



# Worshipping & Praying Together as a community dispersed

*during the week beginning*

*Sunday, 13<sup>th</sup> September*

*The Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost*

## **The Parish of Christ Church Cathedral, Newcastle.**

The worshipping communities of the Cathedral and St Peter's Hamilton.

The picture on the front of this week's pewslip, and following the gospel passage in this resource, are photographs that Dean Katherine took last year whilst visiting Coventry Cathedral in England. You may be familiar with the story of Coventry Cathedral and how from the remains of destruction, a powerful symbol and commitment for the work of reconciliation was born.

Our Gospel passage this weekend places our focus on reconciliation and what it means to live lives of repentance and forgiveness. We ask for forgiveness, yet we are also called to be people of forgiveness. Repentance and forgiveness go hand in hand. Repentance means accepting responsibility for our actions, and making a change in our lives so that our lives reflect this change.

When we pray the Lord's Prayer, we pray "**Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us**", it is a continual reminder to us in prayer not only that this is the call of our lives, but that we also call on God's grace and strength to enable us to change and to forgive.

The community of Coventry Cathedral have made this ministry of reconciliation a central part of their life. You can read more about it here: <https://www.coventrycathedral.org.uk/wpsite/our-reconciliation-ministry/>

**Our Services of Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer are streamed every day and Holy Communion at the Cathedral is streamed on Sundays and Wednesdays:**

**You Tube:** <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCXyas2uhJUNOnDetOpPdUOg>

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/christchurchcathedralnewcastle/>

**Eucharists are offered at Christ Church Cathedral on Sundays at 8.00am and 11.00am and Monday to Friday at 8.30am (following Morning Prayer), and at St Peter's Hamilton at 11.00am on Tuesdays and Thursdays.**

**Families@Five Service at the Cathedral is on the first Saturday of the month.**

**You Tube:** <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYF6oyfKg3zYHolmWjts2JA>

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/ChristChurchCathedralFamilies/>

**Parish Council are seeking additional volunteers to assist with sides people duties and cleaning in the church after our services. Please contact the Parish Office on 4929 2052.**

***Please do not hesitate to contact Dean Katherine or Reverend Angela if you have any concerns at this time and if you would like for us to visit you at home.***

## The Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

### **Exodus 14. 19-31**

The angel of God who was going before the Israelite army moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from in front of them and took its place behind them. It came between the army of Egypt and the army of Israel. And so the cloud was there with the darkness, and it lit up the night; one did not come near the other all night. Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The Lord drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night, and turned the sea into dry land; and the waters were divided. The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. The Egyptians pursued, and went into the sea after them, all of Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and chariot drivers. At the morning watch the Lord in the pillar of fire and cloud looked down upon the Egyptian army, and threw the Egyptian army into panic. He clogged their chariot wheels so that they turned with difficulty. The Egyptians said, "Let us flee from the Israelites, for the Lord is fighting for them against Egypt." Then the Lord said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots and chariot drivers." So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at dawn the sea returned to its normal depth. As the Egyptians fled before it, the Lord tossed the Egyptians into the sea. The waters returned and covered the chariots and the chariot drivers, the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not one of them remained. But the Israelites walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. Thus the Lord saved Israel that day from the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. Israel saw the great work that the Lord did against the Egyptians. So the people feared the Lord and believed in the Lord and in his servant Moses.

### **Psalm 114**

1 When Israel came out of Egypt:  
and the house of Jacob from among a people  
of an alien tongue,  
2 Judah became his sanctuary:  
and Israel his dominion.  
3 The sea saw that, and fled:  
Jordan was driven back.  
4 The mountains skipped like rams:  
and the little hills like young sheep.  
5 What ailed you, O sea, that you fled:  
O Jordan, that you were driven back?

