

"Peace be with you!" They were startled and terrified. Perhaps they had lost their minds. Or maybe it was Jesus' ghost come to haunt them for betraying him.

Jesus spoke: "Why are you frightened? Why do you doubt what you have heard? I am alive just as they told you. Look touch my hand and side. I am flesh and bone. I am not a ghost!"

And even as they looked at his hands and feet they had trouble believing. Then Jesus said, "I'm hungry. You got anything to eat around here?" They gave him some broiled fish and watched in amazement as he ate.

Then Jesus began to teach them again. He said, "I've already told you this but I'm going to tell you again. Everything that the Bible says will happen must happen." Then he opened their minds to see how the scriptures were being fulfilled. And he showed them that it was written that he should die on a cross and rise on the third day. Appropriately we sang, 'Open my Mind' in the hymn 'Silently now I wait for Thee' earlier.

Then Jesus said something that probably worried or even scared the disciples at first. He said, "It's God's will that everyone hears about repentance and forgiveness in my name. Begin in Jerusalem and tell it to all the world. It's your job to be my witnesses. It's your job to let them know that they can have new life through me!" I imagine someone with a rather nervous laugh. "Ha ha ha ha. Does he really expect us to go out and start telling people about repentance and forgiveness in his name. If we go out there openly talking about following Jesus, they'll kill us! 'Go witness!' They had seen what happened to Jesus, they would avoid that fate at all costs. But Jesus went on. Remember when the prophets promised that God would pour out the spirit on all flesh. Well, that's about to happen. Just stay here in the city until you have been armed with power from above.

These first Christian faced incredible odds. The Roman Empire was strong and several times they tried to stamp out this new religion. But power came from above and they told people about the truth of repentance and forgiveness in Jesus' name. And the church moved out of that stale dark upper room. At Pentecost they opened the doors and let some fresh air in. And they openly came out into the light to give their testimony.

But the church today seems to have retreated to that Upper Room mentality. We no longer bolt the doors and shutter the windows. Instead we hide behind carved doors and rose coloured stain glass windows. Phew! Is it just me or is it getting stuffy in here?

Maybe we need to open the doors and windows and let some fresh air in. But people are afraid to let in some fresh air. They are afraid that those outside will find out that they are disciples of Christ. They are afraid to go out there and

face the ugliness of the world and tell it about salvation in Jesus' name. So we hide in our Sunday Upper Rooms. And we keep quiet for fear that the neighbours will hear us.

Jesus told us to be witnesses. To boldly go where no disciple has gone before and tell people of love and grace through Jesus Christ. But we haven't been doing it, because if we had more people would know about it. Have you ever sat down and told someone about Jesus? Have you told them that Jesus died for their sins and if they would accept him they would have eternal life? Have you taken the risk to love and outcast because God first loved you? I Come To America the preacher played by Eddy Murphy says, 'If loving the Lord is wrong – I don't want to be right!' And often I have heard it said, "If being a Christian were a crime, would there be enough evidence to find you guilty?" If I were to interrogate your friends and neighbours, would they say you are a Christian. To bear witness we must be willing to let people see our religion at work. You might be afraid to let people know you are a Christian. They might think you are a fanatic. They might not associate with you. If you showed God's love to the wrong people or spoke out against the wrong thing, they might not like you anymore. If you are afraid, for whatever reason, you are not alone. Jesus' first witnesses were afraid too, perhaps even terrified. But God gave them the strength to face their fears. And God will give you strength to be his witnesses too. You have already been given that power. Simply Believe! Amen.

HYMN - SEEK YE FIRST

SEEK YE FIRST the kingdom of God
And His righteousness,
And all these things
shall be added unto you,
Allelu, alleluia!

*Alleluia! Alleluia!
Alleluia! Allelu, alleluia!*

Man shall not live by bread alone,
But by every word
That proceeds from the mouth of God,
Allelu, alleluia!

Ask and it shall be given unto you,
Seek and ye shall find.
Knock and it shall be opened unto you,
Alleluia, alleluia!

THE peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the Knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord: and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be amongst you and remain with you always. **Amen.**



st andrews

church bentley

Welcome to issue #56. Proverbs 3:5,6 says, 'Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to Him, and He will make your paths straight'.

HYMN - TWO HANDS, ONE HEART

WHAT CAN I GIVE, What can I bring
That would be pleasing to my King
I'll give my heart not just a part
I'm lifting up my everything
Well it's all I have to offer
And it's all I have to give

*Two hands one heart
One life to offer You
Two hands one heart
That's what I give to You*

Use me today I know You can
Lord I surrender to Your plan
Well You made this heart
You made these hands
Take me and use me as I am
It's all I have to offer
And it's all I have to give

Two hands one heart....

