

~ Notices ~

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

Burren Walk

A sign-up sheet is at the back of church for those who would like to take part. I will be in touch with Pius Murray to check his availability and revert with a possible date/s.

Living the Questions - Course

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.

Book Club There is a sign-up sheet if you might be interested in joining a church book club.

Bishop Michael visit

Thank you to everyone who took part in Bishop Michael's visit to our churches, and especially those who put the word about and provided refreshments on the day. Bishop Michael very much enjoyed the visit and he and I will chat through all that he learned in the next few weeks once the holiday and Lambeth Conference season is over.

Hymns at services

During the height of the Covid pandemic, the House of Bishops stipulations and Govt measures meant that we were not able to engage in congregational singing during services (given that public singing was known to spread Covid more widely than speaking). In the past few months, we have gradually returned to singing one hymn at the end of the service (knowing that people would depart soon afterwards), with the intention to phase in more hymns as the situation allowed.

At present we seem to be in the middle of another Covid surge with a new and unpleasant variant, so that more hymns would seem unhelpful in the short term, but the intention is that once this particular round of infection is over, and following medical advice, we shall introduce a second hymn and so on. The first priority is to ensure that our worship is not only as safe as possible, but also feels safe to those who might otherwise be deterred from attending.

Website: clareanglicans.ie

YouTube: www.youtube.com/c/clareanglicans

Facebook: www.facebook.com/clare.anglicans

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5th Sunday after Trinity 2022 (Year C)

Collect

Almighty God, send down upon your Church the riches of your Spirit, and kindle in all who minister the gospel your countless gifts of grace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

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

1) At the name of Jesus

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7w-tDjIpgk>

2) Praise to the Lord

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vegyb1u5s4>

3) Of the Father's heart begotten

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6kK4JLP9i7U>

4) **O Christ the same (103)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DPZII3AH7fk>

Genesis 18.1-10a

The Lord appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day. He looked up and saw three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent entrance to meet them, and bowed down to the ground. He said, 'My lord, if I find favour with you, do not pass by your servant. Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. Let me bring a little bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on—since you have come to your servant.' So they said, 'Do as you have said.' And Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah, and said, 'Make ready quickly three measures of choice flour, knead it, and make cakes.' Abraham ran to the herd, and took a calf, tender and good, and gave it to the servant, who hastened to prepare it. Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree while they ate.

They said to him, 'Where is your wife Sarah?' And he said, 'There, in the tent.' Then one said, 'I will surely return to you in due season, and your wife Sarah shall have a son.' And Sarah was listening at the tent entrance behind him.

Psalms 15

O Lord, who may abide in your tent?

Who may dwell on your holy hill?

Those who walk blamelessly, and do what is right,

and speak the truth from their heart;

who do not slander with their tongue,

and do no evil to their friends,

nor take up a reproach against their neighbours;

in whose eyes the wicked are despised,

but who honour those who fear the Lord;

who stand by their oath even to their hurt;

who do not lend money at interest,

and do not take a bribe against the innocent.

Those who do these things shall never be moved.

Colossians 1.15-28

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

And you who were once estranged and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his fleshly body through death, so as to present you holy and blameless and irreproachable before him— provided that you continue securely established and steadfast in the faith, without shifting from the hope promised by the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven. I, Paul, became a servant of this gospel.

I am now rejoicing in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am completing what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church. I became its servant according to God's commission that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, the mystery that has been hidden throughout the ages and generations but has now been revealed to his saints. To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. It is he whom we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone in all wisdom, so that we may present everyone mature in Christ.

Luke 10:38-42

Now as they went on their way, he entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to what he was saying. But Martha was distracted by her many tasks; so she came to him and asked, 'Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me.' But the Lord answered her, 'Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her.'

