

St Mary Magdalen Church, Knighton

Sunday 26th April 2020

Third Sunday of Easter

Join us in prayer this Sunday morning and through the week

Prayer is God's gift to us. It is his invitation to join in with his creative, renewing and healing work in the world—and in the lives of individual people, including ourselves. Although the Coronavirus 'lockdown' means we aren't able to meet together as a Church, and the newsletter doesn't invite us to 'get involved' at the moment, the privilege and work of prayer cannot be limited by our isolation. Please join us this week in changing the world through prayer.

Collect

Almighty Father,
who in your great mercy gladdened the disciples
with the sight of the risen Lord:
give us such knowledge of his presence with us,
that we may be strengthened and sustained by his risen life
and serve you continually in righteousness and truth;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

Post Communion

Living God,
your Son made himself known to his disciples
in the breaking of bread:
open the eyes of our faith,
that we may see him in all his redeeming work;
who is alive and reigns, now and for ever.
Amen.

Guidance in Tough Times

"Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path"

(Psalm 119.105))

During 2019 accounts emerged from China that Christians imprisoned for their faith were memorizing the whole Bible, from scraps of paper passed around between them and occasionally smuggled in from the outside. One former prisoner said: "We memorize it as fast as we can because even though they can take the paper away, they can't take what's hidden in your heart."

Over the centuries countless Christians have witnessed to the encouragement and hope that they have found in Bible verses known by heart and that return to them during times of hardship and trouble. In contrast, many of us today fail to take the Bible seriously enough even to read it regularly let alone commit passages to memory.

During this present time of hardship and trouble can I suggest that we all add Bible reading to our daily routine? I'm convinced that the wisdom and teaching of the Bible is a key way that God brings reassurance to us, even in the worst circumstances – and most of us now have a better opportunity to spend time with the Bible than ever before.

Here are some simple steps you could take:

Find your Bible - Different people prefer different translations so make sure you have a version that feels 'comfortable'. The traditional King James Version is still available of course, but the website Biblegateway.com allows you to choose from almost fifty English versions - the most popular are the Good News Bible and the New International Version. If you would like a Bible of your own then just let me know as I can get one at no cost to you.

Open your Bible – Become familiar with the names of the 'books' inside and the sort of writing each one uses. Is this 'book' a poem or a letter? A biographical story or gems of wisdom? Perhaps a law code or some history?

Use your Bible – Resist the temptation to start at the beginning! The Bible is not written as a continuous story and experience teaches us that

certain specific passages are particularly helpful. My suggestion would be to start by finding, and putting a bookmark in, the following places:

- Psalm 23 - The Lord is my shepherd
- Matthew 5, verses 1-12 - The Beatitudes
- Romans 8, verses 35-39 – Nothing can separate us from the love of God

These are passages that ought to be familiar to all of us.

Use your Bible – again! Now set aside 15 minutes each day to read one of the Gospel accounts of the life of Jesus – don't worry about understanding everything at first, just simply absorb the story and consider the person of Jesus., what he says and does. In a simple prayer ask God to show you more each day about how to be a faithful Christian in these difficult times.

Memorize your Bible – Unlike our Chinese Christian brothers and sisters we don't have to worry that our Bibles will be taken away – but we will still benefit from committing key verses to heart. Just choose a verse and regularly repeat it to yourself until it 'sticks'. Here are some suggestions to start with:

John 3, verse 16: *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.*

Joshua 1, verse 9: *Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.*

Psalm 27, verse 1: *The Lord is my light and my salvation – whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life – of whom shall I be afraid?*

John 11, verses 25-26: *Jesus said to her 'I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die.'*

These are difficult times for all of us, but also an opportunity to find again the source of our life and faith in Jesus Christ.—the Living Word revealed in God's Written Word.

Keep safe and stay well.

Adrian

Keeping in touch and sharing worship together remotely.