Little becomes a lot
When it's in Your hands
Take me and make me more like You
Well it may not seem like much
But with the Master's touch
I know that I'll be more like You

Two hand, one heart.... (2x)

LET US PRAY

Lord, use me today. Take my hand and my heart and mould it to be more like Yours. Open our eyes, ears, mouths and minds so that in our quiet times we get a glimpse of You. You are my hope in times of trouble. Touch me today, Lord, I know that I cannot live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from You. So Lord, I silently wait for You to speak to me. Help me to always do Your will. Amen.

HYMN - OPEN MY EYES THAT I MAY SEE

Open my eyes that I may see
Glimpses of truth Thou hast for me;
Place in my hands the wonderful key
That shall unclasp and set me free.

*Silently now I wait for Thee,
Ready, my God, Thy will to see;
Open my eyes, illumine me,
Spirit divine!*

Open my ears that I may hear
Voices of truth Thou sendest clear;
And while the wave-notes fall on my ear,
Everything false will disappear.

Open my mouth and let me bear
Tidings of mercy everywhere;
Open my heart and let me prepare
Love with thy children thus to share,

Open my mind, that I may read
More of Thy love in word and deed:
What shall I fear while yet Thou doest lead?
Only for light from Thee I plead.

EVENING PRAYER

WHEN the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive. *Ezekiel 18:27*

I will arise, and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. *Luke 15:18,19*

DEARLY beloved brethren, the Scripture moveth us in sundry places to acknowledge and confess our manifold sins and wickedness; and that we should not dissemble nor cloke them before the face of Almighty God our heavenly Father; but confess them with an humble, lowly, penitent, and obedient heart; to the end that we may obtain forgiveness of the same, by his infinite goodness and mercy. And although we ought at all times humbly to acknowledge our sins before God; yet ought we most chiefly so to do, when we assemble and meet together to render thanks for the great benefits that we have received at his hands, to set forth his most worthy praise, to hear his most holy Word, and to ask those things which are requisite and necessary, as well for the body as the soul. Wherefore I pray and beseech you, as many as are here present, to accompany me with a pure heart and humble voice unto the throne of the heavenly grace, saying after me:

ALmighty and most merciful Father, We have erred, and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep, We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts. We have offended against thy holy laws, We have left undone those things which we ought to have done, And we have done those things which we ought not to have done, And there is no health in us: But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us miserable offenders; Spare thou them, O God, which confess their faults, Restore thou them that are penitent, According to thy promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesu our Lord: And grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake, That we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life, to the glory of thy holy Name. **Amen.**

WORSHIP SHEET #56
Sunday 18th April 2021

ALMIGHTY God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who desireth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he may turn from his wickedness and live; He pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly repent, and unfeignedly believe his holy Gospel. Wherefore let us beseech him to grant us true repentance and his Holy Spirit, that those things may please him which we do at this present, and that the rest of our life hereafter may be pure and holy; so that at the last we may come to his eternal joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

OUR Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive them that trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, For ever and ever. *Amen*

O Lord, open thou our lips.
And our mouth shall shew forth thy praise.
O God, make speed to save us.
O Lord, make haste to help us.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.
Praise ye the Lord.
The Lord's Name be praised.

BIBLE READING - JOHN 24:36b - 48

Jesus Appears to the Disciples

Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you."
³⁷ They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost. ³⁸ He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? ³⁹ Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have."
⁴⁰ When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet. ⁴¹ And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, "Do you have anything here to eat?" ⁴² They gave him a piece of broiled fish, ⁴³ and he took it and ate it in their presence. ⁴⁴ He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms."
⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. ⁴⁶ He told them, "This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷ and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things.

THIS IS THE WORD OF THE LORD - THANKS BE TO GOD.

MAGNIFICAT. Luke 1

MY soul doth magnify the Lord : and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

For he hath regarded : the lowliness of his hand-maiden.

For behold, from henceforth : all generations shall call me blessed. For he that is mighty hath magnified me : and holy is his Name.

And his mercy is on them that fear him : throughout all generations.

He hath shewed strength with his arm : he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

He hath put down the mighty from their seat : and hath exalted the humble and meek.

He hath filled the hungry with good things : and the rich he hath sent empty away.

He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel : as he promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his seed, for ever.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son : and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be : world without end. *Amen.*

THE APOSTLES' CREED

IBELIEVE in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth :
And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary, Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, dead, and buried, He descended into hell; The third day he rose again from the dead, He ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; The holy Catholic Church; The Communion of Saints; The Forgiveness of sins; The Resurrection of the body, And the life everlasting. Amen.

