and carrying his bishop's staff! Let us all help him to relax with our friendly smiles!

The Sheepfold

Please don't forget to collect your sheep from last year's competition after today's service. Thank you.

200 Club Draw for 18th April 2021

The winners are : £15 David Thomson; £10 Brenda Green; £5 Eleanor Smyth.

Mission of St. John's Church

To be a caring community striving to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ;
sharing in the love of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit;
and to love our neighbour, having the Eucharist at the centre of our worship