On-line worship This Sunday, 26th, we aim to have a short recorded, reflective act of worship by members of St Mary's congregation on both the website and our Facebook page—do have a look and join in worship together. We also have an online service of Compline every Wednesday evening -if you would like to take part then do contact Matthew for details. You can also view the service on Facebook.

Every Sunday at 10am on the @DioceseofLeicester Facebook page there will be a short pre-recorded video providing an opportunity to engage with the Gospel reading of the day. There will be simple prayers, a reading, a brief devotional homily and a creative interpretation of the Bible story by an artist, and a closing blessing. Just follow the Diocese of Leicester Facebook page and join with others around our diocese in experiencing God's word in a slightly different way.

The Community of the Tree of Life, our own Diocesan prayer community based near the Cathedral, is praying three times a day at 8am, noon and 9pm with a short and very simple service. You can hear more by going to this page on the internet: www.leicestertreeoflife.org and also their Facebook page: www.facebook.com/LeicTreeofLife/

The Church of England also has a dedicated web page for information about a range of options for praying and worshipping together: www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/church-online

'Pray As You Go' (www.pray-as-you-go.org/) provides a simple Bible reflection each morning, with music to help you pray.

Don't forget to visit the **St. Mary's website and Facebook page**. Keeping in touch within our congregation and wider community without physical contact is difficult—but easier with social media. Facebook is a helpful 'platform' which can host conversations, images, events and even live services. If you are interested in joining St Mary's 'Page' you will need a Facebook account. Matthew can help out with any problems, so please do contact him by phone or email. Also do check the website regularly for information, news, prayers and reflections.

Listening to God's Word

Our Bible reading for this Sunday is: **Luke 24.13-35**

On the road to Emmaus

¹³ Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. ¹⁴ They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. ¹⁵ As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; ¹⁶ but they were kept from recognising him.

¹⁷ He asked them, 'What are you discussing together as you walk along?' They stood still, their faces downcast. ¹⁸ One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, 'Are you the only one visiting Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?'

¹⁹ 'What things?' he asked. 'About Jesus of Nazareth,' they replied. 'He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. ²⁰ The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; ²¹ but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. ²² In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning ²³ but didn't find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. ²⁴ Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see Jesus.'

²⁵ He said to them, 'How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?' ²⁷ And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

²⁸ As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus continued on as if he were going further. ²⁹ But they urged him strongly, 'Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over.' So he went in to stay with them.

³⁰ When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. ³¹ Then their eyes were opened and they recognised him, and he disappeared from their sight. ³² They asked each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?'

³³ They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together ³⁴ and saying, 'It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon.' ³⁵ Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognised by them when he broke the bread.

***Reflection* by the Revd Canon Dr Stephen Foster**

The Gospel Reading for this Sunday, Luke 24:13-35, although in worship terms occurs two Sundays after Easter, according to Luke alone, actually occurs in the evening of Easter Day. It follows on from the dramatic events of the same early morning.

Two disciples, who are not part of the remaining eleven (24:33), (possibly of the larger group, including women, who are central to the 'discovery' of the Resurrection,) are walking from Jerusalem to Emmaus. Emmaus is a place scholars are uncertain as to its location, but same is not vital to the story. One of the two is called Cleopas, unknown in the rest of Scripture, but at least, he has a name and therefore a gender. I've never really understood why tradition and the various art works of the story have assumed the other one to be also male, especially as we know that the greater group of disciples had women within it. Hey ho!

The figure of Jesus appears 'normal and human'. The clues given by Jesus as to his identity and the responses of the disciples themselves based on the first 12 verses of the chapter, in their own retelling of the story thus far, don't help 'the penny to drop!' It is only in the meal, where the Greek is almost identical to the words of the Last Supper (22:19), that finally they 'get the picture', and react accordingly.

The story has obvious Eucharistic overtones...it's a Sunday(!)... there is the interpretation of Scripture, there is the proclamation of the Resurrection, there is the Sacrament... all leading to an evangelistic reaction... the truth of the Risen Jesus.

