

Service for Caversham Park URC, Sunday 12 May 2024: Easter 7, Year B

Preparing to hear God's Word

Call to Worship

Welcome to all

Lighting of candles

Almighty God, your Son has opened for us a new and living way into your presence. Give us new hearts and constant wills to worship you in spirit and in truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Hymn O for a heart to praise my God

Prayers of Approach, Adoration and Confession

Intimate God, we praise you because you know each one of us; the worries that nag us, the achievements we are proud of, the hopes and expectations that we hold, half-recognised, in our hearts.

We praise you for what we know of you; the ways in which you have welcomed and met us, your quiet, constant, presence in our lives.

And we praise you for what we do not yet know; the mysteries of your creation, the questions that baffle us, the wonders of discovery awaiting us.

Unknown God, may we be open to meet with you in unexpected ways; discerning your presence in what is strange to us, and seeing the familiar with newly-opened eyes. **Amen.**

Confession

Jesus is our high priest, tempted like us, yet without sin. He lives for ever in heaven to intercede for us. Through him we approach the throne of grace with confidence, and confess our sins.

O God of justice, we have heard your commandments and they are a gift to us. Yet we have failed always to live by them. For this we are sorry and we turn to you for forgiveness. We have not loved you wholeheartedly. We have failed in love to our neighbours and to our selves. We have not loved our enemies or blessed those who do us harm. We live in an unjust world, where many are hungry, and there is little peace.

Lord have mercy upon us.

Assurance of Pardon

The Lord says: See, I am making all things new. *Revelation 21:5*
If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation. *2 Corinthians 5:17*
In Christ God was reconciling the world to himself. *2 Corinthians 5:19*
Through him your sins are forgiven.
Amen. Thanks be to God.

The Lord also says:
If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross
and follow me. *Mark 8:34*

Hearing God's Word

Preachers - no text

Theme Introduction

Today is the Sunday between the Ascension and Pentecost, so it is hardly surprising that our readings focus on that short period, and on the transition from the time when Jesus was present in person and in flesh with his disciples to the time we are in now, when he is with us through the Holy Spirit. How did Jesus prepare them for this time of change? What did the disciples do about it? And what does it mean for us?

Collect for the Day

O God the King of glory, you have exalted your only Son Jesus Christ with great triumph to your kingdom in heaven: we beseech you, leave us not comfortless, but send your Holy Spirit to strengthen us and exalt us to the place where our Saviour Christ is gone before, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Reading from Scripture Acts 1:15-17, 21-26

Psalm Psalm 1

Hymn Breathe on me, breath of God

Reading(s) from Scripture 1 John 5:9-13
John 17:6-19

Hymn Jesus is Lord! Creation's voice proclaims it

Sermon

Responding to God's Word

Hymn Jesus Christ is waiting

An Affirmation of Faith – The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.
Amen.**

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

The response to our prayers is:

Lord, do not leave us comfortless,
but strengthen us by your Spirit.

Prayers for the Church, the world, our community and ourselves.

Ending

with:

As we wait in silence,
make us ready for your coming Spirit.

As we listen to your word,
make us ready for your coming Spirit.

As we worship you in majesty,
make us ready for your coming Spirit.

As we long for your refreshing,
make us ready for your coming Spirit.

As we long for your renewing,
make us ready for your coming Spirit.

As we long for your equipping,
make us ready for your coming Spirit.

As we long for your empowering,
make us ready for your coming Spirit.

Risen and ascended Lord,
we pray in your holy Name. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

The Offering

extempore

Hymn The head that once was crowned with thorns

The Blessing

Christ our King make us faithful and strong to do his will, that we may reign with him in glory; And we say the Grace together:

**May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all, now and evermore.
Amen.**