



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

Sunday 3rd April 2022
Fifth Sunday of Lent

This Sunday as we come ever closer to Holy Week we're given a passage from Paul's letter to the Philippians that speaks of his journey following Christ. And, as this Sunday is also our AGM, and marks around 6 months since my licensing here, it seems a good time to reflect on our calling as St Aidan's Church: a calling to follow that same path. So, there are two questions I want to ask of us as a church: what will we give to know Jesus, and to make him known? And: what will we do to seek Jesus, and to be made his own?

Before his encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus, Paul was all that a good Hebrew could hope to be. He has every reason for confidence in himself and all he's gained, but Paul willingly, even joyfully, casts everything aside for the sake of knowing Christ and following him. He regards these things 'as rubbish' in order to 'gain Christ and be found in him.'

So, I wonder what St Aidan's might be called to cast aside if it means gaining Christ and being found in him? Will we be willing to give up some of the things we've held dear? Will we be willing to take risks to discover Christ at work? Will we be willing to move beyond our comfort zones to find out where Jesus is calling us to follow? Will we be willing to give our time, our energy, our resources, if it means knowing Christ and making him known?

It can be costly, as a church, to do this: to focus our attention outside our doors, instead of inside; to care more about the call of Jesus, than the workings of the church. So, what will we give to know Jesus, and to make him known?

And then, what are we 'straining forward' to? Paul hasn't reached his destination. He has deeply known Christ and discovered the gift of faith in him, but he presses on 'because Christ Jesus has made me his own.' So how are we straining forward toward the 'heavenly call of God in Christ'? How are we as a church learning more deeply what it means to meet God in prayer and worship? How are we discovering the joy of following Jesus in all of our life and not just on Sundays? What is it that draws us on, that keeps us seeking and searching, as we long to know God more and love him better?

These are questions I don't know the answers to. I hope in the year and years to come, we might begin to find them out together.

First Reading : Philipians 3.4b-14

If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on towards the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

Gospel reading: John 12.1-8

Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him. Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), said, 'Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?' (He said this not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse and used to steal what was put into it.) Jesus said, 'Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me.'

THE WEEK AHEAD

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| Mon | 7.30pm, Zoom: Bible Study Group |
| Wed | 10.00am, Church: BCP Midweek Eucharist |
| Wed | 7.30pm: St Cuthbert's: ' An Adventure with God ' - Rev'd Ben Doolan, Master of St Thomas' |
| Thurs | 12.pm: Lent Lunch, St Cuthbert's Brunswick - The Two Thieves |
| Fri | 5pm: Food for Thought via Zoom (see code below) |

Sun 10th 9.30am: **Palm Sunday**

Leading and Preaching Rev'd Gerard Rundell –

Readings this week will be dramatised

4pm: **Taize service**

DATES FOR THE DIARY

HOLY WEEK

Mon 11th April 7:30pm: **Stations of the Cross 1-5**

Tues 12th April 7:30pm: **Stations of the Cross 6-10 (at St Columba's Church)**

Wed 13th April 7:30pm: **Stations of the Cross 11-14**

Thurs 14th April 7:30pm: **Maundy Thursday**

Fri 15th April 10:00am: **Good Friday Family Worship**

Fri 15th April 2:00pm: **An Hour Before the Cross**

EASTER

Sun 17th April 5:30am: **Sunrise Service**

Sun 17th April 9:30am: **Easter Sunday Eucharist Service**

NOTICES

SUNDAY SERVICE – today's live broadcast link is <https://bit.ly/5thLent22>

UKRAINE FUNDRAISING – thank you to everyone who has supported our fundraising events over the past few weeks. We have raised £2500. Thank you all so much for your generosity in donating both money and items.

LIGHT CANDLES FOR UKRAINE - we have all watched the unfolding conflict in Ukraine and seen the heart-breaking stories of people fleeing violence. Over two million people have fled Ukraine. Lives have been lost and families torn apart. No one is safe. Today, churches and Christians from across the UK and Ireland will come together in an act of witness to pray and light candles for Ukraine, for an end to the conflict and for all those affected by the terrible impact of war. We will do so during our Taize service. Please come along if you can.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – will take place this morning at 11am in church. We will be electing Churchwardens, a Deanery Synod rep, and DCC members at the meeting.

LUNCH GROUP - will meet on 20th April at 12pm at the Rugby Club. Names to Pat or Pauline please if you wish to join us.

BIBLE STUDY GROUP LENT SERIES The Bible study group is continuing on Zoom with Rev Miranda Threlfall-Holmes' video series How to Eat Bread, based on her book exploring different ways of reading the Bible, looking particularly at how the Bible itself uses biblical texts. 7.30 Monday evenings. All welcome, whether or not you have been part of the group before. Meeting code: 884 3537 3515 or Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88435373515?wd=ODA3Q1dQbIRqZnNiaUNHK1UvTkZ1dz09>

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

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7573778713?pwd=NGVjcTRLQjBEaStqYjFDSm1KOURtQT09> 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.

USED STAMPS – if you have any used stamps, please save them and put them in the box at the back of church to raise fund for St Oswald's Hospice.

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

FOOD BANK – a little reminder that we still collect for the foodbank. There is a box at the back of church for donations.

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 for our Bishop Mark, Archdeacon Rachel Wood, Acting Area Dean Pauline Pearson along with those who assist in our worship: lesson readers, intercessors, servers, Eucharistic assistants and sacristans

For the community – Catherine McKinnell, our MP, Newcastle City Councillors, North Gosforth Parish Council

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, Jane Hatton. On their anniversaries: Patricia Malkin, Winifred Olsen, Nora Boyd, Ann Clothier, Robert Allison, Christopher Griffith, John Noble, David Johnson, Norman Barritt, Jean Brindley

CONTACTS

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