

First Sunday in Lent Sunday, February 18, 2018

The Collect: Almighty God, whose blessed Son was led by the Spirit to be tempted by Satan: Come quickly to help us who are assaulted by many temptations; and, as you know the weaknesses of each of us, let each one find you mighty to save; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

Old Testament: Genesis 9:8-17 read from the Message Bible

Then God spoke to Noah and his sons: "I'm setting up my covenant with you including your children who will come after you, along with everything alive around you—birds, farm animals, wild animals—that came out of the ship with you. I'm setting up my covenant with you that never again will everything living be destroyed by floodwaters; no, never again will a flood destroy the Earth."

God continued, "This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and everything living around you and everyone living after you. I'm putting my rainbow in the clouds, a sign of the covenant between me and the Earth. From now on, when I form a cloud over the Earth and the rainbow appears in the cloud, I'll remember my covenant between me and you and everything living, that never again will floodwaters destroy all life. When the rainbow appears in the cloud, I'll see it and remember the eternal covenant between God and everything living, every last living creature on Earth."

And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant that I've set up between me and everything living on the Earth."

The Word of the Lord

Psalm 25:1-9 read from The Episcopal Church Book of Common Prayer

1 To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul; my God, I put my trust in you; * let me not be humiliated, nor let my enemies triumph over me.

2 Let none who look to you be put to shame; * let the treacherous be disappointed in their schemes.

3 Show me your ways, O Lord, * and teach me your paths.

4 Lead me in your truth and teach me, * for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all the day long.

5 Remember, O Lord, your compassion and love, * for they are from everlasting.

6 Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions; * remember me according to your love and for the sake of your goodness, O Lord.

7 Gracious and upright is the Lord; * therefore he teaches sinners in his way.

8 He guides the humble in doing right * and teaches his way to the lowly.

9 All the paths of the Lord are love and faithfulness * to those who keep his covenant and his testimonies.

Epistle: 1 Peter 3:18-22 read from the Modern English Version Bible

For Christ also has once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but made alive by the Spirit, by whom He also went and preached to the spirits in prison, who in times past were disobedient, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. Figuratively this is like baptism, which also saves us now. It is not washing off the dirt from the body, but a response to God from a good conscience through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels and authorities and powers being made subject to Him.

The Word of the Lord

Gospel: Mark 1:9-15 read from The New American Standard Bible

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. Immediately coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens opening, and the Spirit like a

dove descending upon Him; and a voice came out of the heavens: "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased."

Immediately the Spirit impelled Him *to go* out into the wilderness. And He was in the wilderness forty days being tempted by Satan; and He was with the wild beasts, and the angels were ministering to Him.

Now after John had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

The Gospel of the Lord

Closing Prayer: On February 22nd we remember Eric Liddel, Missionary to China

Eric Henry Liddell was born January 16th, 1902 in Tianjin, China the second son of the Rev & Mrs James Dunlop Liddell who were Scottish missionaries with the London Missionary Society. He was a Scottish athlete, rugby union international and missionary. Liddell often called the "Flying Scotsman" was the winner of the Men's 400 meters at the 1924 Summer Olympics held in Paris. He was portrayed in the film Chariots of Fire.

Eric Liddell became well-known for being the fastest runner in Scotland while at Eltham College. He withdrew from the 100 meter race 1924 Olympics in Paris as he refused to run on a Sunday. Liddell spent months training for the 400 metres, an event in which he had previously excelled. Even so, his success in the 400m was largely unexpected. He not only won the race, but broke the existing world record with a time of 47.6 seconds.

Liddell returned to Northern China where he served as a missionary, like his parents, from 1925 to 1943 - first in Tianjin and later in the town of Xiaozhang. Liddell's first job as a missionary was as a teacher at an Anglo-Chinese College (grades 1-12) for wealthy Chinese

students. It was believed that by teaching the children of the wealthy that they themselves would later become influential figures in China and promote Christian values.

During his first furlough in 1932, he was ordained as a minister of religion. On his return to China he married Florence Mackenzie of Canadian missionary parentage in Tianjin in 1934.

In 1941 life in China was becoming so dangerous that the British Government advised British nationals to leave. Florence and the children left for Canada to stay with her family when Liddell accepted a new position at a rural mission station in Shaochang, which gave service to the poor. Meanwhile, the Chinese and the Japanese were at war. When the fighting reached Shaochang the Japanese took over the mission station. In 1943, Liddell was interned at the Weihsien Internment Camp with the members of the China Inland Mission Chefoo School. Although Liddell did have an opportunity to leave the camp as part of an exchange of British and Japanese prisoners, he gave his place to a pregnant woman instead. Having won the respect of his captors, he is remembered by camp survivors for his ministry among them. He died there of a brain tumor on February 21st 1945, five months before liberation.

Let us Pray: God whose strength bears us up as on mighty wings: We rejoice in remembering your athlete and missionary, Eric Liddell, to whom you gave courage and resolution in contest and in captivity; and we pray that we also may run with endurance the race set before us and persevere in patient witness, until we wear that crown of victory won for us by Jesus our Savior; who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**