The Lord be with you.
And with thy spirit.
Let us pray. - Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.
O Lord, shew thy mercy upon us.
And grant us thy salvation.
O Lord, save the Queen.
And mercifully hear us when we call upon Thee.
Endue thy Ministers with righteousness.
And make thy chosen people joyful.
O Lord, save thy people.
And bless thine inheritance.
Give us peace in our time, O Lord.
Because there is none other that fighteth for us, but only thou, O God.
O God, make clean our hearts within us.
And take not thy Holy Spirit from us.

COLLECT - SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

ALMIGHTY God, who hast given thine only Son to be unto us both a sacrifice for sin, and also an ensample of godly life; give us grace that we may always most thankfully receive that His inestimable benefit, and also daily endeavour ourselves to follow the blessed steps of His most holy life; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

O GOD, from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed; Give unto thy servants that peace which the world cannot give; that both our hearts may be set to obey thy commandments, and also that by Thee we being defended from the fear of our enemies may pass our time in rest and quietness; through the merits of Jesus Christ our Saviour. *Amen.*

LIGHTEN our darkness, we beseech Thee, O Lord; and by thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night; for the love of thy only Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

HYMN - WHEN I FEEL THE TOUCH

WHEN I FEEL THE TOUCH

Of Your hand upon my life,
It causes me to sing a song
That I love You, Lord.
So from deep within
My spirit singeth unto Thee,
You are my King, You are my God,
And I love You, Lord.
(Repeat)

OLORD our heavenly Father, high and mighty, King of kings, Lord of lords, the only Ruler of princes, who dost from thy throne behold all the dwellers upon earth: Most heartily we beseech Thee with thy favour to behold our most gracious Sovereign Lady, Queen ELIZABETH; and all the Royal Family: Endue them with thy Holy Spirit; enrich them with thy heavenly grace; prosper them with all happiness; and bring them to thine everlasting kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who alone workest great marvels: Send down upon our Bishops and Clergy, and all Congregations committed to their charge, the healthful Spirit of thy grace; and that they may truly please Thee, pour upon them the continual dew of thy blessing. Grant this, O Lord, for the honour of our Advocate and Mediator, Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

ALMIGHTY God, who hast given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplications unto Thee; and dost promise that when two or three are gathered together in thy Name thou wilt grant their requests: Fulfil now, O Lord, the desires and petitions of thy servants, as may be most expedient for them; granting us in this world knowledge of thy truth, and in the world to come life everlasting. *Amen.*

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

HYMN - FAITHFUL ONE

FAITHFUL ONE, so unchanging,
Ageless One, You're my Rock of peace.
Lord of all, I depend on You,
I call out to You again and again.
I call out to You again and again.
You are my rock in times of trouble.
You lift me up when I fall down.
All through the storm Your love is the anchor,
My hope is in You alone.

(REPEAT)

BRIEF WORD - Bishop Paul

Most of us will not remember or have been around during the war years when families would shut themselves away in stuffy air raid shelters with just a candle to light the tomb-like structure. Just imagine how it felt when the danger was over and the door could be opened and let fresh air in and come out into the light. Just imagine if they had just eaten sprouts before having to go inside! Being rather claustrophobic I am thankful that we have not had to endure those moments and yet during the last twelve months many have been shut inside their own four walls and put into an unprecedented isolation. Who knows what the emotional cost of this will be long term? Thankfully, some restrictions are now being lifted.

The room was dark and John tells us that the doors and shutters were closed. The air in that room was probably stale because of lack of good ventilation. And everyone was quiet; perhaps speaking only in hushed whispers.

The disciples were gathered there for fear of the Jews. The Jewish authorities had killed Jesus just three days before. They had crucified Jesus their leader; the Messiah of God. What would they do to them. So they kept quiet so that no one would find them. Perhaps they even thought of fleeing the city by night to escape.

The pressure was taking its toll on the mental state of the disciples. That morning, some of the women snapped and started babbling about Jesus being alive. The realization that someone had gone as far as to steal his body had pushed them over the edge. The air was so thick with tension that Thomas decided to just leave for a while.

Then someone knocked on the door. Everyone held their breath for fear that it was the Romans come to arrest them. To their relief it was just two of Jesus followers who had left town that morning. They too had gone off the deep end and were babbling about seeing the Lord. Then the door was quickly shut and bolted again and they talked about it in hushed whispers.

Then, suddenly, there was light in the darkness. The light wasn't coming through the shutters or the doors they were still bolted shut. It was from the middle of the room. It was coming from Jesus! Jesus was standing in the middle of the room; alive! He opened his arms and said,