

End the Week with CME - April 25, 2008

25th Apr 2008

Welcome to End the Week with CME! This weekly email is sent automatically to Clergy and Readers in the diocese (if you don't want to receive it, please send an email to CovEW-unsubscribe@lists.covlec.org) but anyone is welcome to subscribe to the list, and we are especially keen to pass it on to any interested lay people, especially those who may have responsibility for preaching. To subscribe they simply need to email CovEW-subscribe@lists.covlec.org.

Coming Up

Ordination Services - understanding the theology of the liturgy

What is ordination all about? The Common Worship Ordination Services have been in use for a couple of years now and a study edition of the texts was published in 2007. This study day will look at the theology behind the service, how it is reflected in the liturgy, and what it says about a contemporary Anglican understanding of ordained ministry. Weds 14 May 2008, at The Red Hill Christian Centre, Snitterfield, 10am-3pm. Led by Adrian Daffern and Richard Cooke. Cost: £30 (including lunch). Grants for half the cost are available for clergy and Readers. Book through sarah.palmer@covcofe.org.

Women Bishops - but what kind?

A study day for women and men. 10am - 3pm, Monday 9 June 2008 at Offa House.

Legislation for the ordination of women bishops will come before the General Synod in the near future. It is a timely moment to ask what we expect of bishops in general, and what we think women bishops might bring to the role. What kind of leadership is appropriate for the church of the future?

The day will be chaired by Katrina Scott (Diocesan Adviser for Women's Ministry), and there will be input from Rosie Ward (Leadership Development Adviser, CPAS). Cost: £30 (including lunch). Grants for half the cost are available for clergy and Readers. Book through sarah.palmer@covcofe.org.

NSM Meeting

There will be a meeting for all NSMs of the diocese, whatever the focus of their ministry, on Wednesday 7 May 2008, 7.30pm at St James' Church, Abbey Road, Whitley, Coventry. For more information or to indicate you wish to attend the meeting, please email Pam Gould at revpamgould@aol.com.

Annual Regional Training Partnership (RTP) Forum

Saturday 14 June, 10am - 4pm, at Droitwich Methodist Church. (Lunch is included.)

This year's West Midland Regional Training Partnership Forum, will look at approaches to theological reflection and will be led by Professor Stephen Pattison from Birmingham and the Revd Judith Thompson from Worcester. For more information about the day, please contact Jenny Harris at jenny.harris@birmingham.anglican.org or on 0121 426 0437.

Subverting the Empire: Romans Disarmed

Blah . . . is a series of conversations on mission, worship, church and Christianity in today's rapidly changing culture.

CMS have planned a 2008 'blah tour', and have invited Brian Walsh and Sylvia Keesmaat over from Canada to present it. "Romans Disarmed" will take place in Birmingham on Tuesday 17 June, 10am until 4pm at Birmingham Cathedral.

For more information, or to book online, go to www.blahonline.net.

Unity in Diversity: celebrating the breadth of Reader Ministry

The Central Readers' Council National Conference will be held Friday 12 - Sunday 14 September 2008 at the University of North Wales, Bangor, with Canon Dr Christina Baxter as keynote speaker on 1 Corinthians 12. There will also be seminars, worship and fellowship, and throughout the weekend there will be an exhibition of various resources relevant to Reader Ministry. For the full programme see http://www.readers.cofe.anglican.org/news_item.php?86

Cost: £170 per head if you book before 30 June / £180 per head for bookings after 30 June. CME Grants for up to half the cost are available - contact Sarah.Palmer@CovCofE.org for application forms.

Mission Training Opportunities Spring 2008

Coventry Cathedral & Hope08

An exciting programme of Mission preaching and teaching opportunities are currently taking place at the Cathedral, to help train and enable Christians to engage in Mission during this year of HOPE08. With special guest speakers such as Steven Croft, Sharon Stone and John Drane these are opportunities not to be missed!

