

(The third part of the Scriptures, the Writings, begins with “the psalms”.) He gives them understanding as to how this is so, interpreting verses from Hosea, Isaiah, Psalms and other books. He charges the disciples (and other followers) with preaching the good news to all people, “beginning from Jerusalem” (v. 47). They are “witnesses” (v. 48); they have seen Scripture fulfilled. The Holy Spirit will be with them, as God promised through the prophet Joel (v. 49). Jesus leads them out (v. 50), as Moses led the people of Israel out of captivity. Here the ascension occurs in a worship setting. Luke ends as it began: “in the temple” (v. 53). Jesus’ ministry on earth has ended; the era of the Church and its mission on his behalf is about to begin.

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~ Notices ~

Ukraine The Church of Ireland Bishops' Appeal has launched a special appeal encouraging all parishes in Ireland to have a special collection this/next Sunday to support the appeal. To donate please use the link on our website: <https://clareanglicans.ie> or go direct to: www.christianaid.ie

Every Friday at 12.00 in St Columba's there is a silent prayer vigil for peace in Ukraine – all are welcome

Clare Music Makers Festival Sat 28th May 10.00 - 5.00pm

Parish Visit of +Michael

+ Michael will be visiting all three of our churches, starting from the Rectory at 10.30am on 12th July. The intention is that we will visit each church at a pre-arranged time, to meet as many people as are available for refreshments or lunch, and, if possible, he would like to briefly meet with church wardens and readers as well.

Sunday 26th June – 2.00 to 5.00pm

The Shannon choir *Non Nobis Domine* will be visiting the church to record a number of tracks for YouTube and their own archives. Drumcliffe Studios will video and record.

Burren Walk

A sign-up sheet is at the back of church for those who would like to take a short walk through the Burren, with the well-known local guide Pius Murray – around 5km of easy walking.

Living the Questions Course

This is advance notice that when meeting inside becomes easier, as the warm weather comes and windows can be open, I intend to resume the course that we started, and then had to cancel, in Lent 2020. This course features some eminent and very engaging theologians and is very accessible, whilst also thoughtful and challenging – start date to be confirmed, but please put your name down on the sign-up sheet if you are interested so I can gauge numbers.

Website: clareanglicans.ie

YouTube: www.youtube.com/c/clareanglicans

Facebook: www.facebook.com/clare.anglicans

Rector: Email: frkevinobrien@me.com Tel: 065 672 4721

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7th Sunday of Easter 2022 The Ascension (Year C)

Collect

Risen Christ, you have raised our human nature to the throne of heaven: help us to seek and serve you, that we may join you at the Father's side, where you reign with the Spirit in glory, now and for ever. **Amen**

Suggested Hymns - For the online service you might like to view these hymns with lyrics on YouTube.

1) Crown Him with many crowns

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FiJYgC_6AFc

2) Christ is the King! O friends rejoice (86) vv.1,4,7

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q2I4wHr6wAc>

3) In the Lord I'll be ever thankful

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q2I4wHr6wAc>

4) God is love – His the Care (89)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q2I4wHr6wAc>

Acts 1.1-11

In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over the course of forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. 'This', he said, 'is what you have heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.'

So, when they had come together, they asked him, 'Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?' He replied, 'It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.' When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going and they were gazing up towards heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up towards heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.'

Psalms 93

The Lord is king, he is robed in majesty;
the Lord is robed, he is girded with strength.
He has established the world; it shall never be moved;
your throne is established from of old;
you are from everlasting.
The floods have lifted up, O Lord,
the floods have lifted up their voice;
the floods lift up their roaring.
More majestic than the thunders of mighty waters,
more majestic than the waves of the sea,
majestic on high is the Lord!
Your decrees are very sure;
holiness befits your house,
O Lord, for evermore.

Ephesians 1.15-23

I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love towards all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

Luke 24.44-53

Then he said to them, 'These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.' Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, 'Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.'

Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

Post Communion Prayer

Eternal God, giver of love and power, your Son Jesus Christ has sent us into all the world to preach the gospel of his kingdom: confirm us in this mission, and help us to live the good news we proclaim; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Commentary

Acts 1:1-11

Luke begins his second book by summarizing "the first" (the gospel). "Theophilus", to whom the gospel is written, may be a person (whose name means lover of God) or any reader who loves God. Jesus had chosen "the apostles" (v. 2) from a larger group of followers; in Luke 24 he instructs them. The "many convincing proofs" (v. 3) of his resurrection include his appearances on the road to Emmaus and in Jerusalem. "Forty days" may be just a considerable period of time, or it may, with "not many days from now" (v. 5), point to the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. The word translated "staying" (v. 4) can also mean eating; in Luke 24, Jesus eats with the disciples. John the Baptist predicted that the Messiah would baptise "with the Holy Spirit" (v. 5).

An angel has told Mary that "the Lord God will give to him [Jesus] the throne of his ancestor David" so it is not surprising that those present expect political Israel to be restored (v. 6). But Jesus' answer shows the restoration to be of a different nature (v. 7). When it will be ("the times") and by what steps ("periods") he does not say. From the Day of Pentecost on, the apostles will be his representatives, spreading the good news universally (v. 8). Luke describes the ascension physically (like Elijah's) but includes a divine element, the "two

men in white robes", (v. 10), God's messengers. Some of the disciples were from "Galilee" (v. 11). The time of the Church will end with Jesus returning as he departed.

Psalm 93

This psalm is a hymn extolling God as king; it deals with the kingly rule of the God of Israel and was probably composed for use in connection with a festival. Mention of Mosaic law ("decrees") in v. 5 suggests the Festival of Booths, a time when the Law was read to the people. V. 3 speaks of waters raising up and "roaring". To the ancients, waters were chaotic, very difficult for the gods to control. The gods did battle with them; when the gods had won, creation followed. We find echoes of this in Genesis 1. Here God wins definitively, establishing world order, which "shall never be moved" (v. 1), i.e. changed or defeated. God rules over all of creation, even the forces of chaos. V. 5a recognizes that the Law ("decrees") are firm and offer dependable guidance ("very sure"). In v. 5b, "your house" is the Temple but the meaning of this half verse in the Hebrew is not clear. It may be saying that the Temple is indeed a holy place, God being who he is and what he has achieved.

Ephesians 1:15-23

Paul has written of the Father's wisdom and insight in making known to us his will, his plan for completion of the restoration of the faithful to oneness with him, as told by Jesus (vv. 8, 9). God's plan embraces both Jews and Gentiles, bringing them together in one Christian community. That this is happening he sees as evidence of God's ability to break down diverse barriers, and to bring the world to unity in Christ.

And so, in vv. 15-16, he is delighted to hear of the successful missionary activity by people he does not know at first hand. Their "faith" (commitment to Christ) and fraternal love (love of "all the saints", Christians both Jewish and Gentile) go hand in hand: faith involves appreciating God's great love for humanity demonstrated in the Father's giving of the Son. That "your" (v. 15) refers to new Christians is indicated by "as you come to know him" in v. 17: Paul prays that these (relatively) new converts may receive "a spirit of wisdom and revelation" as each progressively come to understand God more and more. It is not just digested knowledge ("wisdom") that they will receive, but also "revelation", what God will show of himself and his ways, his manifest character, his greatness, "glory", and the fruit of interaction of knowledge with experience. The objective (v. 18) is that, illuminated by innermost conviction ("with the eyes of your heart"), they may attain a maturer knowledge of God in three ways:

in spiritual growth ("hope") being those whom God has called; the "glorious inheritance" Gentile Christians now share with their Jewish brethren; and experience of the tremendous power of God as he works in their lives.

Paul's experience speaks here: God showed him mercy when he was a persecutor of Christians. Then v. 20: this power that they now experience is what the Father used in raising Christ and having him share in the divine glory. Christ has also conquered all alien spiritual powers ("far above all rule ...", v. 21) and pagan gods ("every name that is named"). God has made "all things" (v. 22) subject to humanity; the Father has given Christ to the church as ruler over all things spiritual. The church is one in Christ and thus is able to share in Christ's exaltation, Christ being the complete embodiment of God, who is in the process of filling (making good) all things. It is through the church that God pervades the world with his goodness.

Luke 24:44-53

After his resurrection, Jesus has appeared to two followers on the road to Emmaus, to Peter, and to those gathered in Jerusalem. When they have thought that they were seeing a ghost, he has invited them to touch his wounds and eats in their presence. Jesus has told his disciples how he is the one to whom the whole of the Old Testament points; he now does so for the last time.