



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

**Sunday 29th May 2022
Seventh Sunday of Easter**

This morning we're in the middle of the nine days of prayer between Ascension and Pentecost. It's a time of prayerful waiting for the coming of the Holy Spirit, and a time to pray particularly for the mission of the church. Globally a movement called Thy Kingdom Come has called churches around the world to set this time apart to do just that, and I think this morning's reading from Acts offers an opportunity to reflect on that call.

And what strikes me in this morning's passage is that prayer supports us, prayer sets us free, and prayer speaks of God's grace. So, first prayer supports us. Paul and Silas find themselves stripped, flogged, and thrown into the innermost cell of the prison. Then we're told that at midnight they were praying and singing hymns to God. In the darkest point of the night, in the darkest cell in the prison, their feet chained their backs bleeding, they pray. Their reflex in need, is to pray. Their response in trouble is to praise the God they know as their rock and their refuge. Perhaps, whether we face bad times or good, we too can learn to respond with prayer. Whatever we face, before anything else, we can learn to turn to the God who is our support.

And then, prayer sets us free. Because as they pray, an earthquake shakes the cell, their chains fall off, and the doors fly open. So, prayer sets us free, it breaks the chains that bind and hold us, and offers, as Paul would later put it in his letter to the Romans, 'the glorious liberty of the children of God.' The workings of prayer are a mystery, but it seems that it's most often through prayer that God chooses to act. It's through prayer that God breaks the chains that hold us in darkness, and allows us to emerge into his light. Whether our chains are physical, spiritual or mental, it's so often in prayer that God is at work to set us free.

And finally, prayer speaks of God's grace. In a striking moment, as the jailer sees his life falling apart, imagining the prisoners escaped, and is about to fall on his sword, Paul reassures him, and the jailer asks: 'Sirs, what must I do to be saved?' The obedient and prayerful response of Paul and Silas, as they choose not to put themselves first, but to remain where they are amazes this man, who recognises God's hand at work. Perhaps similarly, our prayerful lives, as they reflect obedience to God can speak of God's grace. Our faithful prayer bears witness to a faithful God, and perhaps from time to time, others will see it, and ask us the same question: 'what must I do to be saved?'

Acts 16.16-34

One day, as we were going to the place of prayer, we met a slave-girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners a great deal of money by fortune-telling. While she followed Paul and us, she would cry out, 'These men are slaves of the Most High God, who proclaim to you a way of salvation.' She kept doing this for many days. But Paul, very much annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, 'I order you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.' And it came out that very hour.

But when her owners saw that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the market-place before the authorities. When they had brought them before the magistrates, they said, 'These men are disturbing our city; they are Jews and are advocating customs that are not lawful for us as Romans to adopt or observe.' The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates had them stripped of their clothing and ordered them to be beaten with rods. After they had given them a severe flogging, they threw them into prison and ordered the jailer to keep them securely. Following these instructions, he put them in the innermost cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.

About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was an earthquake, so violent that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were unfastened. When the jailer woke up and saw the prison doors wide open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, since he supposed that the prisoners had escaped. But Paul shouted in a loud voice, 'Do not harm yourself, for we are all here.' The jailer called for lights, and rushing in, he fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. Then he brought them outside and said, 'Sirs, what must I do to be saved?' They answered, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.' They spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. At the same hour of the night he took them and washed their wounds; then he and his entire family were baptized without delay. He brought them up into the house and set food before them; and he and his entire household rejoiced that he had become a believer in God.

John 17.20-26

Jesus looked up to heaven and prayed: 'Holy Father, I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. Father, I desire that those also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

'Righteous Father, the world does not know you, but I know you; and these know that you have sent me. I made your name known to them, and I will make it known, so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.'

TODAY

9.30am: Seventh Sunday of Easter Rev'd Gerard Rundell is our President and Preacher. Readings are Acts 16.16-34 and John 17.20-26

4pm: Service of Healing and Wholeness Rev'd Gerard leading, Rev'd Canon Jean Skinner preaching.

THE WEEK AHEAD

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

Wed 12pm, Rugby Club: **Lunch Group**

Thurs 2pm, Church: **Prayer and Praise**

Sat 10am – 12pm: **Saturday Café**

Sun 5th 9.30am, Church: **Pentecost Family Communion** Rev'd Gerard Rundell Presides and Preaches : Acts 2.1-21 and John 14.8-17[25-27]

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

Sun 5th 4pm: Church, **Team Parish Platinum Jubilee BCP Evensong**

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Thurs 9th Jun, 2pm: **Film Club in the Community Room**

Tues 14th Jun, 7pm: **Newcastle University Windband Concert in church**

NOTICES

SUNDAY SERVICE – today's live broadcast link is <https://bit.ly/7thEaster22>

HEALING SERVICE – today at 4pm. A quiet reflective service with the opportunity to receive prayer and anointing with oil either for yourself or someone you know who is in need. Do join us for this special service.

HELP NEEDED FOR JUBILEE CELEBRATION– with only a week until our community celebration it's not too late to offer your help for a short time with setting up, family games and crafts, and tidying up. We really appreciate any help that can be offered.

RED FOR PENTECOST – next week is Pentecost, please wear an item of red clothing if you can.

FILM CLUB – we are very pleased to announce the return of film club, which will be held at 2pm in the community room, on the 2nd Thursday of every month. June's film has yet to be decided.

MEN'S GROUP - We are hoping to restart the Men's Group in the Autumn. For various reasons it may not take the same pattern as pre-lockdown. To consider this and the shape it might take, anyone who is interested and would like to contribute to our planning is invited to a meeting this coming Tuesday, 31st May at 2.00pm in Church. For further information contact Ben Pullan, 07977320895.

TEA ROTA – we would be very grateful if anyone would be willing to be added to the rota, to make the teas and coffees after our Sunday morning service. If you'd like to know more, or to have your name added, please speak to Catherine.

LUNCH GROUP - will meet on 1st June at the Rugby Club. Names to Pat or Pauline if you would like to come. New members will be welcome.

BIBLE STUDY GROUP. The Bible study group concludes its Zoom series Easter in the Prophets at 7.30pm on Monday 30 May, when we will look at the spirit in the prophets, particularly Isaiah 61.1-4 and Joel 2.28-32. All welcome, contact Ken Newitt (kmnewitt@outlook.com) for further details. The group will then have a short break before beginning to look at the gospel of Luke later next month.

Zoom joining link for Monday: Meeting ID: 811 8445 8149, Passcode StABSG.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81184458149?pwd=NltdtklWb3pQVVdFNlhcEhxUT09>

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 Christ the King Team Parish, PCC members and officers: In our church for Moira and Kathryn, and all who enhance our services by their playing or singing

For the community – West End Refugee Service

For the world – particularly for Ukraine, 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 Althea Kirkbridge, Joshua Shone, Jean Roylance, Gillian Hardie

CONTACTS

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Associate Priest (Great Park): Revd Ruth Hewett 217 0367 ruthhewett@icloud.com

 [St Aidan's Church Brunton Park Newcastle www.staidanschurchbruntonpark.co.uk](https://www.staidanschurchbruntonpark.co.uk)