

St Mary Magdalen Church, Knighton

Sunday 19th July 2020

Sixth Sunday after Trinity

**Join us in prayer this Sunday
and through the week,**



Collect

*Merciful God,
you have prepared for those who love you
such good things as pass our understanding:
pour into our hearts such love toward you
that we, loving you in all things and above all things,
may obtain your promises,
which exceed all that we can desire;
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.

Leicester Lockdown and reopening Churches:

we need your views.

As you'll know, our 'local lockdown' in Leicester has been reviewed by the Government And we have another two weeks (at least) before we can follow the rest of the country and ease some restrictions. Our church buildings therefore remain closed and we must continue with worship, prayer and other aspects of our church life in other ways.

At some point though we *will* be re-opening our buildings and re-starting worship together! To help us prepare we would like your views through our questionnaire, circulated last week and still available from the website or directly from Adrian.

The PCCs want to know what *you* think is the best way ahead at this point, so please do complete and return a questionnaire – and many thanks to everyone who has already done so. Full details are in the notes that come with the questions.

Most importantly please continue to pray for our life together as a church and as a benefice partnership of two parishes. A fire burns most brightly when the coals are gathered, and just now prayer is the key way for us to be 'gathered' and to build our fire. Please pray for each other – for a lively and hopeful Christian faith despite the wearying circumstances,. Please pray for those in need – that they will be provided for. Please pray too for the Ministry Team and the PCCs as we try to lead the churches through these times in a way that is attentive to all that God wants of us.

Adrian

Matthew writes:

To assist with the 'Returning to Public Worship' survey recently forwarded, if you prefer to send responses online instead of via the post, please use this link to be taken to the survey.

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/8HWXKXG>



Together In Hope (TIH) is a new project set up by the Diocese of Leicester, the University of Leicester and Leicester City Football Club; it has widespread support from leaders and individuals across sports, business, arts, education, charity, faith and community organisations. Its prime aims are to remind us about the many good news stories that come out of our city and its life and to help communities across the diocese explore the twin themes of togetherness and hope during the pandemic and its aftermath.

The Cathedral will be launching a *Together In Hope* virtual message board, collecting and sharing messages of hope and all churches are being invited to explore with their local communities how best to nurture hope and work together for the common good, under the *Together In Hope* banner over the coming months.

Look out for news of more activities in the coming weeks and get in touch with Adrian if you have ideas about what we could do as a church to help draw our part of the city *Together in Hope*.

“Thank you” to all who work in our care homes:

Sincere thanks to everyone who kindly donated so generously to the Knighton Care Home Staff appeal. We raised in excess of £2400 with donations from parishioners and community alike. We will be distributing £200 each to 12 care homes in the Benefice & ward this week—the gift will be used directly to say ‘thank you’ to the staff for their dedication and commitment over the last months of the pandemic. Particular thanks to St Guthlac's PCC and Cllr Melissa March who have been incredibly helpful with the administrative processes and liaison with the care homes; they have been really touched by the church community's gesture of gratitude, which has meant a lot at this particularly challenging time.

Matthew



How do we live as the Church *now*? - Serving

⁴² *They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.* ⁴³ *Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles.* ⁴⁴ *All the believers were together and had everything in common.* ⁴⁵ ***They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need.*** " (Acts 2.42-45)

While our lockdown continues, I'm taking the chance to reflect on how the first church shared their life together. What 'holy habits' marked out their new life in Christ? despite the hardship and persecution that was also part of their Christian experience, as we read it in Luke's book of 'The Acts of the Apostles'. Perhaps it is time for us to go back to these key aspects of being the church, in our own challenging times.

Here Luke describes a 'holy habit' that has marked Christians over the centuries and in these days of pandemic we also see acted out in news reports: "***They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need.***" This is the practice of *servicing those in need* – of putting other people's needs ahead of our own, and sacrificing personal comfort and ease for the sake of others.

Jesus himself came as one who served (Matthew 20:28) so it is no surprise that, as the first Christians became the first church and began to model their lives around his, serving should become a key hallmark of Christian life together. Every act of service follows the example of Jesus in eliminating need and building a world of love, justice and peace for all. Christians are called then to follow the way of Jesus and serve others, just as he did.

'We can live this calling personally, in our daily lives, work and relationships, in all sorts of diverse and varied ways. We can take opportunities when they come, as well as intentionally planning how we can use our time, energy, skills and money to support those in need.

We can live this calling corporately as churches too, for example through youth and children's work, help for the homeless, bringing together those with disabilities, or refugee welcome centres. There is a long tradition in Knighton of the churches being active in supporting such projects as well as overseas work in children's homes, medical clinics and through emergency charities when disaster strikes.

We can live this calling to serve in partnership with others as well; with other churches, with people of peace in the community, and with other groups – including other faith groups who are also committed to serving the common good.

In the time of Acts, church members sold their own things so that they had a way of providing for and serving others. they trusted that God would provide for their own needs if they now used what they had for the sake of others.

