**

*Dear Friends,,*

**The ‘Triple-A’ Event of the Ascension**

I write the day after Ascension Day, often the least-mentioned feast of the Christian church. The following thoughts, culled from an article by J.John, have concentrated my mind.
Many things, from credit standards and security ratings to consumer goods, get labelled ‘Triple A’ or ‘AAA’, thus claiming to be of exceptional importance and value. For the Christian, Jesus’ ascension into heaven can be seen as an ‘AAA event’, something of the very highest worth.
The return of Jesus into heaven in the Ascension is anticipated in the Gospels (for example, John 3:13, 6:62 and 20:17), and recorded in Luke 24:50-53 and Acts 1:9-11. Luke says the event occurred forty days after Easter, so Ascension is celebrated on a Thursday – 29th May this year. The Ascension is an AAA belief, with three ‘A’ words.
First, a *confirmation of Christ’s* ***Achievement,*** markingthe completion of everything Jesus had to do in his earthly ministry. On the cross Jesus cried out, ‘It is finished!’ but as he ascended into heaven, he could have repeated the words. The church began a week later, with the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost – but Christ’s earthly work of saving us was complete. It was indeed ‘Mission accomplished!’ The Ascension confirms that the price has been paid and there are now no ‘outstanding debts’; it remains a ‘visual aid’ for Christians, past and present, that he has done his work.
Second, the Ascension is important because it proclaims *Christ’s* ***Authority****.* It isn’t Jesus leaving, it’s Jesus leading. He’s not gone; he’s on the throne. Jesus always was King of the universe but now, in heaven and seated at the right hand of God the Father, he reigns as King. That’s a powerful antidote to much that can trouble us. Many of us are wounded; in our lives we can struggle with such things as illness, depression or weariness. Mentally, we can be troubled with difficulties or easily be overwhelmed by news that sees everything in terms of political, economic or military might. Yet the Ascension reminds us of the comforting truth that the ascended Jesus has a power above all earthly powers. He’s not out of sight, he’s overseeing.
Finally, the Ascension is important because it is a *celebration of our own****Access****to heaven through Christ*. Many times in the New Testament, Christians are described as being ‘*in* Christ’. To put our faith in Christ is, in some extraordinary way, to be bonded with him. In heaven we have ‘a priceless inheritance – an inheritance that is kept in heaven for us, ….. beyond the reach of change and decay’ (1 Peter 1:4). That we have this **access** to heaven is the truth that changes all that we are.
Jesus went up with scars, but reigns with majesty – our wounded healer is our reigning King. The Ascension comforts us that the ascended Jesus has a power above all earthly powers. One of my favourite songs says “the only scars in heaven are on the hands that hold you now”; trust Him to hold you now.

Christ’s Achievement, Christ’s Authority, our Access to heaven – a great TripleA event to hold onto!

Mike Chinneck

***Coming Soon from September:* The Rector’s Wonderings…….**

**Please visit our website for information about our churches, services & events** [www.elhamvalleygroupofchurches.co.uk](http://www.elhamvalleygroupofchurches.co.uk)

**Parochial Church Council ( PCC)**

Newly elected PCC meets on July 3rd at 7pm in St Mary’s.

***NB/. Items for A.O.B must be sent to the Secretary at least 48hrs before the meeting.***

3rd July **Prayer meeting @7.30pm** Methodist church

5th July **Prayer Breakfast @8am**

Churches Together in Elham meet on first Saturday in the month at the Methodist church for prayer and short reflection, followed by breakfast at 8.30am. Contact : David Whitethread (07961 053335)