Commentary

Genesis 18:1-15,(21:1-7)

Abraham has set up an altar at "the oaks of Mamre" (13:18), near Hebron. Here divinity appears to him, as he sits in a sacred spot ("at the entrance of his tent", 18:1). In Genesis, God's messengers, here "three men" (18:2), seem to be human in appearance. Abraham offers them the best in oriental courtesy and hospitality (18:2-8). Weary travellers welcomed a foot wash (18:4) and a meal (18:6-8). Addressing them as "my lord" (18:3) was part of the etiquette. That they are divine becomes clearer in 18:9-15, especially when one of them speaks (18:10). He (probably God himself) promises the couple a son: an incredible, laughable, idea, considering their ages. Sarah is no longer of child-bearing age (18:11); to have sexual "pleasure" (18:12) is beyond belief. (In 17:17, Abraham has laughed at the idea of having a son.) God will return "in due season" (18:10, next year). God keeps his promise (21:1-7). Isaac (meaning he laughs) is circumcised as a sign of the covenant between God and Abraham and his descendants (21:4). The author neatly divides Abraham's life: 75 years in Ur and Haran (12:4), 25 years waiting for the child in Canaan, and 75 years after Isaac's birth. Sarah is rescued from the cultural stigma of being childless; she reverses her earlier skeptical laughter: "everyone who hears will laugh with me" (21:6).

This psalm was likely used in a liturgy of admission to the Temple. An inquirer or pilgrim asks God: who may come to Mount Zion ("hill") to worship in the Temple ("your tent")? Who is acceptable to you? Vv. 2-5a are the answer spoken by an officiant: those who are ethical ("walk blamelessly") in their words and deeds; do not wrong other Israelites ("friends ... neighbours", v. 3) by what they say and do; despise evil-doers and honour those who hold God in awe (v. 4); and charge no "interest" (v. 5) on loans to the needy and accept no bribes. They will never be hindered by obstacles ("moved") in their lives.

Colossians 1:15-28

The Christians at Colossae lived in a society where many adhered to Greek cults. Vv. 15-20 are an early hymn about Christ ("He"); he is how we see (and access) God ("image"). Angelology was popular at the time; "thrones ... powers" (v. 16) were orders of angelic beings; each was "created", had its origin "in him", and exists "for him"; any power they have is subordinate to Christ's. The whole of creation – both heavenly and earthly – were created "through him", with his participation. He is also the "firstborn" (v. 18), the inheritor from the Father, of created-ness; he governs it, and is the cohesive power of the universe (v. 17). He existed "before all things", before the first creative act. Greeks saw the "head" (v. 18) as the body's source of life and growth. Christ is this to the Church, and "head" of it in the modern sense. He is "the beginning", the nucleus of the restoration of humanity to union with God, of the new created-ness. In his death ("blood of his cross", v. 20), resurrection, and ascension to the Father, he is the forerunner ("firstborn", v. 18) of our elevation to being with the Father, of our reconciliation with the Father (v. 20). Christians at Colossae tried to find ultimate power and truth in various deities, but in Christ all power and ultimate truth is present (v. 19). Before the founding of the church at Colossae, the people there were "estranged ..." (v. 21). They are now with God, fully acceptable to him ("holy ...", v. 22), thanks to Jesus' fully human ("fleshly body") presence and death, so long as they keep to the truth of the gospel and the "hope" (v. 23) it offers (and shun Greek cults). This gospel is available to all ("to every creature"). Paul extended the reach of Christ's message; it was complete as he received it. In doing so, he suffered "afflictions" (v. 24). So "completing ... Christ's afflictions" tells of Paul's afflictions as extending Christ's – in no way was Christ's suffering incomplete. Greek cults limited knowledge of mysteries to initiates, but Christ came to make known God's "mystery" (v. 26) to all ("Gentiles", v. 27); it had been "hidden" (v. 26) in Old Testament times. Note "everyone" (three times) in v. 28.

Luke 10:38-42

Luke emphasizes that Christ came for all: all sectors of society, all peoples, and both sexes. Samaritans, despised by Jews, are welcome in the Kingdom. Jesus has told the seventy that proclaiming his message demands unswerving commitment. The lawyer has learnt that his love should be for everyone; if it is, he has eternal life. Now Jesus crosses Jewish cultural bounds: he is alone with women who are not his relatives; a woman serves him; and he teaches a woman in her own house. To sit at someone's feet (v. 39) was to be his disciple. Mary is Jesus' disciple. Martha, while devoted to her home, is "distracted" (v. 40) by busy-ness. The "only ... thing" (v. 42) that is really needed is to listen to Jesus' message and proclaim it. This is the task that Mary has chosen; her role is exemplary. Jesus values Martha's role, but Mary's is "better". (The wording of v. 42a varies among early manuscripts. The differences change the interpretation.)
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