

Parish of Ribbleton

St. Mary Magdalene (SMM) The Ascension (ASC) -Longsands (LS)

Sunday 22nd May
6th Sunday of Easter

Alleluia! Alleluia!
Jesus said,
‘Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching.
My Father will love them, and we will come to them.’
Alleluia! Alleluia!

Alleluia!
Christ is risen!

He is risen indeed!
Alleluia!

PRAYER FOR THE DAY

God our redeemer,
you have delivered us from the power of darkness
and brought us into the kingdom of your Son:
grant, that as by his death he has recalled us to life,
so by his continual presence in us
he may raise us to eternal joy;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen

FIRST READING (Acts 16:9-15)

During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him,
‘Come over to Macedonia and help us.’
After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.
From Troas we put out to sea and sailed straight for Samothrace, and the next day we went on to Neapolis.
From there we travelled to Philippi, a Roman colony and the leading city of that district of Macedonia.
And we stayed there several days.
On the Sabbath we went outside the city gate to the river, where we expected to find a place of prayer.
We sat down and began to speak to the women who had gathered there.
One of those listening was a woman from the city of Thyatira named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth.

She was a worshipper of God.
The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul’s message.
When she and the members of her household were baptised, she invited us to her home.
‘If you consider me a believer in the Lord,’ she said,
‘come and stay at my house.’

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Psalm 67)

The response to the Psalm is:

**May the peoples praise you, God;
may all the peoples praise you.**

May God be gracious to us and bless us
and make his face shine on us –
so that your ways may be known on earth,
your salvation among all nations. **R/**

May the peoples praise you, God;
may all the peoples praise you.
May the nations be glad and sing for joy,
for you rule the peoples with equity
and guide the nations of the earth. **R/**

May the peoples praise you, God;
may all the peoples praise you.
The land yields its harvest;
God, our God, blesses us.
May God bless us still,
so that all the ends of the earth will fear him. **R/**

SECOND READING (Revelation 21:10,22-22:5)

The angel carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God. I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendour into it. On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there. The glory and honour of the nations will be brought into it. Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever..

THE GOSPEL (John 14:23-29)

Jesus said to his disciples,
'Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me. All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. You heard me say, "I am going away and I am coming back to you." If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe.'



Sunday Reflection

This week has been a busy week for me, and this Sunday is a busy day for our church communities. As well as our Eucharists, we have our annual meetings and our confirmation service. There's a lot of work goes into preparing for each of these events.

A couple of weeks ago, as I was preparing the order of service for the confirmation service I was asked what the readings would be.

One suggestion for a Sunday service was that we used the lectionary readings – the readings we have on Sunday morning.

That seemed like a no-brainer, so I put in our readings from the Acts of the Apostles and the gospel of John.

Then I went to read them – and yes, they were so appropriate for our confirmation service.

We call our confirmation course “One more Step”.

We encourage our candidates to look at their Christian lives as a journey, starting from baptism, and with their promises and commitment at confirmation as the next step.

But it is only a step, it's not the end of the road.

And where does the journey go then?

We've thought about believing in and about following Jesus.

About committing to prayer, to bible study and being the church in practical ways.

Who knows where the Holy Spirit will lead our young people on their journey?

Our gospel reading is part of the long speech by Jesus after the Last Supper.

It seems to revise the teaching the disciples had received and to be intended as reassurance for the next steps on their journey.

Familiar words to us – words about love, about peace, about fear.

A promise that we will not be alone.

The reading from Acts shows the practical outworking of Christian life.

Paul and Silas and their companions were travelling round the churches – the early groups of Christians in towns and cities around the eastern Mediterranean, encouraging them in their Christian life, and reinforcing the teaching they had received at their baptisms.

Then they receive a call to go somewhere new.

A call to share the Gospel, to make new Christians.

And our reading from Revelation – a glimpse of the end of our Christian journey, our destination with God.

I'm grateful to the Rev. John Ball, who a few weeks ago pointed out to us that the whole book is a message of encouragement to people who were living through difficult and dangerous times.

Christians passing through the valley of the shadow of death.

And it's encouragement to us too.

So, as our young people – Abi, Maisie, Max and Ryan – take the next step on their journeys, they need us to encourage them, to set an example for them to follow.

They need us to show that we too are on that journey, loving, following and serving.

And we need to take stock of where our journey is going, to make sure we're not stuck in a cul-de-sac, or going the wrong way up a one-way street, or endlessly round and round the same traffic island.

And so to our annual meetings, where we look back at 2021 and the work that we have done together as a church.

We also look forward, as we elect those from among us who we believe God is asking us to set aside for the task of leading and guiding our work for the next twelve months.

Work that may mean changes to our ideas and familiar patterns, particularly as we welcome a new rector to the parish.

But we have the reassurance of Jesus' promises in our gospel reading and the example of those we follow.

Love, prayers,

Barbara

Intercessions

God of love, your Spirit extends beyond all boundaries and encompasses the whole world. Unite all who call you 'Father' as members of the one family of faith.

We pray for all who lead and guide your people, among them our bishops, Julian, Philip and Jill, and Archdeacon David. May they bear much fruit for you.

We hold before you those who face discrimination and threat because of their faith in you, and we pray for your church in Nigeria, Pakistan and Egypt. May they know the joy of your presence in their lives.

