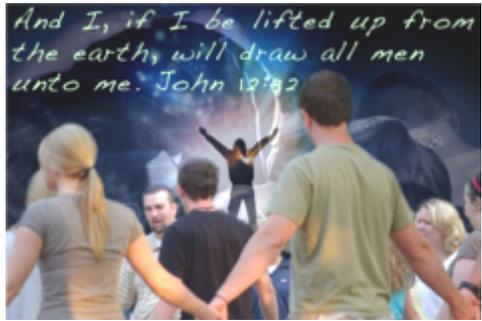


Sunday 18th March 2018

Lent 5

Passiontide begins

Purple



Collect

Most merciful God, who by the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ delivered and saved the world: grant that by faith in him who suffered on the cross we may triumph in the power of his victory; 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**

Jeremiah 31:31-34 English Standard Version (ESV)

The New Covenant

31 ³¹ “Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, ³² not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD. ³³ For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ³⁴ And no longer shall each one teach his neighbour and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

COMMENT: Jeremiah’s ministry from about 627 to 580 BC covered one of the most critical periods of Israel’s history, just before the exile in Babylon. He warned of the catastrophe about to befall the nation because they had failed to live as God intended. His words were not entirely without hope. He looked forward to a “new covenant” – a relationship of the heart, not on stone tablets like the Law of Moses.

People would do intuitively what God requires of them. No one would need instruction or an intermediary because everyone would “know the Lord.”

John 12:20-33 English Standard Version (ESV)

Some Greeks Seek Jesus

12²⁰ Now among those who went up to worship at the feast were some Greeks. ²¹ So these came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” ²² Philip went and told Andrew; Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. ²³ And Jesus answered them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. ²⁴ Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. ²⁵ Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. ²⁶ If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honour him.

The Son of Man Must Be Lifted Up

²⁷ “Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? But for this purpose I have come to this hour. ²⁸ Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven: “I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.” ²⁹ The crowd that stood there and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, “An angel has spoken to him.” ³⁰ Jesus answered, “This voice has come for your sake, not mine. ³¹ Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out. ³² And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” ³³ He said this to show by what kind of death he was going to die.

COMMENT: The Gospel of John is very clever. It sets up questions – and then in the words of Jesus supplies the answer. A simple reading of the text means that the Greeks never got to see Jesus – perhaps they are still waiting there! The answer is that through our Lord’s crucifixion, and Resurrection – and the gift of the Spirit, all mankind (represented by the Greeks) get to see Jesus – it was only by the Cross Jesus enters his Resurrection – and then Pentecost – where through the spirit, all can see Jesus – here is the answer to those Greeks!

Psalm 51:1-14 *Miserere mei, Deus* Grail Psalter

℟ A pure heart create for me, O God.

1 For the Choirmaster. A Psalm of David

2. when the prophet Nathan came to him after he had gone to Bethsheba.

³ Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness.

In your compassion blot out my offense.

⁴ O wash me more and more from my guilt
and cleanse me from my sin. ℟

⁵ My offenses truly I know them;

my sin is always before me

⁶ Against you, you alone, have I sinned;
what is evil in your sight I have done. ℟

That you may be justified when you give sentence
and be without reproach when you judge,

⁷ O see, in guilt I was born,
a sinner was I conceived. ℟

⁸ Indeed you love truth in the heart;

then in the secret of my heart teach me wisdom.

⁹ O purify me, then I shall be clean;

O wash me, I shall be whiter than snow. ℟

¹⁰ Make me hear rejoicing and gladness,
that the bones you have crushed may thrill.

¹¹ From my sins turn away your face
and blot out all my guilt. ℟

¹² A pure heart create for me, O God,
put a steadfast spirit within me.

¹³ Do not cast me away from your presence,
nor deprive me of your holy spirit. ℟

¹⁴ Give me again the joy of your help;
with a spirit of fervour sustain me,

¹⁵ that I may teach transgressors your ways
and sinners may return to you. ℟

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit,**

**As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.**

COMMENT: In the same spirit of repentance and renewal we find in the reading from Jeremiah, this psalm pleads for forgiveness and voices the longing of a faithful soul for a new relationship with God. The actual psalm in its completed form is post exilic, but may contain the sentiments poured out by David. The occasion of David's confession was due to the ministry of Nathan the prophet. Like such men as Nathan and Jeremiah we need to pray that men and women can be raised up to be the prophets of this present age.

Post Communion

Lord Jesus Christ, you have taught us that what we do for the least of our brothers and sisters we do also for you: give us the will to be the servant of others as you were the servant of all, and gave up your life and died for us, but are alive and reign, now and for ever. **Amen**

Blessing

Christ give you grace to grow in holiness, to deny yourselves, take up your cross, and follow him; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among *you*, and remain with *you* always. **Amen.**

At this time of year we approach the financial year's end.

“Give us our eleven days”.

The Financial year beginning was always Lady Day – the Feast of the Annunciation, 25th March. This altered with the adoption of the Gregorian calendar in 1752, by which time it was necessary to correct the year by subtracting 11 days. Wednesday, 2nd September 1752 was followed by Thursday 14th September 1752. Rioters demanded “give us our eleven days”. After 1753, the British tax year in Britain continued to operate on the “Old Style” Julian calendar on the 25th March, which was on the “New Style” Gregorian Calendar the 5th April. In the Gregorian Calendar a year divisible by 100 is not a leap year unless it is also divisible by 400. The Julian Calendar moved 12 days ahead with the Julian leap day in 1800, and to keep in line with the Old Style March 25th the date was changed to the 6th April. It was not changed when the Julian leap day occurred in 1900, and has thus continued to start on the 6th April ever since.

British Summer Time begins next Sunday
CLOCKS GO FORWARD 1 HOUR