For more details, go to:

<http://www.hope08coventry.com/CMS/uploads/842/documents/Mission%20Training%20Spring%2008%20small.pdf>

Notes on the Gospel Readings for Easter 7 (Sunday May 4, 2008)

John 17. 1-11

Where did Jesus' risen body go? It's a good question for the Sunday after Ascension (now known as Easter 7, though I prefer the old name of 'expectation Sunday'). After the resurrection Jesus' appearances to the disciples came to an end - Luke marks this most clearly by emphasising in his second account that it was a forty-day period (Acts 1.3), though he is less specific in his first version (Luke 24.44-53). Matthew takes a different approach, as we shall see in two weeks' time: Jesus promises to be with his disciples 'to the end of the age' (Matt. 28.20) in the scene which closes the gospel. But what actually happens to the physical Jesus afterwards is unclear. For both Luke and Matthew, though, it is clear that Jesus continues to work through his disciples (Acts 1.1 - 'all that Jesus began to do and teach'; Matt 28.19 - 'Go to all nations and make them my disciples').

As so often, John deepens this idea, and he does it much earlier in his gospel. Here, in John 17, he shows us Jesus deep in prayer, just on the edge of disaster. At this moment of mortal peril, as his fate awaits him on the far side of the Kidron valley (John 18.1-3), Jesus' concern is for those he leaves behind, through whom his work will continue.

The concern is not primarily for them, however. His overriding aim is for the Father to be glorified (17.1-5). In the same way that, last week in John 14.15-21, we saw that just as the Father and the Son are one, so the disciples too are drawn into the life of God, so here there is an identity between God and the disciples. They

are to be one, 'as we are one' (17.11). In other words the aim of the fellowship which the disciples have with one another, Jesus and the Father, is for the glory of God and the salvation of the world. It is not an aim in itself.

This passage has often been used as a spur to ecumenical activity, but its emphasis really lies on unity between the disciples, with Jesus and the Father. I am reminded of Robert Runcie's sermon when he became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1978, when he asked whether the process of seeking unity was like sheep huddling together against the blast of the storm, or the flock responding to call of the master to go out into the fields (see John 10.1-10).

For John, Jesus' risen presence is as much in the disciples as it is in his physical resurrection body. Where did his risen body go? In a sense for John, unlike Matthew and Luke, the question is redundant. The Father, Jesus, and his people are one. Therefore Jesus still lives amongst the disciples and there is no 'before and after' sequence to his appearances. In essence the message is not to look up and out (see Acts 1.11) but within. There, the disciples will find the presence of Jesus, and the courage to go on in the task of bringing glory to the Father.

Signing Off...

I'm away in Israel over the next couple of weeks with a group of Readers , so there won't be any more End the Weeks until May 16. Below are a couple of links to some ideas on the readings for the missing Sundays:

Sunday 11 May (Pentecost) John 20.19-23

Raewynne Whiteley's 'Come Holy Spirit' sermon at <http://raewynne.tripod.com/11June2000sermon.htm>

Sunday 18 May (Trinity) Matt 28.16-20

Clare Amos's 'Mountains of Matthew' sermon at http://www.readers.cofe.anglican.org/u_d_lib_res/r130.pdf

And Finally...

A woman brought her budgie into the vet's surgery. It's lying very still and limp. 'Hmm,' says the vet, 'I'm afraid it's dead.'

The woman breaks down in tears. 'Are you sure?' she says. 'Please can you check again?'

So the vet goes to the door and whistles. In trots a black Labrador which goes over to the budgie, takes a good sniff, then looks at the vet, shakes its head, and trots out again.

The in comes a tabby cat. It jumps up and flips the budgie over with its paw, looking it over carefully. It too shakes its head at the vet and leaves.

'Well,' says the vet to the woman, 'that confirms it, I'm afraid. Your budgie's definitely dead. I'm really sorry but

there's nothing I can do.'

Reluctantly the woman accepts that the budgie is indeed dead. 'Shall I pay the receptionist on the way out?' she asks.

'Yes please,' says the vet, 'but I'm afraid it's a bit expensive: £500.'

'£500? How come?'

'Well my diagnosis only costs £50' says the vet, 'but when you add in the lab report and the cat scan...'

That's all folks!

Richard

Richard Cooke

Coventry CME

Richard.Cooke@CovCofE.org