

Thursday Prayer 19th June 2025 at 10.30am

Focus: “Putting On Christ” – led by Jean Webb

Zoom connecting details and link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85209298628?pwd=VDTrciGq12BVz8IuyEa34M6BRLZDIK.1>

MEETING ID: 852 0929 8628 & PASSCODE: 080127.

A warm welcome to everyone this morning; whether you are here in the Cathedral, or joining us remotely via Zoom. It is good to be with you, and for us to be worshipping together.

Introduction

The theme for this morning is “Putting On Christ”.

Today we celebrate The Feast of Corpus Christi, which is observed every year on the second Thursday after Pentecost. Corpus Christi - the Latin term that literally translates as the 'Body of Christ'. It is celebrated as the Day of Thanksgiving for the Institution of Holy Communion.

Our **Opening Prayer** is adapted from the prayers for this month in our Prayer Diary, so let us say together –

Lord, we thank you for the gift of priests and those who lead us in Holy Communion.

Bless those who take communion to our indoor and sick members.

Give them wisdom strength and compassion; guide us to uplift them in prayer and with practical support. May their joy in the Lord inspire them in all that they do. Amen

Today's reading, from Galatians 3: 23-29

Now before faith came, we were imprisoned and guarded under the law until faith would be revealed. ²⁴Therefore the law was our disciplinarian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian, ²⁶for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. ²⁷As many of you as were baptised into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. ²⁸There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise.

Reflection

I am going to begin by repeating part of that passage-

“For in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through Faith, you who are baptised have clothed yourselves with Christ.”

God called Abraham and his Hebrew descendants in order to reveal himself to them. Yet in Christ, God has extended that revelation to all who believe, and have “clothed ourselves with Christ”. *What inspiring words!*

This also means that within God's family there is neither "slave nor free." Nearly every society in the world has had systems of classifying people by their social status. Things like our backgrounds, wealth, power and education have divided people ever since Adam and Eve fell into sin. In Christ, however, Christians don't look down on people from whom we differ. We don't see things like our socio-economic status, job titles or academic accomplishments as any reason to treat each other differently.

God's saving work in Jesus Christ also means that there is neither "male nor female." Here, the Apostle Paul insists that men and women are equal in God's eyes. An assertion, which even many people who are currently outside of God's family, would agree, was far ahead of its time. After all, men almost universally despised and often mistreated women in Paul's day

So in one sense is God colour and gender-blind? God sees each one of us, black and white, male and female, powerful and powerless, rich and poor, as naturally sinful. God sees every person, regardless of race, gender or social status, as in desperate need of God's grace.

It has been said that when God looks at people, God sees two colours. But they're not the colours we so often see. They're, instead, the colours of deep darkness and bright red. When God looks at people, God sees the colours of the spiritual darkness in which some choose to stubbornly live, and the red that is Christ's blood. God sees people who have either rejected God's grace or have let Christ's blood wash away our sins.

Christ's work doesn't obliterate racial, social and sexual distinctions. God's adopted sons and daughters aren't colour- and gender-blind in that sense that we ignore the colour of a person's skin or someone's gender. Christians don't overlook the real pain that society has historically attached to skin colour, gender and social status. Nor do we ignore the cultural backgrounds from which other Christians come. Instead *we treasure* these differences, cherishing the way our diversity enriches and enlivens the body of Jesus Christ, and therefore our lives.

The distinctions on which we so often focus do not erect barriers to Christian fellowship.

By God's grace God people resist the temptation to despise or look down on each other. After all, Christians recognize that those who have faithfully received God's grace are all "one." Because of what Christ has done, we recognize each other as equals, brothers and sisters, by God

As Mothers Union members we acknowledge our need to support *one another*, not just fellow Christians, but *all God's people*;, but especially those whose lives have met with adversity, the marginalised, the sick and disabled, the abused, the homeless, refugees, and many more, and we support with our projects and prayers, locally, nationally and worldwide.

In "Putting on Christ" we recognise we are Christ's hands here on earth.

(pause for thought)

Our hymn today sums up these thoughts so well

**In Christ there is no East or West,
In Him no South or North;
But one great fellowship of love
Throughout the whole wide earth.**

**In Him shall true hearts everywhere
Their high communion find;
His service is the golden cord,
Close binding humankind.**

**Join hands, then, members of the faith,
Whatever your race may be!
Who serves My Father as His child
Is surely kin to Me.**

**In Christ now meet both East and West,
In Him meet North and South;
All Christly souls are one in Him
Throughout the whole wide earth.**

John Oxenham (1852-1941)

Intercessions

So let us pray for-

The worldwide work of the Mothers' Union;
Our Worldwide President Kathleen Snow; The Chief Executive, Bev Jullien, and all who work at Mary Sumner House supporting members. For Our province of Canterbury; our Provincial President Comfort Fearon; and our Zonal Trustee Julia Jameson.
For our Diocese of Ely, our Trustees, and Diocesan Vice-Presidents, our Treasurer and Diocesan Chaplain: for all our members, whether they meet in Branches or groups or are independent; and for those leading them.
For our Worldwide Links: Lusaka in Zambia, Shyogwe in Rwanda, Sokoto & Ikka in Nigeria, Karimnagar in India; and Irene Porter our Worldwide Links Officer. Not forgetting the Diocese to Diocese Links with Kigali and Vellore.

Today in our Wave of Prayer we remember the diocese of –Rejaf in South Sudan, Episcopate in Kenya, Doko & Owo in Nigeria, Chelmsford in England and Jamaica & the Cayman Islands.

In a moment of silence let us pray for our families and friends; and for anyone known to us who is unwell or in need of our prayers

(pause)

Lord In your Mercy

Hear Our Prayer

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray –

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come;
thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven.**

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

As we recall today's theme of "Putting On Christ" we commit ourselves anew to be
Christ's hands here on earth, as we say **The Mothers' Union Prayer**,

Loving Lord, we thank you for your love so freely given to us all.

We pray for families around the world.

**Bless the work of the Mothers' Union as we seek to share your love through the
encouragement, strengthening and support of marriage and family life.**

**Empowered by your Spirit, may we be united in prayer and worship, and in love and
service, reach out as your hands across the world. In Jesus' name. Amen**

And our Mothers' Union **Thursday Prayer**-

**Heavenly Father, you have called us apart to share in a worldwide fellowship of
Christians united in prayer. Take our prayers, we humbly ask, fill them with your
love and power, and use them in the cause of your glorious kingdom, through Jesus
Christ our Lord. Amen**

Let us join hands and share the Grace with one another-

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

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