We ask your blessing on Fr Chris, Linda and Captain David as they serve our parish, and we give thanks for the Reverend Dave Hanson's ministry among us today. May we share with them the work of your kingdom.

We pray for our worshipping communities around the parish, giving thanks for the witness and service of Ron and Jacqueline, our parish wardens, and our PCC members through the past year. We ask your blessing on those who will be elected and appointed to serve for the coming year.

We pray for the person you are calling to lead our church and minister to this parish, and for those who will select and appoint them. Grant them wisdom and discernment in their task.

We hold before you Abi, Maisie, Max and Ryan who will be confirmed this afternoon. May your love surround them and your Spirit fill them.

May your church be one, as you are one.
Lord in your mercy Hear our prayer

God of love, your Spirit breaks the restrictions of nationality, race and language. Unite all who you have created as members of the one human family.

Bless those who hold positions of power and authority in the nations and guide them in the paths of peace and justice. May they be open to your kingdom values and seek always to serve the well-being of the poorest and weakest of your children.

We pray for those who live in fear and turmoil, and struggle to rebuild their lives after warfare, violence or natural disasters. We hold before you the people of Afghanistan and Yemen, all who are living in refugee camps or makeshift accommodation, and those threatened with deportation to unfamiliar and threatening places.

We ask your blessing on the people of Ukraine and those whose lives are damaged and destroyed by the war there. We pray together the diocesan prayer for Ukraine.

May your creation be one as you are one.
Lord in your mercy Hear our prayer

God of love, your Spirit calls us together as family, friends and neighbours. Unite us in concern for the needs of all in

our community and help us to reach out beyond our personal circles and comfort zones.

We pray for all who live and work in our parish, and for those who serve our community's needs, caring for our health and well-being.

We hold before you those of our neighbours who struggle with the needs of daily life and those who will need to use the food banks and community pantry this week.

Support and encourage the children and young people of our parish who are taking exams around this time.

May our community be united and remain in your love
Lord in your mercy Hear our prayer

God of love, your Spirit draws us to abide in your life giving love. Hold in your embrace all who are ill or at the limits of their endurance, and those who are alone and afraid.

Comfort those who are close to death and those who grieve.

We pray for those who need your healing touch: for those known to us, those named on our prayer list, and those among us now.

May their lives be filled with your love.
Lord in your mercy Hear our prayer

God of love, your Spirit breathes life into your creation. Unite us with Christ, and bring us through the waters of death to the joy of life eternal.

We pray for those who have died: for those who have died alone, afraid, or unprepared, for those killed this week in the ongoing conflicts and disasters in our world. And for those known to us who have died recently, including Carole Booth, whose funeral was this week. May her family and loved ones know the comfort of your loving presence.

We remember too those whose anniversary of death is around this time.

Rest eternal grant unto them, O Lord,
and let light perpetual shine upon them.
May they rest in peace and rise in glory

Lord in your mercy Hear our prayer

God of love, your Spirit draws our hearts to you. Dwell in our hearts that we may be obedient to Christ's teaching, and be filled with the peace he gives.

Trusting in your unfailing love, we bring our silent prayers for ourselves and those we love.

May we remain always in your love.
Lord in your mercy Hear our prayer

Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Diocesan prayer for Ukraine

Almighty God,
seated above all the affairs of humankind
and sovereign over nations and leaders,
hear our prayer for Ukraine at this time of war;
that lives may be spared,
that national boundaries be respected
and that forces of aggression be restrained.
Grant, Lord God,
peace in your world in our time.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord,
Amen

Sunday 29th May

Ascension Sunday

7th Sunday of Easter

President: Rev. Canon Grant Ashton

9:30am Eucharist at The Church of the Ascension

11:00am Eucharist at St. Mary Magdalene's

Readings

Acts 1:1-11; Psalm 47;

Ephesians 1:15-23; Luke 24:44-53

Mid-week services and activities

Tuesday 10am – 12 noon – Community Pantry at ASC

Tuesday – Eucharist at Preston Private

Tuesday 6:00 to 7:00 – Confirmation Class at ASC

Wednesday 10am – Eucharist at SMM,
church remains open for private prayer until 12 noon.

Thursday 10am – 12 noon – Place of Welcome at ASC

Dates for your Diary:

Sunday 22nd May: Annual Church Meetings
12:30pm at St Mary Magdalene's

Sunday 22nd May: Confirmation Service with Bp Julian
4:00pm at St Mary Magdalene's

Monday 6th June: Baptism Preparation Class,
7:00pm at St Mary Magdalene's

Ukraine Appeal

International Aid Trust, are unable at present to accept donations of clothing and bedding – they have been overwhelmed.



We cannot accept further donations for them at SMM at present. When things change we will let you know.

Our annual church meetings are today, 22nd May – at these meetings we will elect our Parish Wardens and PCC members for the coming year.

Please consider prayerfully whether you can serve our church – and serve God – by standing for election.

The nomination forms are available in both our churches. Completed forms can be accepted up until the start of the meetings.

If you want to know more about what's involved, please speak to Barbara or Captain David.

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WARDENS – St Mary Magdalene

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WARDENS – Church of The Ascension

Jacqueline Carter