



DIOCESE OF WANGARATTA  
Parochial District of Wangaratta West & The Warbys

11.00am Ante Communion  
The Fifth Sunday of Easter  
May 18<sup>th</sup> 2025

## GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

Opening Hymn: AHB 83 / TiS 96. Tune, Laudate Dominum.

1. **Sing praise to the Lord! praise him in the height;  
rejoice in his word, you angels of light;  
all heaven adore him by whom you were made,  
and worship before him in brightness arrayed.**
2. **Sing praise to the Lord! praise him upon earth,  
in tuneful accord, sing praise for new birth;  
praise him who has brought you his grace from above;  
praise him who has taught you to sing of his love.**
3. **Sing praise to the Lord, all things that give sound;  
each jubilant chord, re-echo around.  
loud organs, his glory tell forth in deep tone,  
and sweet harp, the story of what he has done.**
4. **Sing praise to the Lord! Thanksgiving and song  
to him be outpoured all ages along;  
for love in creation, for heaven restored,  
for grace of salvation, sing praise to the Lord!**

Henry Williams Baker 1821-77 *alt*  
based on Psalms 148 & 150

### *Greeting*

Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**Blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever.**

Christ is Risen! Alleluia!

**He is Risen Indeed! ALLELUIA!**

### *The Sentence*

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.

*The Confession & Absolution*

Christ died to sin once for all, and now he lives to God.  
Let us renew our resolve to have done with all that is evil and  
confess our sins in penitence and faith.

cf Romans 6.10

*silence*

Almighty God,  
**our heavenly Father,  
we have sinned against you  
in thought, word, and deed,  
and in what we have failed to do.  
Have mercy on us,  
forgive us all that is past,  
and grant that we may serve you  
and live a new life to your glory;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

*The minister stands and declares God's forgiveness.*

God desires that none should perish,  
but that all should turn to Christ, and live.  
In response to his call we acknowledge our sins.  
God pardons those who humbly repent,  
and truly believe the gospel.  
Therefore we have peace with God,  
through Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

THE GREETING OF PEACE

Alleluia!  
The peace of the Risen Lord be always with you.  
**And also with you.**  
Alleluia!

*All may exchange a Greeting of Peace.*

*The Hymn of Praise is said or sung.*

**Glory to God in the highest,  
and peace to God's people on earth.  
Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,  
we worship you, we give you thanks,  
we praise you for your glory.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,  
Lord God, Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world:  
have mercy on us;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:  
receive our prayer.**

**For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High  
Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

*The minister says the Collect or all may say it together*

We behold your glory, O God,  
in the love shown by your Son,  
lifted up on the cross and exalted on high:  
be glorified anew in the love we have for one another  
as disciples of the risen Lord Jesus,  
who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

### **A Reading from the Acts of the Apostles [11. 1-18]**

Now the apostles and the believers who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also accepted the word of God. So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him, saying, 'Why did you go to uncircumcised men and eat with them?' Then Peter began to explain it to them, step by step, saying, 'I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision. There was something like a large sheet coming down from heaven, being lowered by its four corners; and it came close to me. As I looked at it closely I saw four-footed animals, beasts of prey, reptiles, and birds of the air. I also heard a voice saying to me, "Get up, Peter; kill and eat." But I replied, "By no means, Lord; for nothing profane or unclean has ever entered my mouth." But a second time the voice answered from heaven, "What God has made clean, you must not call profane."

This happened three times; then everything was pulled up again to heaven. At that very moment three men, sent to me from Caesarea, arrived at the house where we were. The Spirit told me to go with them and not to make a distinction between them and us. These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man's house.

He told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house and saying, "Send to Joppa and bring Simon, who is called Peter; he will give you a message by which you and your entire household will be saved." And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as it had upon us at the beginning. And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said, "John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit." If then God gave them the same gift that he gave us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could hinder God?' When they heard this, they were silenced. And they praised God, saying, 'Then God has given even to the Gentiles the repentance that leads to life.'

