

Sunday May 3rd 2015



**The United Benefice of Long Crendon, Chearsley & Nether
Winchendon**

WELCOME EVERYONE: MAY YOU BE BLESSED TODAY

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. **1 John 4:7**



Come, Lord in the dawning
Come in the newness of the morning,
Come, make yourself known at the break of day
and in the breaking of bread.

Collect for The Fifth Sunday of Easter

Almighty God, who through your only-begotten Son Jesus Christ have overcome death and opened to us the gate of everlasting life: grant that, as by your grace going before us you put into our minds good desires, so by your continual help we may bring them to good effect; through Jesus Christ our risen Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Readings for Today:

First Reading: Acts 8:26 - end



Introduction

How do we abide in Christ, and how do we know that Christ abides in us?

Our faith is often challenged and we might wonder whether God is close to us. The passage from John this week reminds us that Jesus makes a promise that he is with us and that we need never doubt that we are connected to the source of life, just as surely as a branch takes its source of strength and feeds from the trunk of the tree. Even when we walk through the valley of the shadow of death God is with us, even if we find it hard to trust and believe.

How can we be sure that we are truly rooted in Christ?

The evidence of our connection with Christ is clear, we bear fruit. Lives that are lived in the strength of God produce obedience to God's way and a demonstration in Christian living. There is nothing more mysterious than that. If we say we belong to Jesus, then our lives must be living examples of him.

Epistle Reading: 1 John 4:7 – end

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

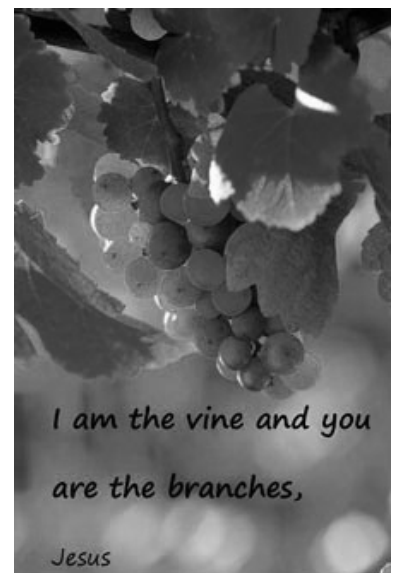
By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Saviour of the world. God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. So we have known and believe the love that God has for us.

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgement, because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. We love because he first loved us. Those who say, 'I love God', and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

Gospel Reading: John 15: 1 - 8

'I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine-grower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you.

Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.



Post Communion Prayer

Eternal God, whose Son Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life: grant us to walk in his way, to rejoice in his truth, and to share his risen life; who is alive and reigns, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Services Today: May 3rd Easter 5

8.00am	Holy Communion	Long Crendon	JW
10.00am	Café Sunday	Long Crendon	
9.00am	Holy Communion	Nether Winchendon	AB
10.00am	Holy Communion	Chearsley	AB

SERVICES FOR NEXT WEEK May 10th EASTER 5: Rogation

8.00 am	Holy Communion	Long Crendon	JW
10.00am	Matins	Nether Winchendon	RSB
10.30am	Sung Eucharist	Long Crendon	JW
10.00am	Morning Celebration	Chearsley	Lay Led
6.00pm	Evensong	Chearsley	JW

Comment: Our faith is often challenged and we might wonder whether God is close to us. The passage from John this week reminds us that Jesus makes a promise that he is with us and that we need never doubt that we are connected to the source of life, just as surely as a branch takes its source of strength and feeds from the trunk of the tree. Even when we walk through the valley of the shadow of death God is with us, even if we find it hard to trust and believe.

God not only shows us the route,
He walks with us every step of the way.



**Friends of St. Mary's, Long Crendon
and
Aylesbury Opera Group presents
A Night at the Opera
St Mary's Church, Long Crendon
Saturday 9th May 2015 at 7.30pm**

A concert programme featuring a quartet of local, professional singers accompanied at the piano by Anthony McCarthy. The programme will comprise famous and popular arias and ensembles from across the opera repertoire, including Handel, Mozart, Rossini and Verdi.

www.FSMLongCrendon.org

for tickets at £10 each e-mail Friends@FSMLongCrendon.org

or call Lindsey Kennedy on 290602.



TOMORROW and TOMORROW

Don't forget: May 4th at 8.30am. Madrigals will be sung from St. Mary's Church Tower by the Witchert Chorale tomorrow morning. Coffee and Rolls will be served. Be there!



ASCENSION DAY

Holy Communion
Ascension Day
at St. Mary's Church, Long Crendon.
8.00pm May 14th



Lord Jesus, it is better to light one candle than to give up hope and curse the darkness. It is better to save one stranger from deportation and reunite one separated family, than it is to say it is not our problem and we can't do much to help. It is better to join hands in one work of love than to sit on our hands and feel powerless. Lord, help us to love you in the stranger and the refugee. Help us to love ourselves enough to believe that we can change things for the better. Help us to love as you have loved us. Amen. Christian Aid

We live and die; Christ died and lived! ~John Stott

Was not Jesus an extremist for love – “Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, pray for them that despitefully use you.” Was not Amos an extremist for justice – “Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream.” Was not Paul an extremist for the gospel of Jesus Christ – “I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.” Was not Martin Luther an extremist – “Here I stand; I can do none other so help me God.” Was not John Bunyan an extremist – “I will stay in jail to the end of my days before I make a butchery of my conscience.” Was not Abraham Lincoln an extremist – “This nation cannot survive half slave and half free.” Was not Thomas Jefferson an extremist – “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.”

So the question is not whether we will be extremist but what kind of extremist will we be. Will we be extremists for hate or will we be extremists for love? Will we be extremists for the preservation of injustice – or will we be extremists for the cause of justice? *Letter from Birmingham Jail, April 1963*
Martin Luther King