

The Dunster Benefice
Carhampton, Dunster, Timberscombe,
Withycombe with Rodhuish, Wootton Courtenay
Newsletter 14th May 2021



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Sunday 16th May (Ascension)

Readings & Collect

Risen Christ, you have raised our human nature to the throne of heaven: help us to seek and serve you, that we may join you at the Father's side, where you reign with the Spirit in glory, now and for ever. Amen.

Common Worship Collect taken from Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England © The Archbishops' Council 2000

Acts 1.1-11

In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over the course of forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. 'This', he said, 'is what you have heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.'

So when they had come together, they asked him, 'Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?' He replied, 'It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.' When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going and they were gazing up towards heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up towards heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.'

Luke 24.44-53

Then he said to them, 'These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.' Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, 'Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.'

Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

SERVICES THIS WEEK

This Sunday there will be services of Holy Communion at Carhampton (CW) and Withycombe (CW) at 9.30am and Timberscombe (CW) and Wootton Courtenay (BCP) at 11am.

Code: CW = Common Worship BCP=Book of Common Prayer

Most churches will be open for private prayer on a Sunday or some other day of the week, please keep an eye on the notice boards.

Rector's Note

It may not feel like it, but it is 41 days since Easter and yesterday was Ascension Day. In some churches, people will have climbed onto the roof to sing at Dawn, or at any rate, very early, to commemorate the day. It is one of the fast days celebrated by all denominations of Christianity and is held in high importance. Nevertheless, accounts in the gospels vary. Neither Matthew nor John mention it at all. Matthew's gospel finishes "remember I am with you always, to the end of the age", surely one of the most comforting sentences in scripture. The official gospel of Mark does not mention it either, it only comes in the postscript. Luke mentions it briefly in his gospel account, but discusses it much more fully in Acts. Jesus makes it very clear in the gospel of John that unless he goes, the spirit cannot come and it is the fulfilment of his word in the stories of Acts that sets up the early church and allows the gospel to spread amongst the whole of the Empire, especially amongst the gentiles. The descent of the Holy Spirit on Cornelius' household at Caesarea was the conclusive proof for Peter that God meant everyone to be part of the new loving relationship between God and humanity.

It marks for us the beginning of the summer, the long days of Trinity, time to reflect and enjoy life out of doors, a resurgence of life and as we await the easing of pandemic restrictions, what better day to celebrate?

Caroline

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