I wonder if we need to consider some specific questions on the 'other side' of lockdown:

Does *our* service have this same level of impact on *us*? Does it feel *sacrificial*?

Is our service both *personal* and *corporate*? Both *financial* and *practical*?

As we look around during lockdown we can see how Christians in our own city have been helping others in need. I wonder if *our* call now is to get more involved in serving in this personal and practical, *sacrificial*, way – something that needs our attention and reflection, at home and together.

In the meantime, keep safe and stay well.

Adrian



Listening to God's Word

Our Bible readings for this Sunday are:

Isaiah 44.6-8 and **Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43**

'The parable of the weeds

²⁴ Jesus told them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. ²⁵ But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. ²⁶ When the wheat sprouted and formed ears, then the weeds also appeared.

²⁷ 'The owner's servants came to him and said, "Sir, didn't you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?"

²⁸ "'An enemy did this," he replied.

'The servants asked him, "Do you want us to go and pull them up?"

²⁹ "'No," he answered, "because while you are pulling up the weeds, you may uproot the wheat with them. ³⁰ Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: first collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn.'"

³⁶ Then he left the crowd and went into the house. His disciples came to him and said, 'Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field.'

³⁷ He answered, 'The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. ³⁸ The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the people of the kingdom. The weeds are the people of the evil one, ³⁹ and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels.

⁴⁰ 'As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. ⁴¹ The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do

evil. ⁴²They will throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Whoever has ears, let them hear.

REFLECTION: the Revd Janet Gasper

Yesterday was our 50th Wedding Anniversary. Because we were in lockdown, we were unable to celebrate in the way we had planned with a service in church and a party shared with family and friends from our years together. We rather selfishly felt very disappointed, but we know that God continually blesses our relationship, our time together and our wonderful family.

We are all aware of selfishness running alongside compassion in our hearts and because of this awareness we know that there will be tension and conflict in communities and in our world. We live with imperfections and sinfulness but we believe in a God whose love is steadfast and unchanging. For Christians, the assurance of God's presence with us in all the situations of life, comes in the person of Jesus. Our Gospel reading for today is a story Jesus told about the development of God's kingdom.

The story is only found in Matthew's gospel and perhaps reflects the difficult times his fellowship was facing. Known as The Parable of the Weeds, the story indicates that even in a Christian community there can be selfishness, but it may not be a good idea to be too hasty in judging who is falling short.

The weed in the story is 'darnel', a plant indistinguishable from wheat in the early stages of its growth. So, if the farmer starts trying to pull it out, he risks destroying some of the wheat and leaving behind the darnel. The advice is to let both grow together until the harvest and then the wheat can be harvested and the darnel burned.

The message for the church from this story is that as Christians we have

to live with good and bad and look for potential. There is a danger of thinking of ourselves as safely inside the ark, but this story challenges any such complacency. Many things surround us that act like the weeds in the story, preventing us from growing in our love of God and neighbour, but it is God and God alone who will determine the time of harvest and sort it all out.

People respond to the Gospel in many different ways, with different levels of commitment. Throughout Christian history there has been tension between those advocating rigid discipline and policies to keep the church 'pure' and those who take a more open view and believe the judgement of the sincerity of church members belongs to God. Jesus is saying we have to live with a church that includes people we don't agree with and the church must interpret the gospel for its generation.

I know I am part of a world wide church which has the courage and honesty to face issues that affect the whole of humanity – issues of authority, discipline, ecology, sexuality, gender and race and I give thanks for a God whose love looks into our hearts and sees us for who we are in his sight. Amen.



Our Patronal Festival,

remembering St Mary Magdalen, falls on Wednesday 22nd July.

We'll be marking this special day next weekend in our Virtual Worship and newsletter.

Adrian

Happy Golden Wedding Anniversary to Janet and Mick Gasper

My parents were married 50 years ago on 18th July 1970 at St Andrew's Church, Whitmore Reans, Wolverhampton. We had planned a party to celebrate this milestone, but sadly lockdown has meant a change in plans and a very much scaled down celebration. I am so very thankful for them and wish them a wonderful day celebrating their golden wedding anniversary.

I thought this prayer was particularly appropriate.

*Dear Lord, these two have been as one
Through times of trial and times of fun,
50 years as man and wife.
They've built a home, a love, a life*

*Please bless them in the times ahead
With love as strong as when they wed.
We pray their love will always hold,
A solid bond as good as gold*

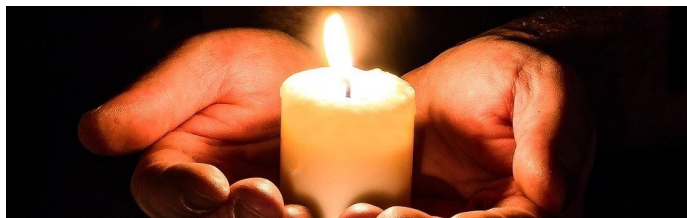
*Keep them safe, keep them true,
Honouring and obeying You.*
(Joanne Fuchs)



Amy Barnes

Adrian adds: *And many congratulations to Janet and Mick from everyone across the churches of the benefice! We hope you enjoy the chocolates and fizz from all of us!*

Prayers continue....



