



Team Parish of Christ the King St Aidan's, Brunton Park

Sunday 1st May 2022
Third Sunday of Easter

The conversion of Saul (soon to be Paul), is among the most significant moments in Christian history. This man who would go on to write a significant portion of the New Testament, to provide perhaps our deepest reflections on who Jesus is, what he's done, and what it means for us, and who would be among the church's earliest and most prolific evangelists; this man, in this morning's passage, is taken by God from one path, and dramatically set onto another. And I think that story continues to speak of the power of Jesus to call people to himself, and to transform lives.

So, first of all, God meets Saul where he is, but doesn't leave him where he is. It's notable that Jesus, when he appears to Saul, first of all names him, and then speaks directly to his situation. 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?' God knows that Saul will recognise that he is in the presence of the Lord. He knows that Saul is devout and zealous, but that he is missing the central key to knowing God – that Jesus truly is God's crucified and risen Messiah. That knowledge turns Saul's life upside down and calls him to a new path.

We may not all have dramatic conversion stories to tell, but many of us will know the experience of God meeting us where we are; of discovering, in some unique, and deeply personal way, something of who God is. And we discover that as God meets us where we are, he never leaves us where we are. We're shown some new facet of God's grace or love or goodness, and as we are, we're called to a new path to serve him more faithfully.

Secondly, God works through other people, and particularly through the church. God sends Ananias to give Saul back his sight, be filled with the Holy Spirit, and be baptised. It's through the ministry of the church that this once hostile and fearful man is supported and nurtured to become one of its most powerful evangelists.

So often, our own experience of discovering God involves the right word, or the right action, at the right time, from someone of faith. Whether that person knew it or not, God takes their life and uses it to bring people closer to him. Perhaps today we might seek to allow God to use us, so that those he's calling to himself, can also receive their sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit.

First Reading: Acts 9.1-20

Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. Now as he was going along and approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?' He asked, 'Who are you, Lord?' The reply came, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But get up and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do.' The men who were travelling with him stood speechless because they heard the voice but saw no one. Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; so they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. For three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

Now there was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, 'Ananias.' He answered, 'Here I am, Lord.' The Lord said to him, 'Get up and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul. At this moment he is praying, and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight.' But Ananias answered, 'Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints in Jerusalem; and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who invoke your name.' But the Lord said to him, 'Go, for he is an instrument whom I have chosen to bring my name before Gentiles and kings and before the people of Israel; I myself will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name.' So Ananias went and entered the house. He laid his hands on Saul and said, 'Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on your way here, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.' And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and his sight was restored. Then he got up and was baptized, and after taking some food, he regained his strength. For several days he was with the disciples in Damascus, and immediately he began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues, saying, 'He is the Son of God.'

Gospel: John 21.1-14

Jesus showed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias; and he showed himself in this way. Gathered there together were Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples. Simon Peter said to them, 'I am going fishing.' They said to him, 'We will go with you.' They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach; but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to them, 'Children, you have no fish, have you?' They answered him, 'No.' He said to them, 'Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some.' So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in because there were so many fish. That disciple whom

Jesus loved said to Peter, 'It is the Lord!' When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on some clothes, for he was naked, and jumped into the lake. But the other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, only about a hundred yards off.

When they had gone ashore, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish on it, and bread. Jesus said to them, 'Bring some of the fish that you have just caught.' So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, a hundred and fifty-three of them; and though there were so many, the net was not torn. Jesus said to them, 'Come and have breakfast.' Now none of the disciples dared to ask him, 'Who are you?' because they knew it was the Lord. Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. This was now the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

TODAY

8:00am: Said Holy Communion

9.30am: Parish Eucharist Third Sunday of Easter with Bernie Troughton Leading and Rev'd Gerard Rundell Preaching and Presiding: Acts 9.1-6 [7-20] and John 21.1-19

THE WEEK AHEAD

Wed 10.00am, Church: **BCP Midweek Eucharist**

Thurs 2pm: **Prayer and Praise in the Community Room**

Fri 5.00pm: **Food for Thought via Zoom (see codes below)**

Sun 8th 9.30am, Church: **Family Communion** Rev'd Gerard Rundell Leads and Preaches; Readings: Acts 9.36-43 and John 10.22-30

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Sat 21st May, 10am-12pm: **Big Breakfast for Christian Aid**

Sat 28th May, all day: **Team day out to Alnmouth (TBC)**

Sun 29th May, 4:00pm: **Healing Service in church**

Sun 5th June, 12-3pm: **Jubilee Celebrations on St Aidan's Church Green**

NOTICES

SUNDAY SERVICE – today's live broadcast link is <https://bit.ly/3rdEaster22>

WINE AT COMMUNION – from next Sunday 8th May, wine will be offered at communion. This is optional for those who feel comfortable accepting wine from the chalice, but could we please ask that, in line with medical advice, you do not dip the wafer into the chalice.

JUBILEE CELEBRATION – along with other local business and organisations we are planning a jubilee celebration on Sunday 5th June between 12-3pm. If you have any ideas or would be able to help on the day please contact either Gerard or Janice.

KEYS TO CHURCH – for insurance purposes we need to know everyone who has a set of keys to church, and which doors they are for (entry, internal doors etc). Could you please let Catherine or one of the other church wardens know if you hold a set. If you are a key holder, but no longer need them, please return them to church.

TRANSFORMATION EXHIBITION - Sarah has created a series of linoprints of Angels, representing the phases of transformation experienced after church related abuse. It has a hopeful message. The exhibition is at Newcastle cathedral from 19th April to 23 May 2022 and is part of a larger project to be launched this year called 'If I told you what would you do?', which aims to help the church respond better to those affected by church related abuse.

ZOOM CODES – all our Zoom sessions will use only the following details:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7573778713?pwd=NGVjcTRLQjBEaStqYjFDSm1KOURtQT0>

Meeting ID: 757 377 8713 Passcode: StAidan **BOOKING ZOOM MEETINGS:** if you would like to use the St Aidan's Zoom account for a church meeting, please contact Janice

CHURCH CORONAVIRUS RESTRICTIONS – face masks are optional, please sanitise your hands on entering church, and maintain at least a one metre distance.

CHURCH OPENING – church is now open during the day, every day. Please come in at any time for some quiet time or prayer.

DONATIONS - to make a donation to St Aidan's, please use the following link

<https://givealittle.co/campaigns/8a599239-a9bd-4136-8b4b-1dcabb0a2c65>

For Our Prayers: St Aidan's Cycle of Prayer

For the church – Particularly churches in our Deanery: Centre of Newcastle Parishes and City Centre Chaplaincy. In our church for sidespeople, our Saturday Café, and all involved in our ministry of welcome

For the community – especially uniformed groups

For the world – particularly during the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, for her people, refugees and the Ukrainian community in the UK, and our own national and political life.

For those in particular need - Gladys Johnston, Sheila Lonie

For those who have died and those who grieve John Macleod and on their anniversaries: Doris Wilson, Kenneth Gray, Geoffrey Long, Edward Keating, Vivien Almond

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