6 You mountains, that you skipped like rams:  
and you little hills like young sheep?

7 Tremble, O earth, at the presence of the Lord:  
at the presence of the God of Jacob,

8 Who turned the rock into a pool of water:  
and the flint-stone into a welling spring.

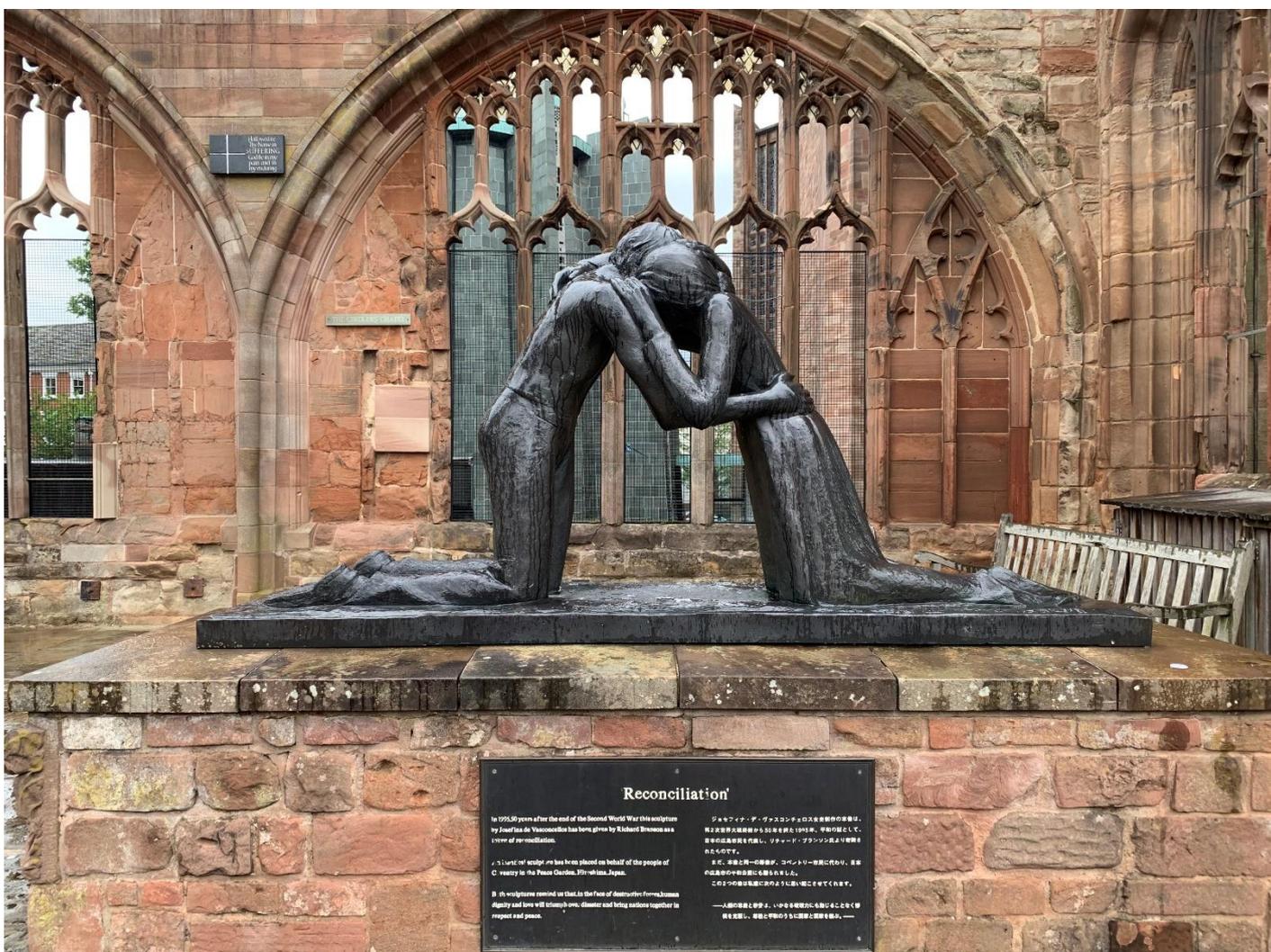
### **Romans 14. 1-14**

Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarrelling over opinions. Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own Lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand. Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. Those who observe the day, observe it in honour of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honour of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honour of the Lord and give thanks to God. We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. For it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God." So then, each of us will be accountable to God. Let us therefore no longer pass judgment on one another, but resolve instead never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of another. I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself; but it is unclean for anyone who thinks it unclean.

### **Matthew 18:21-35**

Peter came and said to Jesus, "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times. "For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; and, as he could not pay, his Lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' And out of pity for him, the Lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his

fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, 'Pay what you owe.' Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their Lord all that had taken place. Then his Lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' And in anger his Lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."



