

## **Sixth Sunday of Easter, May 14**

The first lesson, second lesson and Gospel will be read from the Amplified Bible.

The Collect and Psalm will be read from The Episcopal Church Book of Common Prayer.

**The Collect:** O God, you have prepared for those who love you such good things as surpass our understanding: Pour into our hearts such love towards you, that we, loving you in all things and above all things, may obtain your promises, which exceed all that we can desire; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

### **First Lesson: Acts 17:22-31**

22 So Paul, standing in the center of the Areopagus, said: "Men of Athens, I observe [with every turn I make throughout the city] that you are very religious and devout in all respects. 23 Now as I was going along and carefully looking at your objects of worship, I came to an altar with this inscription: 'TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.' Therefore what you already worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. 24 The God who created the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands; 25 nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, because it is He who gives to all [people] life and breath and all things. 26 And He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their lands and territories. 27 This was so that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grasp for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us. 28 For in Him we live and move and exist [that is, in Him we actually have our being], as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we also are His children.' 29 So then, being God's children, we should not think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination or skill of man. 30 Therefore God overlooked and disregarded the former ages of ignorance; but now He commands all people everywhere to repent [that is, to change their old way of thinking, to regret their past sins, and to seek God's purpose for their lives], 31 because He has set a day when He will judge the inhabited world in righteousness by a Man whom He has appointed and destined for that task, and He has provided credible proof to everyone by raising Him from the dead."

**Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people**

## Psalm: Psalm 66:7-18

7 Bless our God, you peoples; \*

make the voice of his praise to be heard;

8 Who holds our souls in life, \*

and will not allow our feet to slip.

9 For you, O God, have proved us; \*

you have tried us just as silver is tried.

10 You brought us into the snare; \*

you laid heavy burdens upon our backs.

11 You let enemies ride over our heads;

we went through fire and water; \*

but you brought us out into a place of refreshment.

12 I will enter your house with burnt-offerings

and will pay you my vows, \*

which I promised with my lips

and spoke with my mouth when I was in trouble.

13 I will offer you sacrifices of fat beasts

with the smoke of rams; \*

I will give you oxen and goats.

14 Come and listen, all you who fear God, \*

and I will tell you what he has done for me.

15 I called out to him with my mouth, \*

and his praise was on my tongue.

16 If I had found evil in my heart, \*

the Lord would not have heard me;

17 But in truth God has heard me; \*

he has attended to the voice of my prayer.

18 Blessed be God, who has not rejected my prayer, \*

nor withheld his love from me.

## **Second Lesson: 1 Peter 3:13-22**

13 Now who is there to hurt you if you become enthusiastic for what is good? 14 But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness [though it is not certain that you will], you are still blessed [happy, to be admired and favored by God]. Do not be afraid of their intimidating threats, nor be troubled or disturbed [by their opposition]. 15 But in your hearts set Christ apart [as holy—acknowledging Him, giving Him first place in your lives] as Lord. Always be ready to give a [logical] defense to anyone who asks you to account for the hope and confident assurance [elicited by faith] that is within you, yet [do it] with gentleness and respect. 16 And see to it that your conscience is entirely clear, so that every time you are slandered or falsely accused, those who attack or disparage your good behavior in Christ will be shamed [by their own words]. 17 For it is better that you suffer [unjustly] for doing what is right, if that should be God's will, than [to suffer justly] for doing wrong. 18 For indeed Christ died for sins once for all, the Just and Righteous for the unjust and unrighteous [the Innocent for the guilty] so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the Spirit; 19 in which He also went and preached to the spirits now in prison, 20 who once were disobedient, when the great patience of God was waiting in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons [Noah's family], were brought safely through the water. 21 Corresponding to that [rescue through the flood], baptism [which is an expression of a believer's new life in Christ] now saves you, not by removing dirt from the body, but by an appeal to God for a good (clear) conscience, [demonstrating what you believe to be yours] through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 22 who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God [that is, the place of honor and authority], with [all] angels and authorities and powers made subservient to Him.

### **Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people**

#### **Gospel: John 14:15-21**

15 "If you [really] love Me, you will keep and obey My commandments.

16 And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, to be with you forever—

17 the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive [and take to its heart] because it does

not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He (the Holy Spirit) remains with you continually and will be in you.

18 “I will not leave you as orphans [comfortless, bereaved, and helpless]; I will come [back] to you. 19 After a little while the world will no longer see Me, but you will see Me; because I live, you will live also. 20 On that day [when that time comes] you will know for yourselves that I am in My Father, and you are in Me, and I am in you. 21 The person who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who [really] loves Me; and whoever [really] loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and reveal Myself to him [I will make Myself real to him].”

### **The Gospel of the Lord**

**Closing Prayer: On May 21 we celebrate the life of John Eliot, Missionary among the Algonquin. Read from *A Great Cloud of Witnesses*.**

John Eliot, known as “The Apostle to the Indians,” was born in 1604 at Widford in Hertfordshire, England. Educated at Cambridge, Eliot’s nonconformist beliefs brought him into conflict with the tenets of the established church, and he departed for New England in 1631. Eliot arrived in Boston later that year and became the pastor of a church in nearby Roxbury.

During his tenure as pastor in Roxbury he became concerned with the welfare of the native populations and he learned the Algonquin language. After two years of study he began preaching to them in their own language. Like Roger Williams before him, Eliot had learned the native language and preached to the local tribes, but unlike Williams, Eliot devoted his entire life’s work to preaching the gospel to the native people.

In 1649, by act of Parliament, a Corporation for the Promoting and Propagating of the Gospel among the Indians of New England was set up, and, with the financial backing of the English government, Eliot built a native settlement at Natick. The native people were provided with food, clothing, homes, and education, and in 1660 the first Indian church in New England was founded.

During this time, Eliot began his monumental translation of the English Bible into the Algonquin language. Starting with the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayer, he was able to complete translations of the Book of Genesis and the Gospel of Matthew with the financial support of the Corporation for the Propagating of the Gospel. In 1661, his Algonquin New Testament was published, a copy of which was sent to King Charles II, and finally, in 1663, his complete translation of the Bible was published. Eliot would revise his translation several times, after most copies had been destroyed in the Indian Wars of 1670, along with many of the Indian settlements he established.

Eliot wrote a number of other books before his death, including a grammar of the Algonquin language. His work was vital to the studies of many linguists after him who were interested in Native American languages.

**Let us pray:** Almighty God, by the proclamation of your Word all nations are drawn to you: Make us desire, like John Eliot, to share your Good News with those whom we encounter, so that all people may come to a saving knowledge of you; through Jesus Christ our Savior, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**