Hear the word of the Lord,  
**thanks be to God**

### **Psalm 148. 1-6**

**Praise the Lord, praise the Lord from heaven:  
O praise him in the heights.**

**Praise him, all his angels:  
O praise him, all his host.**

**Praise him, sun and moon:  
praise him, all you stars of light.  
Praise him, you highest heaven:  
and you waters that are above the heavens.**

**Let them praise the name of the Lord:  
for he commanded and they were made.  
He established them for ever and ever:  
he made an ordinance which shall not pass away.**

### **A Reading from the Revelation to John [21. 1-6]**

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,

'See, the home of God is among mortals.  
He will dwell with them;  
they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them;  
he will wipe every tear from their eyes.  
Death will be no more;  
mourning and crying and pain will be no more,  
for the first things have passed away.'

And the one who was seated on the throne said, 'See, I am making all things new.' Also he said, 'Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.' Then he said to me, 'It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life.

Hear the word of the Lord,  
**thanks be to God.**

**Gradual Hymn:** Tune, Calhoun Melody.

1. **Let us praise God together, let us praise;  
let us praise God together all our days:  
He is faithful in all His ways,  
He is worthy of all our praise,  
His name be exalted on high!**
2. **Let us seek God together, let us pray;  
let us seek His forgiveness as we pray:  
He will cleanse us from all sin,  
He will help us the fight to win,  
His name be exalted on high!**
3. **Let us serve God together, Him obey;  
let our lives show His goodness through each day:  
Christ the Lord is the world's true light —  
let us serve Him with all our might,  
His name be exalted on high!**

James Edward Seddon (1915 - 1983)

© The Representatives of the late James Edward Seddon / Jubilate Hymns

The Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ According to John [13. 31-35]

**Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

When he had gone out, Jesus said, 'Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you,

"Where I am going, you cannot come." I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.'

For the Gospel of the Lord,  
**praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

Let us affirm our faith.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose from the dead;  
he ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father;  
from there he will come to judge  
the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

*Time for Reflection*

### THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Almighty God, your Son Jesus Christ has promised that you will hear us when we ask in faith: receive the prayers we offer.

Give thanks to the Lord  
**Rejoice and praise his name.**

God of love, you desire that humanity should dwell together in unity and peace. Give wisdom to those who have responsibility and authority in every land, that they may govern in ways that promote unity and peace.

We give thanks for this land Australia and the diversity of its peoples. May we seek to share with justice the resources of the world, and work together in trust.

Teach us all how to love one another.

Give thanks to the Lord  
**Rejoice and praise his name.**

God of love, Hours before betrayal and arrest, your Son commanded His disciples to love. May Your church reflect this love throughout the world.

Strengthen us for our work in the world,  
empower your Church to proclaim the gospel in love, word and sacrament.

Bless Sue Wheeler on this her Baptism Anniversary.

We pray especially for Clarence, our Bishop, and for all who minister in this Diocese.

Unite in the truth all who confess your name, that we may live together in love to your glory.

Fill your Church with hope and the gift of your abiding grace.

Give thanks to the Lord

**Rejoice and praise his name.**

God of love, you show compassion and mercy to all your children. Embrace in your love all who cry for relief in their suffering . . .

Comfort and heal, we pray, all who are in sorrow, need, sickness, or any other trouble. Give to those who care for them wisdom, patience and gentleness and, to us all, your peace.

We bring before you those who have asked for our prayers:

Nicole. Josef. Rob. Warren. Gwen. Wayne. Michael. Kaye.

And those we remember in the silence of our hearts.

May they know and experience Your healing love.

Give thanks to the Lord

**Rejoice and praise his name.**

God of love, in the resurrection of Christ Jesus you open to all people the gates of your New Jerusalem.

Grant that we, with all your saints, may be brought to a joyful resurrection and the fulfilment of your kingdom.

Welcome to your heavenly city all who have died . . .

Remembering with love those whose year's mind occurs at this time, Freda Willett, Ian Menhennitt.

Rest eternal grant unto them, O Lord,

**and let light perpetual shine upon them.**

Take away the heartache of grief and replace it with the joy of your eternity.

