

The Parish of St David with St Michael and All Angels, Exeter

Dear Friends

A warm welcome to our weekly update for the Fourth Sunday of Easter.

Sunday Worship

This Sunday morning I will be offering short Morning Prayers at 9.30am on the "St David's Church Exeter" Facebook page. After this week our offering on Sunday mornings will be our recorded service on YouTube which will be shared on our Facebook pages. But at Pentecost I will celebrate the Eucharist at the Vicarage, as I did on Easter Day, with a live stream on Facebook, hopefully making the service available afterwards on YouTube.

Today's service on [Youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) is available here:

<https://youtu.be/u8jcb21PF14>

Today our service includes bible readings, an address by Howard Friend and prayers led by Bill Pattinson as well as music. The collect, readings and address are printed below so that you can access them if you don't use YouTube or Facebook. I would like to say a special thank you to Nigel Walsh who has put the service together for us and to everyone contributing to our online worship.

Next week Belinda Speed-Andrews will be offering an address.

Websites and Mailing

Our sincere thanks to Clive Wilson and Richard Barnes for keeping our websites updated. Please use them to find pre-recorded or broadcast services as well as our magazine. Also many thanks to Oliver Nicholson and Helena Walker for sending out these emails and to others who are delivering notices to people who are not on e-mail. Please send me links or information which you think should be included.

Phone Networks

I know that many of you have appreciated phone calls from other members of the church community. Howard Friend has set up a network for St David's Church with me and St. Michael's Church also has a number of volunteers phoning around. If would like to be phoned by someone and haven't yet had any contact please let me know at nigel.guthrie1@gmail.com

or by ringing me on 01392 660226.

Thank you to every one who is helping to keep our church communities together by your care.

Live Prayers

Please join us, if you can for our streamed short prayer services during the week on our Facebook pages:

On 'St David's Church Exeter' page:

Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday at 9am.

On 'Friends of St Michael's' page:

Wednesday Regina Coeli and Mattins (BCP) at 9am

If you are not on Facebook you can still access the St David's Page by clicking on the Facebook 'f' symbol on the front page of St David's website.

If you have any feedback about our services, or requests please let me know.

Would you like to contribute to our online worship?

I would love to include more members of our churches reading lessons (or otherwise contributing) during our Youtube services. If you would be willing to make a video of yourself reading for inclusion in our services please let me know, and don't be shy!

Picture Quiz

We were due to have a quiz evening at St David's Church last weekend, but as that is not now going to take place, Pete and Alice Francis thought they could set it as a challenge for this period of Lock Down. If you are able to go out for a stroll, it might give you something to do. If not, see what you can remember!

The photos were taken within the area surrounding St David's Church. They focus on architectural features and signs, the sort of thing you pass daily and fail to notice! The pictures and map are available through our website as part of the May Magazine. If you can't access them please email me and I can send the pictures and map to you by return of email. Please write the corresponding letter from the map underneath each photo. The closing date for entries is Saturday 9th May and annotated pictures should be sent to vicar@stdavidschurchexeter.org.uk

before that date. They will be judged by Tina Guthrie and the winner will be drawn from the correct entries. The winner will have a bottle of red or white wine (their choice) delivered (with due care for social distancing) within the Exeter area. A huge thank you to Pete and Alice for providing this fun challenge. Enjoy!

Magazine

Our May magazine is now available on our websites and it is a great edition with experiences of lockdown from members of our churches.

https://www.stmichaelsmountdinham.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/NewLeaves_May20.pdf

If you would like to contribute to future editions please send all articles as Word documents to newleavesnews@gmail.com or billpattinson136@gmail.com Thank you.

Alleviation of Poverty

Christian Aid Week Zoom Breakfast

Would you like to join us (virtually) in the Vicarage kitchen?!

We were hoping to hold another Big Breakfast to raise some funds for Christian Aid again this year. We will try a Zoom breakfast instead on Saturday 16 May at

9.30am. I'm afraid that you will have to make your own breakfast and then log in to the Zoom meeting enjoy some company and make a suitable donation to Christian Aid. Like most charities Christian Aid will suffer a large fall in income due to the lack of fundraising possibilities at the moment. If you would like to join in please email me and I will send you an invitation to join the breakfast a few days before hand.

Meanwhile, closer to home Christians against Poverty are active in campaigning for and serving some of the poorest people in this country. If you would like to learn more about their work or support them the link to their website and newsletter is here: <http://www.church-poverty.org.uk>

God is our ever present help in trouble

We are still living with great uncertainty in many areas of life. Much as we would love to come together for worship and fellowship we must still keep our distance for the health of the whole country. The Bishops are thinking hard about how church life might be able to start again in our buildings and we are all awaiting further Governments decision, of course. But in the meantime much of our work and communication will have to continue by phone, email and social media.

This week the Archbishop of Canterbury has launched **Daily Hope**, which includes music, prayers, reflections and full worship services at the end of a telephone line. It is available 24 hours a day on **0800 804 8044** and has been set up to reach people unable to join online church services.

In this time of uncertainty it is good to meditate on the images we find of God in the bible. Our readings today focus on the Good Shepherd. But I am also appreciating the images of God as an unchanging rock, as the writer of Psalm 18 did:

The Lord is my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer,
my God, my rock in whom I take refuge,
my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

Our God is an unchanging and utterly dependable friend. May these images strengthen and comfort us and help us to face the fear and uncertainty which are always part of life, but which are heightened now.

Your Prayers are asked for...

