

Worship for 9th May

EASTER 6

Our worship today is focused on understanding anew God's love for each of us and for all people. At the beginning of this Christian Aid Week, we seek to be inspired once again by God's transforming vision for our world, made possible by His love for us and our love for each other.

Invitation to Confession:

God invites those who thirst to come to the waters, to find refreshment, yet so often we look elsewhere for satisfaction. In the search to find satisfaction for ourselves, we ignore the hunger and thirst of many, locally and around the world.

We have not drawn close to know God's love for us.
Lord, have mercy.

We have not recognised God's love for all people,
each one a beloved child of God.
Christ, have mercy.

With our limited imagination, we have not grasped God's vision
for a world where all will flourish.
Lord, have mercy.

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins
and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

Collect of the Day

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. Amen.

A reading from the the Book of Acts (10:44-48 NRSV)

While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the word. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles, for they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter said, 'Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?' So he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they invited him to stay for several days.

Psalm - 98 (NRSV)

O sing to the Lord a new song,
for he has done marvellous things.
His right hand and his holy arm
have gained him victory.
The Lord has made known his victory;
he has revealed his vindication in the sight of the nations.
He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness
to the house of Israel.
All the ends of the earth have seen
the victory of our God.

Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth;
break forth into joyous song and sing praises.
Sing praises to the Lord with the lyre,
with the lyre and the sound of melody.
With trumpets and the sound of the horn
make a joyful noise before the King, the Lord.

Let the sea roar, and all that fills it;
the world and those who live in it.
Let the floods clap their hands;
let the hills sing together for joy
at the presence of the Lord, for he is coming
to judge the earth.
He will judge the world with righteousness,
and the peoples with equity.

Gospel

Alleluia, alleluia!
I will not leave you orphans, says the Lord;
I will come back to you,
and your hearts will be full of joy. Alleluia!

A reading from the Gospel according to John (15:9-17 NRSV)

As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

'This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.

Thought for the Day

"Love one another as I have loved you" is such a simple command, yet so difficult to carry out. We have to let go of our differences, our prejudices and our instinct to hold things tight to ourselves. Following this command is possible when we take the second part of the command – "as I have loved you" – seriously. When we know we are loved, we can let go of defending ourselves and are able to love others.

Intercessions

Take some time to reflect on your life this week. Where do you need God's presence and help? Give thanks for where you feel you have received it and pray for those situation - places and people - who are in particular need at this time.

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

An Act of Spiritual Communion

Our Father, who art in heaven...

Act of Reception

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.
I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul.
Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally,
come at least spiritually into my heart.
I embrace You as if You were already there

and unite myself wholly to You.
Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

Final Prayer

God our Father,
whose Son Jesus Christ gives the water of eternal life:
may we thirst for you,
the spring of life and source of goodness,
through him who is alive and reigns, now and for ever. Amen.

Blessing

We are the beloved children of God.
As the branches are to the vine, so we are to Christ.
May we go out rejoicing in God's love,
spreading that love wherever we go this week.
And may the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be upon us, now and evermore. Amen.