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Sunday 9th May 2021 Sixth Sunday of Easter

Collect

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**

First Reading: Acts 10: 44-end

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.

Second Reading: 1 John 5: 1-6

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the parent loves the child. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. For the love of God is this, that we obey his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome, for whatever is born of God conquers the world. And this is the victory that conquers the world, our faith. Who is it that conquers the world but the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? This is the one who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ, not with the water only but with the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one that testifies, for the Spirit is the truth

The Gospel: John 15: 9 - 17

Jesus said; "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.

Post-communion 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**

Reflection

In today's Gospel we hear Jesus speaking about love; about abiding in his love. However, there is a danger that we could be side-tracked by what he also says; 'if you keep my commandments'; we might naturally find ourselves thinking about the 10 commandments given by God to his people, through Moses. These can appear to be a set of rules which sound very negative, especially if they begin, 'thou shalt not', but we must remember that any rules given to us by God, are given out of love. A parent who repeatedly tells a child not to climb onto the table, does so out of love for the child and out of concern that the child might not be hurt. So, God gives us rules out of his love for us and his desire for our wellbeing.

Even then, the human love a parent has for a child can only begin to suggest the depth and kind of love God has for us. We speak of God 'as love' because we try to find a way to express, in human terms, the infinite quality of God. All other metaphors are much more limiting and we know that God transcends all images – that, ultimately, the mystery that is God, cannot be limited. Love has no limits.

This love is, of course, expressed for us in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. 'No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends'. Jesus gives his disciples a fairly clear indication of what he is about to do and in return he asks that they should show this love to one another, bearing it as an outward fruit – as something visible and tangible. To abide in him – to live with his life – is to abide in his love; in the love with which he loves his disciples – just as the Father has loved him.

Jesus then goes on to show what abiding in his love means. He says that keeping his commandments will enable us to live in his love, just as he has lovingly been obedient to his Father's commandments and so abides in his Father's love. Jesus then reduces his 'commandments' down to *one* commandment – the commandment of love – 'that you love one another as I have loved you'.

God's love, poured into our hearts, compels us to love. It empowers us to love until it hurts. We show that love to those we are especially close to, but God's love also calls us to reach out. To go even further. There is to be no restriction on this love. God's love can even enable us to love those we don't like; those we disagree with; those who irritate and annoy us. God's love has the power to transform the way we think about others.

Jesus, reducing his 'commandments' down to one commandment, might appear at first to be easing the burden, but in fact, the command to 'love one another as I have loved you' places enormous demands on us, as his followers. That degree of love must be a part of the life of every member within the Church. It must be a

'mark' of the Church – something that marks us out as being distinctive – as being different.

It seems particularly appropriate to have this reading to reflect on at the beginning of Christian Aid Week, a national campaign that enables us to express something of our concern – our love – for others, particularly those in the wider world. Of course, due to the ongoing restrictions, fund-raising for Christian Aid has to be different; there will be no door-to-door collections, but I encourage you to look at the various ways in which you can still support the vital work which Christian Aid on our behalf. Of course, our concern – our love – for our brothers and sisters in the wider world, is not limited solely to responding to appeals for cash. There are other ways in which we can be more aware of the lives of others in the world. To be aware of their needs. To give our love, most simply, through our prayers. And so our intercessions for the needs of the world are also an expression of our love for others as we hold their needs before God, trusting the power of his love to be at work in the dark and difficult places of our world.

Canon Michael

Intercessions

Gracious God of love

Help us to heed the command to love others knowing that we can trust that Christ loves us.

We pray for the worldwide Christian community that it may become known as the source of true love and compassion.

We pray for clear eyed and compassionate leadership in our own diocese, for our Bishops, Rachel and Robert and locally clergy in this Benefice.

Lord in your mercy

Hear our Prayer

By the example of Christ who crossed the boundaries of race and welcomed all who came to him, teach us how to be open to those different from ourselves, by race, gender, colour, creed or style of living.

Lord in your mercy

Hear our Prayer

We pray for a greater understanding of the serious challenges for the whole world community as the natural world faces destruction, and pray for a preparedness in ourselves to change the way we live.

Lord in your mercy

Hear our Prayer

We pray for the work of Christian Aid wherever it seeks to bring Christian care and justice to those who are oppressed, through famine, refugee status and lack of education. Let us pray for every group who are raising money during these next weeks to support that vital work.

Lord in your mercy

Hear our Prayer

We pray for those parts of our world, like India and Brazil which are still in the grip of Covid-19. That western governments can truly support the fight against the disease worldwide, for until all countries are safe, none of us is truly secure.

