

Sunday 14th May 2017 St Cyprian's, Highlands 11 a.m. Dedication of the Rose Garden (Celia Rose Jameson memorial)		5th Sunday of Easter 4th Sunday after Easter Year A
Acts 7:55-60	Ps 31:1-5, 17-18	1 Peter 2:2-10
		John 14:1-14
Remember who we are... become who we are called to be		

“Come to him, a living stone ... and like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood...” (1 Peter 2:4-5)

“Remember who we are... become who we are called to be.”

Thank you, Fr Ruthell and Pam Johnson, for your ministry here, and to the community of St Cyprian's Highlands; Rob and Di Wilmot; Archdeacon Cynthia Webstock (in absentia); Dr Isaias Chachine and Ilda (in absentia); Canon Melany Adonis and Hilton; the people of Sidbury and Alicedale – I greet you all in the name of Christ.

Special greetings from my wife Claire – she would have loved to have been here today, but she is with our Cathedral students on their camp at Assegai Trails. She sends her love.

It is a real privilege to be here with the Cathedral choir – a very significant community and group for Celia.

CELIA

Today is a day of great thanksgiving and celebration, as we gather to give thanks for the life and witness of Celia Rose Jameson, and to dedicate the Rose Garden here at St Cyprian's, in her memory. We thank God for the gift that Celia was to Peter; to Sarah and Arthur (children); Sebastian and Samuel (grandchildren)

... and the gift that she was to many people through her care and competence as a doctor and physician.

Celia made a unique and deeply significant contribution to the health and well-being of many, over the years.

At her funeral on Christmas Eve, normally a time when no-one is around, the Cathedral was packed with people who had come from near and far, to say – thank you. We continue to remember her with appreciation and with love.

Jos Wortley posted on Facebook “Doc, we will never forget. We are so grateful for your love and understanding. May your family find comfort in the knowledge that you, Doc, have helped so many... thank you!”¹

We remember...

Celia the healer, the go-to person

Celia the immensely competent physician

Celia the family person

Celia the lover of music

Celia the person of Christian faith

Today, we give thanks – for a life well lived; for years of marriage; for children and grandchildren; for a life of worship, witness and service.

We continue to hold Peter, Sarah and Arthur, the whole family, in our love and prayers.

¹ 22nd December 2016

WE REMEMBER

We are people who remember. We remember birthdays and anniversaries; we remember great events in our lives, in our history; we remember deaths, loved ones. One of the saddest things is when a person loses their memory – they lose something of what they are. And it is equally tragic when a community forgets; when people forget who they are, where they have come from, what has shaped them.

Today is a day when we remember. The dedication of the Garden of Remembrance is an opportunity given to this community of St Cyprian's to remember, into the future, loved ones, all who were part of our journey, and who continue to surround us in worship, love and prayer.

As Christians we believe in the Communion of Saints. We are surrounded by that great cloud of witnesses, the “great multitude that no-one could count” (Rev 7:9), all who are asleep in Christ; all who have gone before us in the way of Christ.

We remember. Siyakhumbula!

How do we remember?

We raise a stone:

Gen 28 – Jacob's dream of angels going up and down the ladder to heaven; he wakes from his sleep and says, “Surely the Lord is in this place – and I did not know it!” And he was afraid, and said, “How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.” (Gen 28:16-17)

He put up the stone and poured oil on the top of it, and called that place “Bethel” – which means “House of God.”

We re-enact and re-live:

To remember is to “re-member” – to be re-membered – joined once again to what gives us life. In the Eucharist, we re-enact, we relive – we remember the great act of Christ – we make present his saving power, his great act of salvation. Not simply something that happened in the dim and distant past, but a living present reality, now, amongst us, in us, present with us.

“Take this and eat; this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me...”

“We remember his offering of himself made once for all upon the cross...”

We reconnect:

“Come to him, a living stone... and like living stones let yourselves be built into a spiritual house...” (1 Pet 2:4-5)

“But 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....” (1 Peter 2:9)

Remember who we are... remember what God has done... remember who we are called to be...this high calling.

“Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.” (1 Peter 2:10)

Remember who we are in Christ, where we belong, remember that we are connected to one another as God's people...

One of my biggest concerns of the times in which we live is that many people do not remember. People have forgotten. They describe themselves as spiritual but not religious; there is a vague adherence to the Christian faith but are not part of a community of life and witness and worship. Parents do not lead their children in worship and witness. They think all is fine... but they have forgotten. The truths and gift of Christ are a distant memory.

And because they no longer remember who they are, they are not able to become who they are called to be – living stones, a royal priesthood, God's own people...

Have we forgotten?

My longing and prayer and hope is that one day those who have forgotten will wake up from sleep, and remember who they are called to be – and realise like Jacob that “truly God is in this place”, this community of worship, witness, service, the church.

ADVENT & EASTER

Celia died in the season of Advent: the season of preparation for Christmas and the return of Christ as Lord and King and Judge. Advent is a time when the scriptures speak to us of hope, expectancy; waiting; looking forward; the promise of new beginnings, new possibilities; the coming of Christ into the world, born as our redeemer; his return as Lord and King as our life...

Christ in the present comes to us as our rest and our consolation.

Peter is very fond of a hymn that he quoted to me, a few days before Celia died. It begins with the words, “I feel the winds of God

today...” and in the third verse, the words, “Great pilot of my onward way...”

Jesus Christ – our rest, our consolation, the great pilot of our onward way...

We are now in the season of Easter – the Fifty Great Days from Easter Day until the Day of Pentecost - when we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and his victory over sin and evil and death.

Life after death...

Life and hope...

Death is not the end. It is the end of this life as we know it. But it is also the beginning of new life, the perfect life with God beyond the grave.

The cross of Christ with its horror and suffering and desolation was not the last word.... Evil and oppression and deceit and betrayal and failure are our present reality, but things do not end here....

Because we are people of the resurrection....

Because God has the last word...

Because of the empty tomb...

Because of our risen Lord, who is the way, the truth, the life...

CONCLUSION

Let us remember...

Let us submit ourselves to the will of God...

Let us remember who we are...

And become who we are called to be...

Eternal God, you hold all souls in life: shed forth upon your Church in paradise and on earth the bright beams of your light and heavenly comfort. Help us to follow the example of those who have loved and served you here on earth and are now at rest, and bring us with them into the fullness of your unending joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.²

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² *An Anglican Prayer Book 1989*. pg 561 #97