

**Lectionary**  
**Readings for every day**  
**You Select!**



in the HCUC

**No. 5**

**For 21 May 2017**

**Dear Friends**

I remember the day well. It was a hot summer day on the Canterbury plans. I was a student working on the trucks collecting sacks of freshly harvested wheat. The farmer drove his modern expensive car into the paddock to talk to the truck driver. I kept looking at this car. My mind was saying “Wow! I would be happy to own that!” As the farmer walked back to his car I noticed he walked slowly with the help of a walking tick. He must have read my mind. He stopped and said “If you don’t have your health, all the money in the world doesn’t make you happy.”

It was a moment of truth for me, and continues to be.

I wanted to write about being happy. Now I’m feeling overwhelmed by all the issues. Danny Kaye the actor said his father often declared that ‘to be happy every day is not to be happy—truly happy.’ For ages I’ve wondered what his father meant. I have a hunch he was saying life is made up of opposites. Success stands alongside failure. Pleasure and pain. Happiness gives way to unhappiness. This is the way of the world. Everything is changing. Nothing lasts and we need the darkness to appreciate the light, the sourness to balance the sweet.

So why is it that we spend so much time, money and effort trying to increase our happiness? Do you know anyone who believes we are meant to increase unhappiness in our lives and in the world around us? (We can’t overlook the fact that many people—ourselves included at times—are very good at increasing pain, distress, tension and division—great unhappiness.)

Whether we have consciously decided, or not, that the purpose of life is to find happiness, we seem to have a deep down inner homing impulse that points us in the direction of increasing happiness in ourselves and others. What do you think?

**Sincerely - Lester**

	<b>Psalm</b>	<b>Epistle/OT</b>	<b>Gospel</b>
Monday 22 May:	149:1-5	Acts 16:11-15	John 15:26-16:4
Tuesday 23 May:	138	Acts 16:22-34	John 16:5-11
Wednesday 24 May:	148:1-2, 11-end	Acts 17:15,22- 18:1	John 16:12-15
Thursday 25 May:	47	Acts 1:1-11	Luke 24:44-53
Friday 26 May:	47:1-6	Acts 18:9-18	John 16:20-23
Saturday 27 May:	47:1,2,7-end	Acts 18:22-end	John 16:23-28
<b>Sunday 28 May <u>Easter 7</u></b>			
Ps 68:1-10,32-35; Acts 1:6-14; 1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11; John 17:1-11			

	<b>Psalm</b>	<b>Epistle/OT</b>	<b>Gospel</b>
Monday 29 May:	68:1-6	Acts 19:1-8	John 16:29-end
Tuesday 30 May:	68:9-10, 18-19	Acts 20:17-27	John 17:1-11
Wednesday 31 May:	113	1 Sam 2:1-10	Luke 1:39-57
Thursday 1 June:	16:1,5-end	Acts 22:30;23:6-11	John 17:20-end
Friday 2 June:	103:1,2,11, 12, 19-20	Acts 25:13-21	John 21:15-19
Saturday 3 June:	11:4-end	Acts 28:16-20, 30-end	John 21:20-end
<b>Sunday 4 June <u>Pentecost</u></b>			
Ps 104:24-34,35b; Acts 2:1-21; 1 Cor 12:3b-13; John 20:19-23			

	<b>Psalm</b>	<b>Epistle/OT</b>	<b>Gospel</b>
Monday 5 June:	111	1 Peter 1:3-9	Mark 12:1-12
Tuesday 6 June:	112	1 Peter 1:10-16	Mark 12:13-17
Wednesday 7 June:	25:1-8	1 Peter 1:18-25	Mark 12:18-27
Thursday 8 June:	128	1 Peter 2:2-5,9-12	Mark 12:28-34
Friday 9 June:	146	1 Peter 4:7-13	Mark 12:35-37
Saturday 10 June:	103:1,8-13	Jude 17,20-25	Mark 12:38-end
<b>Sunday 11 June <u>Trinity</u></b>			
Ps 8; Gen 1:1-2:4a; 2 Cor 13:11-13; Matt 28:16-20			

## SIGNPOSTS AND PATHWAYS TOWARDS HAPPINESS

One of the signposts that we might find useful is to watch Jesus being with people. The gospel stories are full of an underlying focus on moving people who are unwell, diseased, to a fresh and happier experience of daily life.

Jesus always drew in the despised, the rejected, the person on the edge, and those who felt pushed outside society's warmth, friendliness and acceptance. He obviously knew deeply and with an unwavering conviction that we are meant to reach for and experience much, much more than cold isolation and desperate unhappiness.

Yes we are created to move and evolve into a richer happiness. Over the centuries explorers of this illusive path have discovered that there are layers to this experience. For some "happiness" is often superficial—the morning cuppa, to buying a new car.

The philosopher John S Mills said "Happiness? — bah, happiness is for pigs." I think he was wanting something more lasting and on a deeper level. The great positive fact is that the ancient explorers have identified and experienced levels of happiness that they called—joy, contentment, expansion of heart, pure clear unconditional love, a vision of oneness, and the most complete or highest experience they call bliss.

Because we live in a culture that assumes that happiness lies mainly in the objects of the senses (seeing, touching, tasting, feeling and hearing) and the people relationship, we easily become stuck on our evolutionary journey. It happens when we think our happiness will be found in that field. The result can be we go on repeating and looking for happiness in external objects like—more money, more possessions, gadgets, beautiful and useful things. There is no denying that we all can and do find joy and happiness in such things—they are not bad or wrong. It is just that all of these are never permanent or lasting. We need to find the deeper reality—our Source, or the unchanging bliss that lies within us.

As a human being we have the ability to see and know (and enjoy) external things, but all too often we miss evolving our ability to see and know the inner realm of existence—the reality that is within us and always has been. Our undying Self.

## FOR THE JOY—SET BEFORE HIM (Hebrews 12:2)

In 2015 two world leaders—HH the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu—sat together to explore what joy might mean; How we develop it? How we share it? How we miss knowing it?

Both men have survived more than 50 years of exile, and soul-crushing violence, life threats and oppression. Despite their hardships—or as they would say, because of them—they are two of the most joyful people on the planet.

[The story of their week together is in the book titled "The Book of Joy"]

A woman named Dawn sent in a question to this week long dialogue. She asked— "The world is in such turmoil—war, starvation, terror attacks, pollution, genocide. My heart hurts for the situation and the issues. How do I find joy in the midst of such large world problems?"

Desmond Tutu began by saying "You show your humanity by how you see yourself as not apart and different from others, but by your connection to others."

We are all different and separate, and our divisions create fears, walls, more divisions.

We actually don't see that our common ground is far deeper, permanent and healing than our separate views.

A rich young ruler came to Jesus with the question: What must I do to gain eternal life?

- It turned out he not only had a powerful position and plenty of money but lived an ordered and upright life.
- His question showed there was a desire for something more—more lasting, more satisfying, more important, more desirable, more joyful?
- Jesus liked him and responded to his question with caring honesty.
- Jesus seemed to be saying you are on the wrong path—heading in the wrong direction—facing away from the deeper reality, tied into a way of seeing life that is just a perpetuation of your wrong thinking.
- Jesus was sad to see him walk away leaving Jesus' gift of attitude lying on his path. (Mark 10:17ff)

**"The Kingdom is within you ..."**