

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



in the HCUC

**No. 14**

**For 28 August 2016**

**Dear Friends**

“Love is all you need ...”. This song from The Beatles says it all.

It is so simple. It is just a four letter word, but it rules the world. For ever poets have searched for words to describe it, singers strive for emotions to express the haunting beauty of it, theologians find it slips through their fingers as they look for ways to define it and try to squeeze it into a hard dogma. Before it our minds fall flat on their face. Deep in our own lives we know we are always hoping we can discover and experience love. It is like the air that we breathe—essential for our existence, our health, wholeness and wellbeing.

Stephanie Dowrick underlines this with clarity.

*“No wonder that the primary spiritual challenge is not just to love but to allow love to be the foundation of our lives, the ground of our being, the place forgiveness and gratitude delight and awe, and ceaseless source of hope.”*  
And note what she says next: *“When a religious teaching leaves out love it ceases to be religious. Where a spiritual teaching and practice sentimentalises love, it ceases to be spiritual.”*

By way of comment on this: Religion (the word) means to re-connect our inner being to its Source. Spiritual practice can often feed us on “candy-floss” - offering only easy, instant experiences that ignore the daily commitment, the dry patches, the pain or hurt that can be so hard to deal with. Hence it becomes a watered down, sloppy or ‘puppy love’.

Let’s finish with the profound, yet simple, foundation on which our Christian religion rests:-

**“Beloved: let us love one another, for love is of God, and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God—for God is love.” 1 John 4:7-8**  
**Sincerely - Lester**

	<b>Psalm</b>	<b>Epistle/OT</b>	<b>Gospel</b>
Monday 29 August:	33:12-21	1 Cor 2:1-5	Luke 4:16-30
Tuesday 30 August:	145:10-17	1 Cor 2:10b-end	Luke 4:31-37
Wednesday 31 August:	62	1 Cor 3:1-9	Luke 4:38-end
Thursday 1 September:	126;145	Prov 8:1-13	Matt 5:1-12
Friday 2 September:	37:3-8	1 Cor 4:1-5	Luke 5:33-end
Saturday 3 September:	145:18-end	1 Cor 4:6-15	Luke 6:1-5

**Sunday 4 September Pentecost 16**

Ps 139:1-6,13-18; Jer 18:1-11; Philemon 1:1-21; Luke 14:25-33

	<b>Psalm</b>	<b>Epistle/OT</b>	<b>Gospel</b>
Monday 5 September:	5:5-9a	1 Cor 5:1-8	Luke 6:6-11
Tuesday 6 September:	149:1-5	1 Cor 6:1-11	Luke 6:12-19
Wednesday 7 September:	45:11-end	1 Cor 7:25-31	Luke 6:20-26
Thursday 8 September:	139:1-9	1 Cor 8:1-7,11-end	Luke 6:27-38
Friday 9 September:	84:1-6	1 Cor 9:16-19, 22-end	Luke 6:39-42
Saturday 10 September:	116:10-end	1 Cor 10:14-22	Luke 6:43-end

**Sunday 11 September Pentecost 17**

Ps 14; Jer 4:11-12,22-28; 1 Tim 1:12-17; Luke 15:1-10

	<b>Psalm</b>	<b>Epistle/OT</b>	<b>Gospel</b>
Monday 12 September:	40:7-11	1 Cor 11:17-26,33	Luke 7:1-10
Tuesday 13 September:	100	1 Cor 12:12-14, 27-end	Luke 7:11-17
Wednesday 14 September:	98:1-5	1 Cor 1:18-25	John 3:13-17
Thursday 15 September:	118:1,2,17-20	1 Cor 15:1-11	Luke 7:36-end
Friday 16 September:	17:1-8	1 Cor 15:12-20	Luke 8:1-3
Saturday 17 September:	30:1-5	1 Cor 15:35-37, 42-49	Luke 8:4-15

**Sunday 18 September Pentecost 18**

Ps 79:1-9; Jer 8:18-9:1; 1 Tim 2:1-7; Luke 16:1-13

## SEEKING THE HIGHEST, GOING TO THE DEPTHS.

It is fun to list all the things we love: We can start at the coffee we love first thing in the morning, or the chocolate in the evening, the first daffodils, sunset-red through the dark pines, the smooth harbour, warm duvets, hot showers, the weekend break, the bright eager eyes of young children, the unconditional love of grandparents, and the calm cat warm on our lap.

It is no wonder that we see the things, places, words, faces, feelings, relationships and experiences as a long ascending medley of pleasure, preferences and soul-restoring moments of life. What follows is our desire to sort out the simple and superficial loves from the highest reaches of eternal, divine, profound love.

C S Lewis wrote a significant book about what he called the “Four Loves”.

The levels we know best in our culture are philia (love) as in the love of philosophy wisdom), or in people living in harmony in a city (community) Philadelphia.

Eros—love more focused on the body level, with all the relationships we enjoy, get entangled in and the different emotions we experience.

Agape—the deep profound love that moves from the head (ideas), emotions (changing feelings) down into the heart where it abides, full, unlimited, warm, flowing as our essence into the world.

This love we have at our heart is our Spiritual Heart. It has come to be known as the ‘greatest power in the world’.

Einstein put the nature of the entire universe into an equation which we know even if we don’t understand it:  $E = MC^2$ . The ‘E’ stands for Energy. There is a story that Einstein at one point considered writing it as  $L = MC^2$ , the ‘L’ standing for Love. So this indicated that he saw the vast ocean of energy in the universe (which is mind-boggling) as the energy of Love.

Jesus endorsed this, lived it and demonstrated its reality. Love is not a belief, not an idea, not a concept. It is the positive life force and the creating, transforming unconditional life force that holds all reality

## THE VAST OCEAN OF LOVE IN WHICH WE SWIM

### Ponder 1 Cor 13

- \* Sit in a comfy place—be still, breathe easily. The chapter is beautiful and well known. The first section is verses 1-3.
- \* What would you call this section? Give it a title.
- \* Read it again slowly (aloud?)
- \* Try re-writing it for your world:-
- ⇒ Speaking/using your
- ⇒ Gifts and abilities.
- ⇒ Actions without your heart of love being at the centre.
- \* This is love—vs 4-8.
  - Ponder ... is this true to me?
  - What needs your conscious attention?
- \* The third section is about our inner growth from partial to fuller knowing—to full knowledge of what ...? Vs 9-13
- \* In what way is love the greatest of the three lasting things?
- \* Sit quietly and allow your loving heart to speak to your inner ear.

(Do all this again within a week!?)

Who can tell what miracles Love has in store for us if only we can find the courage to become one with it?

Everything we now know is only a beginning of another knowing that has no end.

- Iqbal (1877—1938)

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A young man who as a teenager flipped through the New Testament found these key fragments. Later in a group of students he wrote them on the white board:-

- ◆ God is Love
- ◆ Fear not
- ◆ Be still
- ◆ Know the truth
- ◆ Love your neighbour as you love yourself.
- ◆ Love one another as I have loved you.

As he put down the pen he said: “I have found that if I meditate upon these words, and live them, there is nothing missing ... Love is all there is. Let’s live it.