**10 May 2020 St Buryan Feast Easter 5 White**

**Readings** Acts 7.55-60 **1 Peter 2.2-10** John 14.1-14

**Opening Words**

We are the Easter people, and Alleluia is our song.

**There is nothing in all creation that can separate us from the love of God, no height nor depth, no death nor life, no isolation nor social distancing, no virus nor scaremongering, no ill health nor anxiety, no riches nor debts, nor things present nor things to come can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. AMEN!**

Roman's 28 amended Vanda Perrett

**Collect of the Day**

Almighty God, to whose glory we celebrate the dedication of this house of prayer: we praise you for the many blessings you have given to those who worship you here and for our patron saint Buriana: and we pray that all who seek you in this place may find you, and, being filled with the Holy Spirit, may become a living temple acceptable to you; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, **Amen.**

**Reading** **1 Peter 2.2-10**

2Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation – 3if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

4Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God’s sight, and 5like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 6For it stands in scripture:
 ‘See, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.’
7To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe, ‘The stone that the builders rejected has become the very head of the corner’, 8and ‘A stone that makes them stumble, and a rock that makes them fall.’ They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

9But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. 10Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

**Prayer**

Eternal God, whose Son Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life: grant us to walk in his way, to rejoice in his truth, and to share his risen life; who is alive and reigns, now and for ever. Amen.

**Reflection**

When you have the care of several ancient buildings, the idea of the corner stone is a bittersweet one. The challenges of caring for an old building and making it fit for purpose is at times too much. We look at what shape our worship should and could be, then realise that the building, the light, the space and facilities mean the vision may never be achieved. Wonderful volunteers spend hours on maintenance and cleaning, reshaping and loving the old stones. Just as we finish one part of the work another stone begins to crumble. The history of the community is written in the stones and carving, the history of God’s love story with these people can be found in the worn paths that enter the doorway, the footsteps that have worn away the ancient stones.

Often things have gone a bit stray with the caretakers: I remember the architect’s face when a lovely church warden moaned to him that the pulpit steps were dissolving but bleach was the only thing that kept the mould at bay!

But what if, on this day of St Buryan Feast, we properly remember that the church has always been the people not the building, rather like we are human beings not the clothes we wear or the car we drive!

*10Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy*.

The church that Jesus is the corner stone for is a group of people, his favourite type of people who are sinners and saints, old and young, rich and poor but all united with a desire to know God and live with integrity. How hard God must work with us – some of us are not quite in the right shape for how we should live, some of us need some remedial work on our hearts and souls, others need a complete refurbishment!

Some bits of us are crumbling, and maybe we don’t seem fit for purpose – but God is bigger, greater than that. With the raw materials of a fallen people he trusts the life of his own son, with the saints and sinners he shapes his church. Using ordinary people, he sends out the message of love, grace, forgiveness and healing in the hands of those in most need of the message, in the hearts of those who have experienced this loving redemption for themselves. This is what we are celebrating for St Buryan Feast. Those whose experience of God gave them the energy and dedication to build a shelter that the people of God may find a space to be holy, to worship God and to care for one another.

During lockdown we have learnt that we don’t need to have the building to do this. We can worship at home, online, on the phone because God is with everyone of us.

But oh, wont it be wonderful to worship in God’s holy spaces in our building like St Buryan once again? Until them and beyond then God works with us his raw material to build the church he needs, thanks be to God.

**Prayers**

We pray that Christ may be seen in the life of the Church.
You have called us into the family of those who are the children of God. May our love for our brothers and sisters be strengthened by your grace. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

You have called us to be a temple where the Holy Spirit can dwell.
Give us clean hands and pure hearts, so that our lives will reflect your holiness. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

You have called us to be a light to the world, so that those in darkness come to you. May our lives shine as a witness to the saving grace you have given for all. You have called us to be members of your body, so that when one suffers, all suffer together. We ask for your comfort and healing power to bring hope to those in distress. We pray for those suffering today, for their health workers and their family. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

We remember the promises of a place for us all in heaven. We pray now for those who have recently taken their place in your home Lord, for those who grieve, and we pray for ourselves that one day we will be united with you for ever. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer. Make us one in heart and mind to serve you with joy for ever. Amen.**

**Final Prayer**

May the power of God this day enable us,

The nakedness of God disarm us,

The beauty of God silence us,

The justice of God give us voice,

The integrity of God hold us,

The desire of God move us,

The fear of God expose us to the truth,

The breath of God give us abundant life,

And may the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. Amen.