6th July 3rd Sunday after Trinity

**08:00 Said Eucharist - 09.30 Sung Eucharist with Baptism**

**Lectionary readings:**

Isaiah 66: 10-14, Psalm 66:1-8, Galatians 6.[1-6]7-16, Luke 10.1-11,16-20

13th July 4th Sunday after Trinity

**09:30 Sung Eucharist**

**Lectionary readings:**

*Deut 30:9-14, Psalm 25:1-10,* Colossians 1.1-14, Luke 10.25-37

20th July 5th Sunday after Trinity

**09.30 Sung Eucharist**

**Lectionary readings:**

*Gen 18:1-10a, Psalm 15,* Colossians 1.15-28, Luke 10.38-42

27th July 6th Sunday after Trinity

**09:30 Sung Eucharist**

**Lectionary readings:***Gen 18:20-32, Psalm 138,* Colossians 2.6-15[16-19], Luke 11.1-13

***Every Tuesday at St. Mary’s…***

Traditional Morning Prayer at 8.30am in the Jesus Chapel. Download the free Church of England app or use the red book. A good way to begin the day. [https://play.google.](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.aimermedia.dailyprayer&pli=1)

[com/store/apps/details?id=com.aimermedia.dailyprayer&pli=1](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.aimermedia.dailyprayer&pli=1)

***Every Monday at the Methodist Hall …***

Coffee and cake, a warm welcome and friendship, 10.30am –

12pm

**EXPLORERS**

Fun church for children aged 7-11yrs, with games, snacks and activities meets at St Mary’s on **Tuesday 15th July** 3.30-4.30pm

**Churches Together in Elham Valley August**

1st August **Prayer meeting @7.30pm** Methodist church

2nd August Prayer Breakfast at 8am, Methodist Church.

*Contact : David Whitethread (07961 053335)*

3rd August 7th Sunday after Trinity

**08:00 Said Eucharist 09.30 Sung Eucharist**

**Lectionary readings:**

*Eccles.1:2,12-14,2:18-23, Psalm 49:1-12, Col 3:1-11, Luke 12:13-21*

10th August 8th Sunday after Trinity

**09:30. Sung Eucharist**

**Lectionary readings :**

*Gen 15:1-6, Psalm 33:12-end, Heb 11:1-3, 8-16, Luke 12:32-40*

17th August 9th Sunday after Trinity

**09:30. Sung Eucharist**

**Lectionary readings:**

*Jer 23:23-29, Psalm 82, Heb 11:29-12:2, Luke 12:49-56*

24th August 10th Sunday after Trinity

**09:30. Sung Eucharist**

**Lectionary readings:**

*Isaiah 58:9b -end, Psalm 103:1-8, Heb 12:18-end, Luke 13:10-17*

31st August 11th Sunday after Trinity

**10:00 BENEFICE EUCHARIST @ St Peter’s Swingfield**

**Lectionary readings:**

*Sirach 10:12-18, Psalm 112, Heb 13:1-8,15-16, Luke 14:1, 7-14*

**Events for the September Notice sheet** Please send to Margaret Keeble by 5th of each preceeding month. m.keeble@outlook.com

**Donations**

We would greatly appreciate your help to continue our work for God in the village of Elham and surrounding areas. If you can, please consider making a donation. This is our QR code for St Mary’s Elham. To donate using this code, open up the camera on a mobile phone - point the camera at the QR code – follow the instructions. 😊

The offertory plate will go round in the service, during one of the hymns. There is also the opportunity to donate by card using the PAYAZ machine by the North door.

**Safeguarding / ‘A Safe Church’:**

If you ever have any concerns, contact our Parish Safeguarding Officer:

Susannah Pallot :  susannahpallot@gmail.com

**Paper Copies of Notices**

Some copies are available on back table in church. Please take a copy to give to those unable to access the internet.

**Elham Methodist Church**

(all at 9.30am unless otherwise stated)

Services for JULY

6th Local arrangement

13th 10.15am Valley United Service at Lyminge

20th Tom Lewis

27th United Service at Rhodes Minnis

Services for AUGUST

3rd Rev Gill Songer (video)

10th Valley United Service (HC) Rev Gill Songer

17th Tim James

24th Valley United Service at Rhodes Minnis

31st Circuit Service at St Andrew’s (10.30am)