Lord in your mercy

Hear our Prayer

We pray of the people of this town and community who are beginning to recover from the latest lockdown, as they open up their businesses; we pray for those who remain jobless and those who continue to use the foodbanks during this time.

Lord in your mercy

Hear our Prayer

We pray for all who have in this past week been elected to office in the recent elections: councillors, the police and crime commissioners and mayors, that each one of them may work for the good of their communities and particularly for those most vulnerable who have no voice. Lord in your mercy

Hear our Prayer

We pray for those by name for those whom we have been asked to pray, whose needs are known to you: Emily, John, Dave, Sue, Lynne, Mary, Frances, Norma, Joan, Jean, Jack, Len, Frances, Phil and Janet Be with them in their suffering, support and comfort them and give them peace of mind in times of trouble

We also pray for those who have recently died and those who mourn their dying: Roland Newman, John Flood, Josh Hall and Kathleen Hill

Lord in your mercy

Hear our Prayer

In the words of Catherine of Sienna, who lived in the 14th century, let us pray: Shine upon us O Lord with the light that surpasses all other light. Cleanse us with the fire that consumes all other fires, and fill us with love that transforms all other loves.

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

Revd David Vonberg

If you would like someone who is currently unwell or in particular need of prayer to be named on the weekly pew sheet, please email the parish office giving the person's name and also your name as the contact

Service Sheet for Worship at Home

If you are unable to join the Sunday services, please do make use of the reflective service for use at home alongside the prayers and readings for the day which can be found on this pew sheet.

If you would like a copy please contact the office

ewelmeparishoffice@gmail.com

Pastoral Care

Please continue to let Canon Michael (546459), Revd Ian Gardner (546895) or Revd Jane Wood (07983 623525) know of those who need to be contacted or those who need to be contacted or are in hospital and we will get in touch. Marion Kee (860364) or Pat Jones (860696) are happy to be contacted for Uley, Owlpen and Nympsfield

Please continue to check the Ewelme Family Facebook page and the Benefice website www.ewelmebenefice.co.uk regularly and if there are members who you know do not use any of these media, please let them know what is going on.

Printed copies of the weekly pew sheet are available to pick up from the porch in St James from Friday lunchtime. The porch will be left open every day. For those who can't come into Dursley, especially from Nympsfield or Uley, please do contact the office if you know of someone who would appreciate a printed copy.

Churches are still open for private prayer

We are extending the opening times so that St James in Dursley will be open each day between 9.30am and 5pm and St Giles in Uley will be open each day between 10am and 3pm. Access to all areas of the church buildings will still be restricted as these openings are for private prayer and not for general visiting.

Live stream Service for Sunday 9th May Easter 6

My apologies for the confusion last week. The link failed but those who spotted the instruction to search on 'Ewelme Benefice' got in OK.

The Service of Holy Communion at St James on Sunday 9th May will be live streamed. To join the stream, click <https://youtu.be/TQdwFM1w3yQ> or go into YouTube and enter 'Ewelme Benefice' in the Search Box, hit enter and select the service.

Please note - the stream will start at about 9.50am; the service starts at 10am. After the service the stream will convert to a recording which can be viewed from about 12noon.

To hear this service by phone through Zoom, dial 0131 460 1196 or 0203 481 5237

Meeting ID: 863 5677 7863 Passcode: 624077

Morning Prayer in May via Zoom

9.00am: 12th, 19th, 26th May

To join the Zoom Service click:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82211320140?pwd=Q2NrK3FzZ0c1MzIxY1bUZRVXplZz09>

Meeting ID: 822 1132 0140 Passcode: 137079

To join by phone, dial 0131 460 1196 or 203 481 5237

Evening Prayer via Zoom

There will be a short 20 minute service of Evening Prayer via Zoom on Mondays and Wednesday at 6pm. Joining details for this week are:

Topic: Evening Prayer for 10th and 12th May, 2021.

To join, click:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82307878288?pwd=Q1o0b2l0cTJRaGZ6d3VzOUFLVHFoQT09>

Meeting ID: 823 0787 8288 Passcode: 517491

Dial by your location 0203 481 5237 or 0131 460 1196 United Kingdom

Meeting ID: 823 0787 8288 Passcode: 517491

Holy Communion on Thursdays

There will be a service of Holy Communion at 10am every Thursday in St James, Dursley. We will continue to follow the Covid guidelines and so face coverings must be worn please and social distancing observed.

Morning Prayer will be said in St James at 9am on Thursday mornings.

Thursday 13th May Ascension Day

10.00am Said Holy Communion in St James

7.30pm Choral Evensong via Zoom

Sunday 16th May 7th Sunday of Easter

8.00am Holy Communion in St James

10.30am Service of the Word at St Marks

10.00am Holy Communion in St Giles



Thy Kingdom Come

Thy Kingdom Come is a global prayer movement inviting Christians to pray between Ascension and Pentecost for more people to come to know Jesus Christ.

