



Sunday 5th May 2024
The Sixth Sunday
of Easter
The Revd Andy Braunston

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Today we ponder today what love is and what it has to do with our faith. Our culture, built on the values of the Bible, sees love as a positive virtue but gets confused on what exactly love is. We'll explore that a little in word and song, movement, and music, and in bread and wine as we're swept up into the loving presence of God as we gather around His table. Love is a universal human emotion; we know what we mean when we say we're in love with someone, or that we love someone, or that this or that church shows love to others. We mean love to mean our romantic and erotic emotions, the bonds that come within families, and the acts of our will that are informed by our faith and values. Love is what we sing about in our culture and read about in our Bibles. Love is what the world thinks is enough, yet it often is confused about love; we say we fall out of love – when we're probably just moving on from infatuation. We confuse, even within our faith, love as an emotion and love as an act of our will.

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Christ has risen, alleluia! =
Our help is in the name of the Lord

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We awake this day, O God, to sing your praises.
We are enlivened by your presence and made attentive to your love.
We awoke with the knowledge of your commandments in our hearts,
and we bring you our praise.

With nature we are awakened with your hope of a world reborn;
with all who grieve we embrace your comfort as we rub the sleep from our eyes.
We awoke with the knowledge of the joy you bring to those who grieve
and we bring you our praise.

We awake this day O God with the knowledge that you warm our wintry hearts,
that the light of your love awakens our desire to obey you,

and we are awoken with the life that springs like fire from the cold tomb,

is ruthlessly impersonal; it doesn't care about age, gender, race, sex, class or wealth; it's about who needs our help. It's the idea that this type of love will counter the powers that seek to rule our world. It's the idea that this is the love that drove Jesus to the Cross and

a love that tells Mr Putin his lies, greed and subversion of the Gospel must be answered.

a love which tells Mr Trump that it's better to read rather than sell Bibles, that truth will set him free but will hurt him first, and that attacking those he perceives as weak will end only in hatred.

a love that tells our politicians to seek the common good; to look for long term prosperity for all not short-term gains at the polls.

a love which donates and volunteers in food banks

a love which works with the homeless to help restore dignity, trust, and help.

a love where white people tell the truth about our past and the legacies of slavery which are all around us. All over Britain money from slavery flowed; allowing ancient houses to be repaired, lands to be purchased and improved, charitable donations and endowments made to ease, no doubt, troubled consciences. This is tough love and requires bravery, openness, and a willingness to make reparations to those whose lives, even now, are blighted by these poisonous legacies.



O God, Eternal Majesty, hear us now as we pray for our world.
We pray for places and people in need of your love,
for those who worship in secret this day for fear of the authorities,
for those whose praise of your name endangers their lives,
and for those persecuted for how they love and live.
Give them strength, O God,
that your love will encourage and strengthen life and faith.

O God, Risen Lord Jesus, hear us now as we pray for your people,
We pray for those people and places in need of your shelter,
for those hiding from bombs and raids,
for those living with chronic pain,
and for those whose life ebbs to its close.
Give them your love, Lord Jesus,
that your grace will encourage and strengthen life and faith.

O God, Fiery Spirit, hear us now as we pray for your inspiration,
that the power of your change will make a difference.

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His light is become our light; his Spirit is ours;
may our lives shine with the radiance of his glory
and this bread and wine, which His Spirit has blessed,
lift us into his presence and lead us to the feasting of the Kingdom,
where we shall be raised up to see him face to face,
in the glory of the blessed Trinity, through all ages. °

	RS	CH4	StF	MP
Earth, Earth awake; your praises sing: alleluia! (also goes to Jesus Christ is Risen Today)		420		
Jesus Lover of My Soul	332	490	355	372
Sing A New Song to the Lord (Psalm 98)		62		599
Christ is Alive! Let Christ ans Sing	260	416	297	
O The Love of My Lord Is The Essence			431	
Our Lord Christ Is Risen The Tempter is Foiled		421		
The King of Love My Shepherd Is	552	462	479	649
Love Divine All Loves Excelling	663	519	503	449
Love Is His Word, Love is His Way				
Love is the touch of intangible joy		518		

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is well known but missing from most hymnbooks! This version https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bL5bT_Ezeq8 is the one used in the DD Sunday Service and uses some updated lyrics which avoid the gender specific ones in Fr Scholtes' original.

Why not play Tina Turner singing at the start of worship and the Beatles' at the end?