Spiritually, I have never really understood why other scholars seem to have missed a key point which is as plain as day to me. The two disciples are what we would call 'bereaved' , and are therefore almost wholly preoccupied with having lost Jesus to the darkness of death. Other 'circumstances' which 'happen along ' initially have no effect whatsoever on this single mindedness. It is only after a while, when an action stares them in the face, that they are wrenched out of their all consuming initial 'place'. Although bereavement for each of us is unique, disbelief and shock do tend to dominate our initial focus. This seems precisely where the two disciples 'are'.

For me, Luke intends to reflect a pastoral situation alongside the overtly theological ideas mentioned above.

SAF

Changes to the way we organise ourselves : Keeping the church running during these challenging times means making some changes. We need to be more careful with how we spend our money for instance, because our income from weekly giving and bookings of the Parish Centre has fallen away. To help us deal with this, James, our Administrator, and Mark and Steph, caretaker and bookings secretary for the Parish Centre, have agreed to move onto furlough under the Government aid scheme. This will enable us to claim back 80% of their salary without any loss of income to them.

Adrian will check on the security of our buildings and deal with routine administration—please do bear with him! The newsletter will continue to be published so please send items for inclusion to the usual email address or the office by **Thursday 12.00 noon**, or contact Adrian on 0116 2702705 or 0116 270 4268.

Church Family News: We've been told the sad news of the death of Terence (Terry) Oswin who was a regular monthly member of our 8am Sunday Service. Terry was always ready for a chat and a laugh, and found great support in his Christian faith—we will miss him. Terry died at home and as yet the cause of his death is still unconfirmed.

We also heard last week of the death of Margaret Austin, wife of Roger and formerly well-known at St Mary's. Roger hopes to have a Thanksgiving Service for Margaret's life, later in the year at St Mary's.

Some of you will have met Jackie Wood, mother-in-law of Bet Wood who moved to Norfolk last year. Sadly Jackie has had cancer for some time now, and she too died recently.

Coffee Morning! (yes, really!) : you are all cordially invited to a church coffee morning on Thursday 30th April, from 10-11am. We will be meeting in the comfort of our own homes (with whatever type of hot beverage and biscuits that take your fancy!) and sharing in some relaxed and informal chat using our computers, laptops, phones or tablets and "Zoom". If you'd like to join us please send me a quick email and I'll send you some straightforward instructions for making the connection. Drop in at any time! *Adrian* (adrian.jones@zoho.com)

NEW! Discussion Group open to all: "*Life Together*" is the title of a famous book by Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and also of a new discussion group for everyone during this season of the coronavirus pandemic. We will meet online for around an hour, using Zoom (which is not complicated!) and discuss aspects of what we value (and are missing) in our church life together. Before each meeting I'll send everyone some questions and discussion ideas—but I'm sure you'll have plenty to bring yourselves! It will be important to have a Bible to hand for each session.

The first 'Life Together' meeting will be on Tuesday 28th April at 7.45pm - Do let me know if you'd like to take part, or if you're not online but would like to have copies of our discussion questions. Do join us!

Adrian

JIGSAWS: The local community have kindly donated a significant number of jigsaw puzzles for people to use who may be isolated and in need of jigsaw stimulation. The puzzles have all been left to decontaminate for at least 5 days and then bagged up. Contact Matthew for a delivery or collection.

Ramadan has begun: Each year our Muslim neighbours share a season of fasting and prayer called Ramadan, during which they aim to grow spiritually and increase their giving and service to others. Ramadan 2020 began this week, and because of the coronavirus pandemic these spiritual disciplines will prove to be an extra challenge. Do please encourage our friends and neighbours by wishing them "Ramadan Mubarak" . Ramadan 2020 ends with the festival of Eid al-Fitr on 23rd May. *Adrian*

Benefice Magazine—May edition : We aim to produce a May edition of the benefice magazine despite the limitations provided by current circumstances. Please send your copy as usual to the Editor, Nigel Siesage.

