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Weekly Letter – 2nd April 2023



Matthew 21.1-11

Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth.

You know this reading 'oh so well'! As always, I hope you will read it slowly and carefully feeling the descriptions, actions and words. No one else, absolutely no one else could enter the Holy City like Jesus Christ.

In order to consider this reading I am going to focus on verse 5, the prophet's words from Zechariah 9.9, Matthew v5

“Say to the Daughter of Zion,
'See, your King comes to you
gentle and riding on a donkey,
on a colt, the foal of a donkey”.

Jesus Christ is the King of peace, a King of meekness, a King of the vulnerable and of those who long for truth. None of this was in any real way understood at the time, and I for one have continually struggled to understand His Kingdom – a Kingdom based in God's desire to redeem the whole of creation through the only power that can redeem – God's power! And therefore not through the power we imagine we have!

What is this power that enters Jerusalem? It could be summed up in Matthew's third Beatitude, “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Matthew 5.5. In the act of genuine meekness there is pure goodness, who does not depend on political or military power. Why? Because Christ makes it clear in the third Beatitude and through this symbolic act of riding on a donkey that the earth ultimately belongs to the meek, and to the peaceful. Christ's words and actions invite us to locate our intentions within this goal. Unbelievably challenging. Once again!

Stephen

Sunday Morning Worship in Christ Well, and on Zoom, will be led by Rev Dr Noel Davies
Bible Readings : Matthew 21.1-11: Philippians 2.1-12

Cycle of Prayer in the Swansea Region – we will pray for Christ Well

Tea and Chat – Tuesday, 4th April – 2-4 pm. Easter Card making

Holy Week Services

Maundy Thursday - 6 pm – Communion at Wesley, Eaton Road - Rev Howard Long

Maundy Thursday - 7 pm - at Mount Calvary – Rev A. Mullin

Good Friday – 10.30 am – Rev Simon Walkling

I wonder (Lectionary Readings: Psalm 118.1-2, 19-29: Matthew 21.1-11)

I wonder if I would be in the cheering crowd as you rode into Jerusalem

I wonder if I recognise you as my King

I wonder if I will let you wash my feet so I too can learn to serve

But

I worry that I fall asleep when you asked me to stay awake

I worry that I close my eyes to my neighbour in need and fall into temptation's way

So

I cry at the foot of the cross as my Lord is crucified

I cry in the garden as I don't recognise that my Lord is with me

I cry out "My Lord and my God"

For

I know you died on the cross for me

I know you rose from the dead to save me

I know you are with me all the days of my life and fill me with joy and peace

So

I believe that Jesus Christ is my Risen Lord and Saviour

I believe you offer forgiveness for all sins and new life on your path

I believe you are the living God, Father Son and Holy Spirit, my Lord and my friend.

The logo for Christ Well features a stylized plant with three leaves above the text "Christ Well" written in a cursive, handwritten-style font.



Holy Week

Holy Week Readings

Monday 3rd April – John 12.1-11. Jesus is anointed at Bethany

Most of us have a great capacity for ignoring or avoiding truth. But once we do that, as Jesus shows we are not on the side of God, but of men. Jesus does not/cannot avoid the truth, for he knows the truth brings freedom that is given by God His Father in Love.

Prayer: Help me to see the truth, to love truth and the courage to love with the truth. Amen.

Tuesday - 4th April - John 12.20-36. Jesus predicts his death

Here in this remarkable passage Jesus is once again reminding us that we are not the architect of our lives. As much as we think we are, at times! Because we are not the creator of our lives, so we start each day asking God to help us, offer the day to him, and so have the daily courage to “die” to our desires to manipulate and seek security. For if we do that, we seek a dead life, full of dead things, and so not of the Spirit “. Whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life ... will save it”. Mark 8.35.

Prayer: Show me how to surrender my plans, my projects and desires of ease and security so that I may cultivate love and so cultivate life.

Wednesday – 5th April – John 13.21-32. To be with Jesus means, seek the Light

Here we see a profound and difficult truth about those who were once enlightened, who have tasted God’s truth and other heavenly gifts, but then reject the light and pass into the darkness of the night. Here Judas also betrays his friendship with Jesus and his fellow disciples, and is clearly in the grip of another power, to which he has opened himself up to.

Prayer: May I be with you, Jesus, and so understand your life and all that you give.

Thursday – 6th April – Maundy Thursday – John 13.1-7, 31b-35. The washing of the feet

Jesus rose from supper, and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and wipes them with a towel. Here in this single gesture Jesus explains the heart of his life: He comes down from heaven, and kneels before us,

washes and dries our soiled lives, in order that we can sit at the table for God's wedding feast. Here in this act, Jesus shows us he is the servant of love, whose sole purpose is to guide us away from pride and self-sufficiency and make us "clean".

Prayer : May I be with you, Jesus, and so understand your life and all that you give.

Good Friday – 7th April - John 18 and 19.

Jesus is arrested, charged, crucified and dies

Today they shout, 'Crucify him. Crucify him. Crucify him.' Today the people who shout for Jesus' blood demand his execution. Jesus also knows what is ahead of him, disgrace, torture and ultimately death. They could not have cried out any words that would have been more loaded with hatred and evil. All of this falls on God's Son, Jesus Christ.

Prayer: Help me to give more of my life to all that is good and true, just as you gave yourself to me.

Holy Saturday – 8th April – John 19.38-end.

Jesus is buried

This Holy Week we have lived through, Jesus final week, and we know He was anointed for death. Jesus is dead. He is buried. We must wait! Jesus must wait. It's not easy waiting, but we must somehow immerse ourselves in the stillness of Christ lying in the tomb.

Prayer : Today I ask for your grace to rest with you, so that I may be with you in the tomb - waiting for the new creation.

Stephen