Charles Argall, Roger Beer, Janine, Charles Speed-Andrews and Nick & Karen Speed-Andrews, Peggy James (for continued recovery), Jacqueline and her family, Joy and her family, Claude and Gillian Harbord, Elizabeth Hewitt, Grace Tointon, James (for recovery after an operation) and Katy Tyler, Andrew Wakley, Rosemary Willcox and Maurice Wright, Raymond (for recovery after an operation), Julie and her son Ola,

All those suffering from the symptoms of Covid-19, and those who are feeling lonely or afraid.

In the Parish Cycle of Prayer we pray for the Listeners (a Samaritans training initiative for Exeter Prison inmates)

Please also pray for:

Communities in our own country and elsewhere where poverty and living conditions are worsening the effects of the Corona Virus pandemic;

those suffering domestic violence or abuse;

Alison Whiting, Simon Harrison and the whole chaplaincy team at RDE;

the Nightingale Hospital in Exeter and especially those involved in the Bereavement support team.

all those working in the NHS, Social Care and in our emergency services.

May God keep you in peace and good health,

Nigel Guthrie

**Confession, Collect, Readings and Address for the Fourth Sunday of Easter
(service on Youtube) <https://youtu.be/u8jcb21PF14>**

Greeting

Alleluia, Christ is risen!

All He is risen indeed, Alleluia!

Confession and Absolution

Jesus Christ, risen Master and triumphant Lord,

we come to you in sorrow for our sins,

and confess to you our weakness and unbelief.

We have lived by our own strength,

and not by the power of your resurrection.

In your mercy, forgive us.

All Lord, hear us and help us.

We have lived by the light of our own eyes,

as faithless and not believing.

In your mercy, forgive us.

All Lord, hear us and help us.

We have lived for this world alone,

and doubted our home in heaven.

In your mercy, forgive us.

All Lord, hear us and help us.

May the Father forgive us

by the death of his Son

and strengthen *us* to live in the power of the Spirit
all *our* days.

All Amen.

Collect

Risen Christ, faithful shepherd of your Father's sheep:
teach us to hear your voice
and to follow your command,
that all your people may be gathered into one flock,
to the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside still waters;
he restores my soul.
He leads me in right paths
for his name's sake.
Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I fear no evil;
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff—
they comfort me.
You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord
my whole life long.

Gospel Reading

John 10: 1-10 - Jesus the Good Shepherd

‘Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.’ Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

So again Jesus said to them, ‘Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come

in and go out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.

An Address for St David's and St Michael's, Exeter, by Howard Friend – May 3rd 2020 – Easter 4

Psalm 23 & John 10 vs 1-10

May I speak in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit – Amen

Jesus said, in the middle of this discourse on Sheep and himself as the Good Shepherd – ‘I have come that they might have Life, and have it more Abundantly.

The problem is – right now, there doesn't seem to be a lot of it about, does there? – not much opportunity for this Abundant Life.

I wonder what you're missing most:

Having friends around for a meal and greeting them with a hug, or if you don't do hugs – at least a handshake.

Going out for a drink in a comfortably full and buzzing Pub

Singing in your choir. Going to Church, the Theatre, the Cricket, Rugby, Football – whatever. It all seems like a very long time ago, a distant memory since we DID any of those things, those activities.

Therein lies the dilemma for many of us, in this Lockdown, we can't DO stuff and for many of us – that defines us. Our Abundant Life is DOING. And simply BEING just doesn't hack it. Actually I suggest it's even more problematic than that. Many of us look into our inner selves and conclude that we don't like what we see - or wonder if there's anything there at all.

How then to be comfortable, how to find meaning in just BEING and not in running around DOING. That is the question – to be - - - - no I'm not going to say it, even though we've just celebrated his birthday.

The Christian answer to this existential dilemma is to remind ourselves that The Good Shepherd gave his life for the Sheep - that's you and me. Why did he do it – because he loves us – This is the Easter Good News.

Confidence in just BEING starts with being still (and there's plenty of opportunity for that for most of us, at the moment,) - being still - and meditating on this wonderful truth. When everything else is stripped away - God loves me – not for what I've done - but just as I am, he loves me.

Coming back to sheep for a moment:

David the Psalmist, knew this truth and expressed it memorably in the 23rd Psalm, today's Psalm.

This isn't the one, written in the cave of Adullam, when he was hiding from King Saul. (That's 142), but from one of his other Lockdown moments, and he had quite a few. His boyhood experience gives expression to the certainty of his relationship with God, that he is loved by God, no matter what.

It's worth enjoying again these wonderful words

The Lord IS my Shepherd, I shall not want, he makes me lie down in green pasture, he leads me beside still waters, he restores my soul.

Lockdown is an opportunity, a challenge, for us to explore just BEING in his presence - not - I hasten to add 'In green pasture or beside still waters' unless your time there exceeds the journey time to and from. But government guidelines notwithstanding - may I encourage you as I'm trying to do myself, to make space to just BE in his presence and allow him to 'Restore our Souls'.

The time for action will come again - in the meantime let's properly explore 'The Abundant Life' of just BEING in his presence. Let's be honest - this doesn't come easily to all of us. Certainly not to me. I am much more a do-er than a be-er. But I'm learning. Recently I have started meditating on the Psalms, and actually have spent quite a lot of time on the 23rd, which has become even more precious to me. It's made me think back over my own farming background. That's the reason you got it instead of one the standard readings by the way.

Abundant Life – What are we missing by not Doing?

Abundant Life - What are we missing by not just Being?

I close with a prayer that Belinda Speed-Andrews introduced us to last week. It has the great qualities of truth and brevity.

Let us pray:

Be Silent

Be Still

Let your Lord God love you.

Amen

Prebendary Nigel Guthrie
95 Howell Road
Exeter EX4 4LH
nigel.guthrie1@gmail.com