Sermon: **I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, who will stay with you for ever.****He is the Spirit who reveals the truth about God.** (*The world cannot receive him, because it cannot see him or know him.*)
**But you know him, because he remains with you and is in you.** (John 14.16-17)

How many churches have you been involved with over the years? For me, over 30! Many as the minister – one appointment I had 9 to look after. Saying goodbye at the end can sometimes be a relief! Sometimes difficult – true in life, such as when someone is dying, moving abroad, changing job, etc.

So when Jesus left his friends how hard would that have been for him, and them? He was concerned they would feel abandoned, hence John 14.16f, including TEXT.

Helper = Comforter = Paraclete. *Another* helper suggests that being a helper is what Jesus was.

Who is this other helper, and what is he there for?

TEXT. Spirit. In Hebrew & Greek, Spirit = breath/wind. It is this which gives life cf Ezekiel 37 – Valley of Dry Bones. There are three things Jesus tells us about this Spirit:

[1] **He will stay with you for ever**

Lottery winners find they have lots of ‘friends’ – they do not remain when the money goes. Spirit remains whatever. Jesus had to go, he had a job to do that included his own death. If had remained as he was he would eventually have died; at some point he had to go. The Spirit remains.

Is this your experience? It is what Jesus offers.

[2] **He reveals the truth about God**

If you have a leaky roof, three builders will give four opinions. None may be the truth!

Spirit is there to reveal truth (not opinion) about God – what does that mean?

Spirit is not there to reveal the truth about the church, world situation, answers to your particular problems. (We might want him to, and sometimes he might even do so.) But he will reveal truth about God.

God is alive, God loves creation, God wants to be in fellowship with us, God wants his Kingdom visible in this world.

Sadly we need to hear these truths over and over again, for we have doubt, low self-esteem, an ‘I-can-manage’ attitude, and think that God is only interested in heaven.

What truth about God do you need to hear today?

[3] **He is in you** (*plural*)

One aspect of this is obvious, one less so.

Obvious - as we surrender/offer ourselves to God, Spirit comes, not just beside, but within. Amazing!

So Spirit is there when we walk, eat, make love, as well as pray, worship.

Have you read 1984? I did again two years ago. Spirit is not like Big Brother who monitors in an intrusive and unwanted way controlling against our wishes, but to help/guide/strengthen, with our consent.

Less obvious – ‘you’ is plural, so Spirit is in the fellowship, in the coming together. That is why it is important not to give up the habit of meeting together (Hebrews 10.25). It is easy to not come when you are tired, busy, have had a fall out, so-an-so is preaching, or when David retires and a new pastor comes along.

If TEXT then by separating you are losing out, and so is everyone else.

“Stick with the bloomin’ church” – for there is the Spirit, **and where the Spirit is there is liberty.**
(2 Corinthians 3.17)