Although our buildings are closed, our prayers continue. Our Ministry Team pray regularly for the church and for all its congregation members, as well as for the wider church family and the local community. Prayer is God's gift to us, and releases his power into situations and people's lives in ways that are often beyond our understanding or imagining.

If you would like to be prayed for, or have on your heart someone ill or in need, then do please let us know. In the first instance contact Adrian or Matthew in confidence. We will ask if you would like a name added to the prayer requests on the newsletter or to our 'continuing prayer list', or if you would prefer not to share your request more widely. We can pray with you on the *phone*, call around and sit in the garden or pray for you later in our regular prayers at home.

We will pray alongside you for two weeks and look expectantly for God at work. And of course, do pray yourselves—God is listening!

Church Family News

Sad News It is with great sadness that I have to tell you our friend Ray Wood died peacefully at Welford Court earlier in the week. Ray played such an active and cheerful role in church life that he was well known to many, and a great source of encouragement too. He will be very fondly remembered. Our thoughts and prayers are with his children Sue and Dave, and with their wider family.

Ray's funeral will be on Wednesday 29th July, and it is hoped that the hearse will stop by outside St Mary's at around 9.30am for a prayer and a final goodbye from the church. he loved. *Adrian*

“Images of Knighton”

Entries Wanted
for
2021 Calendar
Competition



Have you got a photographic eye, or can you paint, draw, create (any medium) an image of Knighton?

Adult and under 18s categories

The panel of judges is made up of a local councillor, artists, photographer & Vicar

Free calendars to successful entrants

Please send high quality original jpeg images by -

Monday 14th September

to **spireappeal@gmail.com**

Queries to Rev. Gough-07754961997



St Mary's Knighton Spire Appeal

InSPIREd

The campaign to save our spire

UPDATE and GOOD NEWS!

Thanks to the generosity and fund-raising efforts of so many people in the St Mary's and the wider benefice community, by the end of May we had raised £40,489 towards the cost of repairing the spire. This means that we have achieved our initial target, despite the very unusual circumstances, in only about 8 months! This certainly exceeds our expectations - but we cannot rest on our laurels.

Our plans have been based on the assumption of substantial contributions from charitable trusts and foundations. Applications have been submitted, but their success is not guaranteed, particularly in these very uncertain times, So if you have been meaning to donate but just haven't got round to it, please give now. Details are on the St Mary's website,.

We look forward to emerging from the lockdown hibernation so that we can resume our programme of social and fund-raising events.

Best wishes and thanks,

Nigel Siesage, Chair of the Appeal Group

Adrian Jones, Vicar



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)

Keeping in touch and sharing worship together remotely.

On-line worship Each Sunday 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.

Wednesday Compline (Night Prayer) - Each week we are meeting virtually for Compline at 8pm on Wednesday. It has proven to be a meaningful way to have fellowship and prayer together as well as being quite good fun, especially as we find our feet with the technology and with more people joining us every week.

You can join by just phoning up and inputting the code or using 'Zoom' online. It has been democratic with several voices joining in with a line of liturgy each. If you would like to participate with a speaking part, please do contact Matthew by 4pm on Wednesday.

To join by phone only, call this number **0131 460 1196** and when prompted input Meeting ID: 746 767 4408

To join by Zoom on the internet, go to this address and click 'Open Zoom' <https://leccofe.zoom.us/j/7467674408>

PLANNED GIVING SCHEME

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 01162704272 or email: 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.

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Please pray..... *"And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. "* (Ephesians 6.18)

Praying for the World: Please pray for all those countries in the world where the pandemic is getting increasingly severe: South America, the United States, Africa and more. Pray for all those who work in over-stretched hospitals and those who have to make difficult decisions about how to control the spread and the impact of the corona virus.

Praying for the Church: This week we pray for all those retired clergy and lay Readers who still give of their time and energy to the life and ministry of our churches. Here in Knighton we pray for the Revd Aphro McCullough and her husband Dale (taking a 'holiday at home' this week), for the Revd Canon Dr Stephen Foster, for the Revd Janet Gasper and her husband Mick, and for the Revd John gates and wife Barbara—and we thank God for their contribution to building our life and faith.

Praying for the Parish: Please pray for the peace and well-being of all those who live on Elms Road, Knighton Drive, Knighton Road, Northcote Road, and Newstead Road.

Praying for those in need:

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. Please do continue to pray for **Gary Joynes, Anne Squires, Ed Groves** and their families. We pray for 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: **Ray Wood.**

Jesus said "Come to me, all you who are weary and carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest." Matthew 11.28.