Coventry Cathedral

## Reflection on a page by the Very Reverend Katherine Bowyer

Vegetables. It's not often that we hear about vegetables in a church context – unless it's Harvest festival time, or you're watching the sermon in the film *Hunt for the Wilderpeople*.<sup>1</sup> But that's what we find in the section of Paul's letter to the Romans that we have this weekend from chapter 14. Over the past few weeks, we've heard Paul expounding a code for living for this young, growing, fledgling church in Rome. They're yearning for direction, for everything is new, this way of living in Christ, and Paul attempts to help them by helping them to understand that in Christ all things are made new, and that we are called to live according to the law of Christ, the law of love. Over the past few weeks we've heard a form of a household code – rules for living – if you like, about how to care for others – particularly the poor, the widowed, the orphaned, the sick. We've heard about resolving divided loyalties between civil and church authorities, in which Paul concluded that all the laws and commandments could be summed up as “love your neighbour as yourself”. Indeed Paul concluded that “Love is the fulfillment of the law”. St Paul was outlining to this growing church, that in Christ, the old laws of forbidding are transformed to laws of love. Rather than not doing things, or refraining from certain actions because of the law, in Christ our lives are transformed to lives of action, to do things, living out the love of God. And so, this weekend, we hear about vegetables.

It's not that St Paul is saying that vegetables are bad, or make for weak people. No, we all need our two serves of fruit and five serves of vegetables a day! What he is saying is that criticising people for the stance they take according to their beliefs, about eating, or not eating certain foods, is wrong. Toleration of diverse views is important, he argues. Paul is specifically referring to a situation in which meat may not have been slaughtered in accordance with Jewish dietary laws, and indeed, that this meat may have also been offered for pagan sacrifice. To eat such meat would be to become unclean, and to be unclean was to be cut off from the community, to be removed from all the celebrations and parts of community of life which were shared. So the safe path was to stick to the known, stick with the vegetables. But Paul says, that whilst it's important to be understanding, that it's important not to judge, that the new way of living in Christ releases us from what binds us in the past, and enables us to live lives of liberty, freed from the things which would bind us. There is nothing in and of the meat itself, he says, that makes it unclean, reminding us of Peter's vision in Acts, where he sees a sheet lowered three times with all sorts of food on it, and a voice commanding Peter to eat. Peter realizes that this vision is more than just about food, but about everyone being included in God's love. Paul's message to the Romans is much the same, live in God's love, and treat others accordingly, recognizing that we are freed to live lives of love, not of restriction.

For in the end, it comes back to the law of love. Are we living lives of love, which reflect the love shown to us? Or are we living lives of restriction? As we continue to navigate these challenging Covid times, it does indeed feel like we are living lives of restriction, yet what would change if we reframed our understanding, and saw it as an expression of love? As I said in my sermon last Sunday “Covidtime has made us think about what living lives of love looks like in different ways. Washing hands, and self-isolating, physical distancing and wearing a mask, actions which before this year we would have thought put a barrier between us and others, through the lens of this year, we now see that they can be signs of love. Because no matter how hard that is at times, love means giving what we would have ourselves.” For as we read in 1 John 4.19: “We love because he first loved us.”

---

<sup>1</sup> If you have never watched *Hunt for the Wilderpeople*, may I encourage you to do so? You will not regret it. And the sermon is one of the most memorable I have ever heard 😊

## Readings for next week – The Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

**Exodus 16: 2-15**

**Psalm 105. 1-6, 37-4**

**Philippians 1**

**Matthew 20: 1-16**



### **Prayers for use during the COVID-19 Pandemic**

Ever present God,  
be with us in our isolation,  
be close to us in our distancing,  
be healing in our sickness,  
be joy in our sadness,  
be light in our darkness,  
be wisdom in our confusion,  
be all that is familiar when all is unfamiliar,  
that when the doors reopen  
we may with the zeal of Pentecost  
inhabit our communities  
and speak of your goodness  
to an emerging world.  
For Jesus' sake. **Amen.**

Keep us, good Lord,  
under the shadow of your mercy  
in this time of uncertainty and  
distress.  
Sustain and support the anxious and  
fearful,  
and lift up all who are brought low;  
that we may rejoice in your comfort  
knowing that nothing can separate us  
from your love  
in Christ Jesus our Lord. **Amen.**

**Parish office: (02) 4929 2052 or [cathedral@newcastlecathedral.org.au](mailto:cathedral@newcastlecathedral.org.au)**

**Dean Katherine: 0407 201 693 or [katherinebowyer@newcastleanglican.org.au](mailto:katherinebowyer@newcastleanglican.org.au)**

**Reverend Angela: 0400 076 515 or [revangela.peverell@newcastlecathedral.org.au](mailto:revangela.peverell@newcastlecathedral.org.au)**