

Connected

Sunday 30th May 2021
Trinity Sunday

Verse For The Week

Ananias said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here, has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit."

(Acts 9: 17)

Sermon Snippets

Acts 9: 1-19

Read for yourself the story of Saul in Acts 8: 1-4 and Acts 9: 1-2. He was a murdering, persecuting, frightening man who made it his mission to destroy the new church. He was also very religious with a strong belief in God. The things that the followers of Jesus said went against everything he believed about God. In his eyes, God's honour was at stake and he intended to do whatever he could to stop people talking about Jesus.

If you can't be with us in church or online on Sunday, read Acts 9: 1-19 and be amazed at this story of grace, forgiveness and hope. Think about how the story of your journey with Jesus began. Then think about how God has shown you grace, forgiveness or hope recently. These are the stories we can share with each other to encourage one another and to share with those who don't yet know Jesus.

Let's tell our stories this week.

Pentecost Response

Following Terry's sermon last week, I received the following reflection, which also fits in with Angeline's challenge this week that we tell our own stories.

At Pentecost the power of the Holy Spirit fell upon everyone who was present. In Joel 2: 28-29 God says, "I will pour out My Spirit on all people". The Holy Spirit and His power are available still to all who seek Him, but they remain an unopened gift unless we receive Him and are prepared to unwrap all that He has for us. John Wimber used to say that "Every Christian gets to play". This was not an irreverent statement but an invitation for everyone to engage in effective evangelism, mission and social action.

As Christians, we carry the Holy Spirit wherever we go, into every situation, but we can turn the 'tap' of His presence and power on or off. We can ask Him to be at work in and through us, or we can stifle and silence Him.

Today God still works through His Spirit, through us, to bring about those 'break through' moments when we see His will being done and His kingdom come. By inviting the Holy Spirit into a situation, we turn on the tap of God's power, and ALL His children can do that.

We must never think that we're too 'small' or too 'insignificant' for God to use us. It's not our power He's using, it's our availability, willingness and obedience that enables Him to move. Let's be open to God filling us with His Spirit and being vessels through which He works to pour out His Spirit into the lives of those who desperately need Him.

Watch this Sunday's Service

at www.ccwsm.org.uk

Go to the 'Church Life' menu and click on the 'Sunday Services' page.

Trinity Prayer

Father, Son and Holy Spirit inspire us ... guide us

Monday

For rest, relaxation and safety for those visiting our town this Bank Holiday - and for the chance to enjoy your beautiful creation!

Tuesday

For all who are baptised and confirmed in your faith: may we be witness to your presence and love!

Wednesday

For all studying at school, college and university: may their knowledge of your whole creation increase!

Thursday

For all who work and those seeking employment: give them your strength and resilience day by day.

Friday

For all who are ill and suffering, poor and hungry: may they know your love and our support every day.
Pray especially for the dreadful situation in Yemen.

Saturday

Our local clergy: for encouragement and enthusiasm to help us build a fairer society in our town.

Mission Partner Prayer

The April / May Newsletter from CAP is now on the Christ Church website. **Please click on this link** to read the newsletter. Do pray for this important work in our town.

Please continue to remember the Potters in your prayers. You can watch their latest video update on the Christ Church website under Mission Partner News, or you can [click on this link](#).

The Morrisseys are asking for prayer as they settle to life in Exeter after seven years in West Africa. Please see last week's *Connected* for more details.

Notices

Annual Church Meetings

A reminder that the Emmanuel Church Meeting will take place on Sunday 06 June after the morning service.

For those who missed it, the Christ Church Annual Meeting is still available to watch on the Christ Church website. Go to the [APCM Page](#) under the What's On menu. Please pray for Sandra and Martin who were elected to serve on the PCC.

Bible Notes

Bible Notes for July have arrived. Those who come to church services are asked to collect theirs from the box in the foyer. The remainder will be distributed before July 1st.

Penny's Plants

Penny has hundreds of bedding plants ready if anyone is interested. Please either phone 623310 or email pennylester3@hotmail.co.uk. Donations will go to Christ Church, Emmanuel, and Weston Hospicecare.

Church Services

We are currently holding the following services:

- Daily Prayer Online - [click here to view](#)
- Sunday Morning services at 10.30 at both Christ Church and Emmanuel. The Christ Church service will continue to be live-streamed - [click here to view](#)
- Wednesday Communion service at 10.30 at Emmanuel on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month.

We look forward to welcoming you at these services, whether in person or online.

Contact Details

Rev. Tom Webber (709343)
(Day off - Tuesday)

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The Parable of the Bus Stop

A couple of hundred yards from where I live, there is a concrete pillar set up in the pavement where a number of people are seen to congregate at certain times of the day and in all weathers, in the hope of being transported to some distant destination. The pillar bears a metal banner near the top, on which are the words 'Bus Stop'.

Below this, at what is considered eye level, there is a metal frame containing a yellowing notice labelled 'Timetable'. This bears columns of figures in microscopic print, which those who congregate round the pillar refer to, anxiously stamping their frozen feet on the pavement, and muttering to themselves or to their fellow pilgrims, concerning the interpretation and veracity of the figures displayed.

At the same time, they anxiously scan the road, which runs away to the east, obviously expecting the means of their deliverance to come from that direction. At length, with an audible sigh of shared relief, a large red vehicle appears round a bend in the road. Some of the pilgrims raise their hands, urgently imploring the vehicle – which bears the legend 'Town Centre' – to stop. It may do so, of course, with a loud hissing noise and unfolding of the doors. Occasionally, it will go sailing past at high speed – only, this time, it will display the doom-like message: 'Sorry – Full'. At this point the group of pilgrims will disperse to their various homes, with drooping shoulders and looks of sadness on their faces, only to repeat the process all over again the following day.

Most times the bus will stop and some pilgrims will get on board. The Driver will either take a cursory glance at a small card which they carry, which says 'Bus Pass', or accept the offering of a few coins deposited on a plate by his little window. Some pilgrims, however, seem to have gathered only to witness this daily ritual. They will point out to each other the cheerful redness of the bus; its shining paintwork, the inviting look of the interior and the waft of warm air which spills out towards them. They will stand worshipping the bus until the driver of the conveyance calls out: "I can't wait all day! Are you lot going to get on or not?" As they shake their heads, he will slam the doors shut with another, angrier, hiss and depart rapidly down the hill.

Jesus almost always taught by telling stories - or parables, as we know them. He took every-day events or situations, familiar to everyone of his time, often about something lost – a precious coin, a farm animal, even a wayward son, or someone on a journey. He rarely explained these stories; he left people to work them out for themselves. People would be entertained – maybe thought them funny: "Have you heard the one about the man who lit a candle and put it under a bucket!" "What about the farmer who bought a pair of oxen and then said he'd better go and try them out!" Why wasn't Jesus more explicit? Maybe – like any good teacher today, he wanted his hearers to work it out for themselves. By doing this he sorted out the serious listeners from those who simply wanted to be entertained, and having done so, would be more likely to grasp its deeper meaning.

So, what about the Parable of the Bus Stop? What does the concrete pillar represent? Or the metal 'banner' at the top? What is the 'timetable'? Do we know what we are waiting for? Looking for? Expecting? Even admiring the 'Bus' when it comes along. Or do we get on board, looking forward to where it is taking us? What do we feel about those who haven't got aboard?

Barry

Next time? "The Parable of the Washing Machine."