Ascension Day is on 13th May and we would like to encourage you to make use of some of the resources that are available and commit your self to 9 days of prayer. For more details about this initiative, see the Thy Kingdom Come website here:

<https://www.thykingdomcome.global/prayer-resources>

Canon Michael and others will be using the free App of daily prayers. Details of how to download it are here:

<https://www.chpublishing.co.uk/apps/thy-kingdom-come>

Some material has also been produced for a Novena of Prayer, which simply means 9 days of prayer. This resource can be found as a PDF file on our Benefice website: www.ewelmebenefice.co.uk or you can request a printed copy from the Parish Office 549280 or email ewelmebenefice@gmail.com



This is Christian Aid Week 10th-16th May

The theme for Christian Aid week this year is the climate crisis, which can lead both to flooding and drought across the world. Click here for more details:

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/key-appeals/christian-aid-week>

Christian Aid are promoting e-envelopes to encourage on-line giving, which is an alternative to the more traditional envelopes. These can be personalised quite easily. More information can be found here:

<https://envelope.christianaid.org.uk/>

Christian Aid Water Walk



This walk has been planned by members of Dursley Tabernacle for Churches Together.

Try all or part of it in your own time, and donate to Christian Aid

For more details about this go to the Benefice website:

www.ewelmebenefice.co.uk

Don't forget that we are being asked to make a donation to Christian Aid in thanksgiving for receiving our Covid vaccinations.

Click this link to donate

<https://www.gloucester.anglican.org/2021/generosity-in-thanksgiving-for-vaccinations/>

CHANGE OF DATE FOR Uley Annual Meetings

Government legislation does not currently permit meetings to be held in church buildings. This is expected to change as we move to Step 3, but not before 17th May!

The date of the Uley APCM has been changed to Sunday 20th June at 11.30am in St Giles. The Electoral Roll for Uley, Owlpen and Nympsfield is still open for revision and names can be added. If you want to check whether you are already on the Roll, or if you would like an application form, please email Charles Drewett (Electoral Roll Officer) on charlesdrewett@hotmail.com

Dursley's APCM

will, hopefully, still be held on **Sunday 23rd May**, 11.30am at St James. **The electoral roll** is now closed for revision. We are required to display it in St James so that it can be checked for accuracy. If you have any questions or corrections please email Chris Raffle (Electoral roll Officer) on rafflechristine@gmail.com

Nomination forms for Churchwardens and PCC representatives are now available in both churches or on request from Parish Office.

Food Bank

The Food Bank is now operating and donations are welcome. Uley village shop and both Tesco's and Sainsbury's have food donating points which can be used. Please continue to donate.

Pill Pack Recycling

There are baskets at the back of St. James & St Giles Churches (by the Food Bank Box) to collect empty pill packs for recycling.



OPEN GARDEN

**On Sunday 23rd May at
52 Woodmancote from 2.00pm.**

Come and enjoy the garden and indulge in Afternoon tea.

We celebrate the easing of restrictions.

Please note Covid safety measures will be in place.

Everything will be outdoors so please pray for warm sunshine.

St James Church Choir Plant & Produce Stall

**Saturday May 29th
on the church lawn from 9.30am
Donations gratefully received.**

Parish Office is closed

During the current lockdown, Clive will be working from home. You can email him on ewelmeeparishoffice@gmail.com He will also check for any messages left on the office answer machine.

Wanted! Foundation Governor

We need to fill the post of Foundation Governor at Uley C of E Primary School. Foundation Governors are particularly responsible for upholding the Christian ethos of a church school and are nominated by the PCC and appointed by the Diocese. They also fulfil a very important role as a link between the local church and the school. It is not necessary to have lots of previous experience, just some enthusiasm and a willingness to make a commitment to the role. If you would like to know more, please speak to Canon Michael on 546459 or mgcozens86@btinternet.com

Visit us on Facebook :  Ewelme Benefice Family

Stewardship, Parish Giving Scheme, gifts and donations

Very many thanks to all members of our church community who have helped us financially by registering for the Parish Giving Scheme, increasing contributions through the Parish Giving Scheme, sending cheques to the treasurers or making bank transfers into our parish bank accounts.

These acts of generosity are really, really appreciated.

Please visit our website for quick and tax efficient online ways of giving -

<https://ewelmebenefice.co.uk/coronavirus/>.

You can also donate directly via on-line banking:

Uley account:

Barclays 20-33-83 A/C 43042057

Dursley account:

Lloyds 30-98-29 A/C 02391588

Dursley PCC