Give thanks to the Lord

**Rejoice and praise his name.**

Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord, who taught us to pray:

**Our Father in heaven  
hallowed be your name.  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours  
now and forever. Amen.**

**Offertory Hymn:** AHB 191 / TiS 246. Tune, Christe Sanctorum.

- 1. Christ is the world's light, he and none other;  
born in our darkness, he became our brother.  
If we have seen him, we have seen the Father:  
*Glory to God on high.***
- 2. Christ is the world's peace, he and none other;  
no one can serve him and despise his brother.  
Who else unites us, one in God the Father?  
*Glory to God on high.***
- 3. Christ is the world's life, he and none other;  
sold once for silver, murdered here, our brother —  
he, who redeems us, reigns with God the Father:  
*Glory to God on high.***
- 4. Give God the glory, God and none other;  
give God the glory, Spirit, Son and Father;  
give God the glory, God in man my brother:  
*Glory to God on high.***

Frederick Pratt Green 1903–2000

*Offertory Prayer*

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation.  
Through your goodness we have these gifts to share.  
Accept and use our offerings for your glory  
and for the service of your kingdom.

**Blessed be God for ever.**



## THE SENDING OUT OF GOD'S PEOPLE

*Notices may be given at this point*

Let us pray

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.**

**Hymn:** AHB 68 / TiS 134. Tune, Praise, my soul..

- 1. Praise, my soul, the king of heaven;  
to his feet your tribute bring;  
ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,  
who like me his praise should sing?  
Praise him, praise him, hallelujah,  
praise the everlasting king!**
- 2. Praise him for his grace and favour  
to his people in distress;  
praise him still the same for ever,  
slow to chide, and swift to bless:  
praise him, praise him, hallelujah,  
glorious in his faithfulness!**
- 3. Father-like he tends and spares us;  
well our feeble frame he knows;  
in his hands he gently bears us,  
rescues us from all our foes:  
praise him, praise him, hallelujah,  
widely as his mercy flows!**
- 4. Frail as summer's flower we flourish,  
blows the wind and it is gone;  
but while mortals rise and perish  
God endures unchanging on.  
Praise him, praise him, hallelujah,  
praise the high eternal one!**

- 5. Angels, help us to adore him,  
you behold him face to face;  
sun and moon, bow down before him,  
dwellers all in time and space:  
praise him, praise him, hallelujah,  
praise with us the God of grace!**

Henry Francis Lyte 1793–1847 alt.  
based on Psalm 103

Let us pray.

**Lord Jesus Christ,  
send us out with confidence in your word  
to tell the world of your saving acts,  
and bring glory to your name. Amen.**

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God,  
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all. **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
Alleluia! Alleluia!

**In the name of Christ.  
Alleluia! Alleluia!**

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### **The Fifth Sunday of Easter**

The verses from St John's Gospel come at the turning point of the Last Supper. Judas has just left the room, and there is now no going back. A sense of urgency seems to overtake Jesus after this. The supper is over, and Jesus begins to talk, to explain, as though trying to make the disciples understand at last, to impress upon them some of the things that they should already know. But whenever one of the disciples does speak in the verses that follow today's reading, it is only to demonstrate how puzzled they are, and how little they understand, even at this late hour.

*(Continued from page 10)*

The two themes of today's reading from John are related, and are characteristic of all of John's writing. First of all, now that Judas has gone about his business, and the cross is inescapable, Jesus speaks of glorification. In all of John's writing, the cross is the moment of illumination, when God is to be seen in Christ and Christ is to be seen in God. Second, Jesus talks about love, the new commandment that he gives to his disciples. The themes are connected because what is revealed in the cross is the love of God in Christ. In the cross we see that love is the whole nature of God in his dealings with us.

The commandment to love is not exactly new. Most of the Old Testament law is designed to make Israel a loving community, that will treat its members and those who come in contact with it with justice and care. But here in John's Gospel the connection is made explicit and unavoidable. Just as Jesus shows us the nature of God, so we are called to show others that same nature. Just as Israel was designed to be a community that showed the nature of its God, so Jesus' followers are called to be a community from which the love of God, God's very nature, shines out.

