

HOLY TRINITY CUCKFIELD

Joyfully serving Jesus



Weekly devotions, prayers and news

The Fifth Sunday of Easter

2 May 2021

My dear friends,

The theme of our readings this week speak to us of the powerful sense of connection we are called to know not only to God but to one another as brothers and sisters in Christ. This in turn overflows into the world and is sometimes expressed in extraordinary ways. No one can have been failed to be moved by the account of Folajimi Olubunmi-Adewole, the 20 year old young man, who lost his life after jumping into the River Thames in an attempt to rescue a drowning woman. The mere act of what he sought to do reveals an inward call of connection - a blessing - even if, as in this case, this can sometimes lead to tragic consequences.

The powerful imagery of the vine is at the heart of our Gospel reading this week. Jesus is the true vine, and we are intimately connected through faith to him and capable of drawing others to know of his selfless grace and love. In doing so, we become the rich wine of the Kingdom of God. In his hymn 'Bread of heaven,' Josiah Conder, referring to Jesus as the Vine of heaven, addresses the Lord - *Thou our life! O let us be rooted, grafted, built on thee.*

Each one of us has different gifts to bring to the Kingdom life we are called to. May we ever grow in the knowledge that we are truly rooted, grafted, and built on the one who is the Way, the Truth and the Life.

With love and blessings,

Michael

Please check the church website for more details

www.holytrinitycuckfield.org

Fifth Sunday of Easter (2 May 2021)

8.00 Holy Communion *(in church)* Reader: Gerry Larner

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

6.00 Choral Evensong—Preacher—Kevin Carey

Services during the week:

Wednesday: 10.30 Holy Communion (C. Worship) Readings: Acts 15 : 1-6; John 15: 1-8

Thursday: 9.00am Holy Communion (Iona/Celtic) Readings: Acts 15: 7-21; John 15: 9-11

Friday: 11.00am Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer) Readings: Fourth Sunday of Easter

Next Sunday: Sixth Sunday of Easter (9 May 2021)

8.00 Holy Communion *(in church)*

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

All 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 Fifth Sunday of Easter

Risen Christ,
your wounds declare your love for the world
and the wonder of your risen life:
give us compassion and courage
to risk ourselves for those we serve,
to the glory of God the Father.
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:

Eternal God,
whose Son Jesus Christ
is the way, the truth, and the life:
grant us to walk in his way,
to rejoice in his truth,
and to share his risen life;
who is alive and reigns, now and for ever.
Amen

Acts 8: 26-end

Then an angel of the Lord said to Philip, 'Get up and go towards the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.' (This is a wilderness road.) So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. Then the Spirit said to Philip, 'Go over to this chariot and join it.' So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, 'Do you understand what you are reading?' He replied, 'How can I, unless someone guides me?' And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this: 'Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter, and like a lamb silent before its shearer, so he does not open his mouth. In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth.' The eunuch asked Philip, 'About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?' Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, 'Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?' He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

1 John 4: 7-end

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Saviour of the world. God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. So we have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgement, because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. We love because he first loved us. Those who say, 'I love God', and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

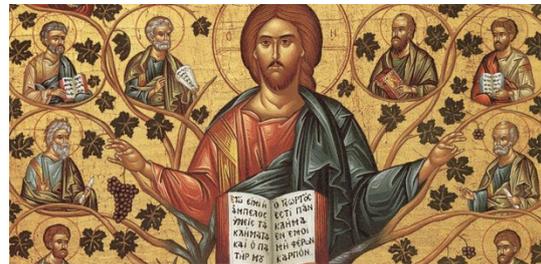
John 15: 1-8

'I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine-grower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.'

A thought

Vine imagery features heavily in the Old Testament: Psalms, Isaiah, Ezekiel and Hosea. All describe the Children of Israel as the vine. In some cases, trampled down or consumed – references to catastrophe or faithlessness leading to disaster. Here, though, Jesus gives us something radically different. HE is the vine, and we are intimately connected to him and thus to God, just as branches are to the vine. The life-giving, self-giving vine gives us the sap of the Holy Spirit to enable us to bear the rich fruit of the Kingdom in drawing others to know the truth and beauty of the fullness of life found within our Faith.

The imagery Jesus uses is so vivid that we can imagine that he has been in vineyards watching and even helping to prune and prepare the vines to bear a full crop. This teaches us that we are to know the intimacy of relationship with God, but also our



interaction with one another as part of the Body of Christ. We are one with him as the branches are to the stem, and one with each other through the same sap of love which we know flows from our connection to Jesus Christ.

**God of all compassion,
your love never fails.
Help us to listen to the tranquility
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, Graham Hibbert, Joe Eaton, John Bernardi (priest), Kate Malby, Ros Thunder, Shirley Lewis

Long Term Need: Young Georgia, Young Joshua, Young Reggie, Anne Greenhill, Ros Ayling, Wendy, Ann Went, Dave Cox, Jenny, Julie Sadler, Mark Parker, Becky Parker, Tony Burbidge, Christopher, Jenny, Marjorie Chilton, Janet Card, Yvonne Godsmark, George Snashall, Eileen Knight, Mary Todd, Gracie & Lucy Neiff, **Those in Care Homes:** Anne Norris, Alan Prebble, Stephanie Gilpin, Jill Rockey, Jean Simmons, Mary Watts, Diana Hoile, Ruth Baker

Please remember the recently departed and their families: Catherine Dunnage, Angela Hopkins, Michael Hilton

In our Book of Remembrance this week we remember: 2nd John Wilcox, Gerald Leaney, Derek Wood, Robert Buckle, Douglas Simpson, 3rd Eileen Hall, 4th Iris Simmons, Irene Garley, John Williams, Viola Muddle, 5th Peter Irving, 6th Angela Turner, Richard Beddington, 7th Dicky Brigden, 8th Wyn Capelin, Peg Goddard, Peggy Shortt, Thomas Coke