



Sunday 1st June 2025

7th Sunday of Easter

Acts 16:16-34

Psalm 97

Revelation 22: 12-22

John 17:20-26

The Rev'd Margaret Peel-Shakespeare

I speak to you in the name of One God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Amen.

This is the last Sunday in Eastertide. We have had 40 days of celebrating the Resurrection and this past Thursday we celebrated the feast of the Ascension. The day when Jesus ascended into heaven that we hear about in the first chapter of Acts.

Throughout our readings today God's presence, God's glory is constant, in the Book of Acts, Revelation, the Psalm and John's gospel.

The Revelation text leads us to pay attention God is gathering the faithful to bring us to the Holy City of God so we may live into the fullness of God. The Lord God that created us from the beginning, the God we hear in the psalm today and the God who saved Paul and Silas from their chains in prison. This is the same God who leads us to drink of the water of life.

In the text from Revelation, we are called to enter into the refrain of the Spirit and the Bride say "come!" Come to the water of life, the New Jerusalem, the Holy City of God where God's kingdom is realised in fullness "Come!"

Today's gospel, in John 17, Jesus bids farewell to the disciples in what has been called the "High priestly prayer". Words from Jesus that are in

the form of a prayer to God about the disciples, the future of believers and to God in heaven, all at once.

The focus of this prayer leads us to Oneness with God. Jesus is preaching unity for all who believe both now and into the future and he ends the prayer with love. John 17: 26, “so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them and I in them.” The glory of God is given to us for the sake of this unity and Oneness with God.

As we hear about in Revelation the new Jerusalem, the Holy City, the Bride of the Lamb (Christ), the water of life where we are invited to be, to drink.

The Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come.’

And let everyone who hears say, ‘Come.’

And let everyone who is thirsty come.

Let anyone who wishes take the water of life as a gift.

(Revelation 22:17)

In Acts, glorifying God comes through Paul and Silas who we are told were “going to the place of prayer” when they met a servant girl who had a “spirit of divination”. Paul casts out the evil spirit in her and later he and Silas were beaten and imprisoned for this act. Sore and wounded it is in this moment that they turn to God in prayer and praise, singing hymns and praising God with all that they have! This very act of loving God leads to their freedom.

When the earthquake happens, the jailer is ready to hurt himself and he begs Paul and Silas, “what must I do to be saved” and As Eugene Petersen’s interpretation of this in the Message they answer, Acts 16:31 ”Put your trust [vs. believe] in the Master Jesus. They you will live as you were meant to live—and everyone in your house included!”

You will live as you were meant to live. Friends, this IS the good news. That when we live in Christ, we live as we were meant to live. Christ that was resurrected, has appeared and ascended into heaven is welcoming us to come and drink from the water of life! That the ideal city that we hear in Revelation is the merging of the old and new.

A place where God is praised, and this praise pours out from every brick and wall and person in the Holy City because it is the Bride. We too are included as the bride, those who follow the Lamb of God. God calls us to be set apart for Christ because we have chosen to come to the water of life that never runs dry, the source of all goodness and mercy, the water of life in Christ, the Lamb.

As we go into the world today, no matter what happens around us, may we be reminded that when we trust in Christ, when we believe in Jesus and follow his ways, we will truly live as we are meant to live.

AMEN.