

Third Sunday of Easter Sunday, April 15, 2018

The Collect: O God, whose blessed Son made himself known to his disciples in the breaking of bread: Open the eyes of our faith, that we may behold him in all his redeeming work; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

First Lesson: Acts 3:12-19 read from the Holman Christian Standard Bible

When Peter saw this, he addressed the people: "Men of Israel, why are you amazed at this? Or why do you stare at us, as though we had made him walk by our own power or godliness? The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified His Servant Jesus, whom you handed over and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release Him. But you denied the Holy and Righteous One and asked to have a murderer given to you. You killed the source of life, whom God raised from the dead; we are witnesses of this. By faith in His name, His name has made this man strong, whom you see and know. So the faith that comes through Him has given him this perfect health in front of all of you.

"And now, brothers, I know that you did it in ignorance, just as your leaders also did. But what God predicted through the mouth of all the prophets—that His Messiah would suffer—He has fulfilled in this way. Therefore repent and turn back, so that your sins may be wiped out, that seasons of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,

The Word of the Lord

Psalm 4 read from The Episcopal Church Book of Common Prayer

1 Answer me when I call, O God, defender of my cause; * you set me free when I am hard-pressed; have mercy on me and hear my prayer.

2 "You mortals, how long will you dishonor my glory; * how long will you worship dumb idols and run after false gods?"

3 Know that the Lord does wonders for the faithful; * when I call upon the Lord, he will hear me.

4 Tremble, then, and do not sin; * speak to your heart in silence upon your bed.

5 Offer the appointed sacrifices * and put your trust in the Lord.

6 Many are saying, "Oh, that we might see better times!" * Lift up the light of your countenance upon us, O Lord.

7 You have put gladness in my heart, * more than when grain and wine and oil increase.

8 I lie down in peace; at once I fall asleep; * for only you, Lord, make me dwell in safety.

Epistle: 1 John 3:1-7 read from the International Children's Bible

The Father has loved us so much! He loved us so much that we are called children of God. And we really are his children. But the people in the world do not understand that we are God's children, because they have not known him. Dear friends, now we are children of God. We have not yet been shown what we will be in the future. But we know that when Christ comes again, we will be like him. We will see him as he really is. Christ is pure. And every person who has this hope in Christ keeps himself pure like Christ.

When a person sins, he breaks God's law. Yes, sinning is the same as living against God's law. You know that Christ came to take away sins. There is no sin in Christ. So the person who lives in Christ does not go on sinning. If he goes on sinning, he has never really understood Christ and has never known him.

Dear children, do not let any person lead you the wrong way. Christ is righteous. To be like Christ, a person must do what is right.

The Word of the Lord

Gospel: Luke 24:36 - 48 read from the King James Bible

And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

But they were terrified and affrighted (uh-frahyted), and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?

Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands

and his feet.

And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat?

And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb.

And he took it, and did eat before them. And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things.

The Gospel of the Lord

Closing Prayer: On April 17th we celebrate the life of Emily Cooper, Deaconess read from *A Great Cloud of Witnesses*

Emily Cooper was admitted to the office of deaconess in June 1873, in a service at St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Brooklyn, New York. A widow at age 44, she had gone to Brooklyn from her home in Louisville, Kentucky, for two years of training.

Soon after her commissioning, the Bishop of Kentucky, Benjamin Bosworth Smith, called Cooper to serve in her home diocese. In 1880, she was named director of the new Home of the Innocents, a Louisville home for neglected, unwanted, sick, and abused children. Founded by the Episcopal Diocese of Kentucky, the home initially served as many as fifty children at a time.

Cooper found that many children brought to the home were abandoned there, unnamed. She gave each of these children Christian names and over the years assisted at the baptisms of 244 children. Many of the children arrived at the home already too sick to be saved, and their

parents, if known, were to destitute to provide for their burials. Over 200 of the children who died during Cooper's decades of service were buried in unmarked graves in two large plots in Louisville's Cave Hill Cemetery.

In 2005, the Home rediscovered the graves, and over the next four years, they identified the deceased children. Statues placed at the grave sites now bear the names of the children and commemorate Cooper's ministry.

Emily Cooper retired in 1904 due to failing health spending her final years at the Orphanage of the Good Shepard. She died on April 17th, 1909.

Let us pray: God of the holy innocents, we thank you for the motherly witness of your deaconess Emily Cooper, who, in naming and baptizing, did not forget the children: Draw our hearts and minds also to the plight of little ones, always remembering your Son's teaching that in receiving a little child in his name, we receive Christ himself, who lives and reigns as one with you and the Spirit, as one, caring forever and ever. **Amen.**