So what is this love that we are called to receive and transmit? It is, apparently, the love that Jesus has shown to us, his followers. We are to reflect back what we have received and, in doing that, we will be reflecting the God whom we believe in. We will be restoring his image in ourselves, by making ourselves like the Son. We were created in God's image, and now we are to be restored in that image again, by showing the love of the Father and the Son.

This great 'new commandment' can fill us with a great sense of hopelessness and failure, if we do not read John carefully. We know that we are wholly incapable of showing the love of God, but this commandment is given to disciples who don't seem to understand a word Jesus is saying, and who are shortly going to betray him. Jesus' love for his disciples is utterly realistic. He knows the kind of people he has chosen, then and now. They are ordinary, fallible. To these people, Jesus entrusted and continues to entrust himself and his message. They are worthy because they are loved. That is the Christian disciple's only qualification for the great task we are given.

Knowing that we are loved and trusted by God is the beginning of fulfilling this new commandment. We do not have to generate this love ourselves, because it is given to us. Christians are, most fundamentally, people who know that God is love, and we know it, not because we are better at loving than anyone else, but because we know that God has loved us and trusted us, even before we were either lovely or trustworthy.

Jane Williams, (2003). *Lectionary Reflections: Year C* (p. 67). SPCK

## **The Fifth Sunday of Easter**

Acts 11:1–18; Revelation 21:1–6; John 13:31–35

You only discover the flavour of today's Gospel if you remember that it comes immediately after Judas's departure, and immediately before Peter's rash promise to lay down his life for Jesus—and Jesus' sorrowful prediction of Peter's triple denial. Like a warm fire glowing all the brighter as the wind starts to howl and the snow to fall, Jesus' parting promise and commandment sparkle out against the dark backcloth of betrayal and disloyalty.

The promise is characteristically Johannine. Now at last God will be truly glorified. Somehow, what will happen to Jesus will both reveal and exalt the God of Israel, the one Jesus called 'father'; this will show God, so to speak, in his true colours, will unveil the divine love in all its glory. As John puts it at the start of the chapter, Jesus knew that he had come from God and was going to God, and so, having loved his own, he loved them to the uttermost. What he did on the cross was the true and complete expression of what it meant to be precisely the one who had come from God and was going back.

The command which follows is therefore anything but arbitrary. It isn't that Jesus had a particular thing about people loving each other, his own idiosyncratic addition to an ever-increasing store of miscellaneous ethical maxims. It is, rather, that just as his own life, and approaching death, were the true expression of the Father's heart, so he intends his followers to become a further, and continuing, re-embodiment of that same love. This would, of course, be unthinkable without the gift of the Spirit; hardly surprisingly, that is precisely what is promised in the rest of the discourse. The fire which Jesus has lit in the cold, dark night is to be the first in a line of beacons, stretching away into the future and out into the rest of the world, true evidences of the true God, and of the accomplishment of Jesus.

Acts highlights Peter's visit to Cornelius as one key moment in that story. Here, 'love' is not so much a feeling that binds Peter and the new Gentile converts, but the act of obedience in which Peter recognizes Cornelius and his household as his brothers and sisters in Christ, without respect of race. Another beacon: the Spirit told Peter to go somewhere he'd never have dreamed of going; the Spirit fell on Peter's hearers in the first minute or so of his discourse. And, though the Spirit is not mentioned in Revelation at the moment when the new Jerusalem comes down as a bride adorned for her husband, the uniting of God and his people, and his tender healing of all their hurts, are themselves the ultimate end of the story, the victory of love over all that distorts and defaces, damages and destroys, God's good and beautiful world. Why, in the unwisdom of the lectionary, did we have to stop at verse 6?

N. Tom Wright, (2000).

Twelve Months of Sundays: Reflections on Bible Readings,  
Year C (pp. 62–63). Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.