"Laughter is the best medicine!" - some quotes from other parish newsletters (courtesy of Margot Comer):

- *"Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our church and community."*
- *"Barbara remains in hospital. She is having trouble sleeping and requests tapes of Fr Jack's sermons."*
- *"Miss Charlene Mason sang 'I shall not pass this way again' giving obvious pleasure to the congregation."*
- *"Weight Watchers will meet at 7pm in the Church hall. Please use the large double doors at the side."*



InSPIREd

The campaign to save our spire

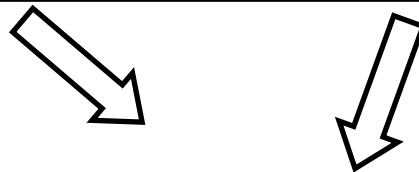
InSpired - our appeal for the spire

InSpired – a progress report

As we have previously reported, thanks to your efforts and generosity, the amount raised by the end of February was £33,400.

Sadly, but inevitably, the Coronavirus pandemic has put our exciting programme of events and outreach to the community on hold, but rest assured that when we all emerge from enforced hibernation, we will bring them back, and they will surely be all the more welcome.

Nigel Siesage



ENVELOPES OR STANDING ORDER 😊 😊 😊

Have you considered paying by monthly standing order instead of envelopes?

If you would like to do this, please contact Lorna Pollard :
by telephone 0116 2704272
or e mail at stmarysknighton.giving@gmail.com

CHEQUES FOR ST MARY'S Please make cheques for St Mary's payable to **Knighton PCC**.

Contact details:

Vicar: Adrian Jones 0116 270 4268 or 07584 954414

Email: adrian.jones@zoho.com (day off normally Friday)

Assistant Curate: Revd Matthew Gough 07754 961997

Email: revgough@gmail.com (day off normally Friday)

Revd Aphro McCullough: 0116 283 7887

Email: aphro.mccullough@btinternet.com

Revd Canon Dr Stephen Foster

Email: safpta6@gmail.com 07966 376905

Revd Janet Gasper

Email: janet.gasper@hotmail.co.uk 0116 288 9646

Reader: Fiona Wingate

Email: Fiona.wingate@talktalk.net 07515 752954

Churchwarden: Rosalind Matthew

Parish Administrator: James Gutteridge 0116 270 2705

Email: office@knightonparish.co.uk

The Parish Office is currently closed to the public. Sorry for any inconvenience and thank you for your understanding.

PLANNED GIVING SCHEME

giftaid it

Regular giving is an integral part of our church life supporting our day to day costs, ministry and mission.

A good way to achieve this is through a weekly envelope or a monthly bank standing order as part of our Planned Giving Scheme. Scheme details can be obtained from Lorna Pollard, Planned Giving Scheme Secretary: telephone 0116 2704272 or e mail:

stmarysknighton.giving@gmail.com. If you are a taxpayer and gift aid your giving, our church can claim an additional 25%.

During the current Coronavirus pandemic please put aside your weekly offerings ready to bring to church when things return to something like normal. The costs of the church are largely unchanged even though we cannot meet, so your regular giving is extremely important to our collective 'health' and the mission of God here.

Please pray..... "Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

(1 Thessalonians 5.16-18)

Give thanks: for the dedication and commitment to others shown by all our Key Workers.

A prayer for the Coronavirus outbreak

Keep us, good Lord,
under the shadow of your mercy,
in this time of uncertainty and distress.
Sustain and support the anxious and fearful,
and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may rejoice in your comfort
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love
in Christ Jesus our Lord.
Amen.

We pray for all those who are unwell at the moment, whether in body, mind or spirit, and all those with troubling investigations and diagnoses.

In particular we pray for **Anne Squires, Ed Groves, Gary Joynes, Trevor Gutteridge, all those with the symptoms of Coronavirus infection,** and all those on our parish 'Continuing Prayer' list. May they know the power of God's healing love at work in their lives today.

We give thanks for those who have been healed and restored.

We remember those who have died recently and pray for their families and friends:

Alastair Barnett, Jennifer Charles, Rose Golland, Terry Oswin, Margaret Austin, Lionel Peters, Jackie Wood.