

St David's and St Michael's and All Angels, Mount Dinham, Exeter

Newsletter for 19 July 2020

Dear Friends

Welcome to this weekly update for the sixth Sunday after Trinity.

Sunday Worship

Today our service is Holy Communion which will be live-streamed on the St David's Church Exeter Facebook Page and both our churches will be open for worship.

Next Sunday, 26th July, there will be a recorded service on You Tube as well as our services in church. Jonathan Draper will be our preacher.

Churches Opening for public worship

This week opening times are:

St Michael and All Angels – Wednesday Morning Prayer at 9.30am followed by Mass at 10am and Sunday Mass at 11am

St David – Thursday 10.30am, Holy Communion, Sunday 9.30am Holy Communion

There will be special provisions to keep worshippers as safe as possible.

Hand sanitizer must be used on entering and leaving church.

Seating will be distanced to approximately 2 metres. Please sit on the seats where service books are placed. Seating is also marked by white labels at St Michael's.

Please observe appropriate distancing from others at all times and the one way systems through the churches.

Services should be 'no longer than necessary'; in practice that means about 45minutes.

Toilet facilities will be available and please follow the instructions for use.

Please do not attend church if you are feeling ill or are shielding or vulnerable. Although we will do all we can to make the church safe you attend at your own risk.

Thank you to our church members who have helped with this process and with cleaning and preparing our churches for re-opening to the public, it is much appreciated.

Live Daily 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 and Compline on Monday evening at 8pm.

On 'Friends of St Michael's' page: Wednesday Angelus and Mass at 10am.

Bible Study

This month we will be holding a bible study on the psalms. This will be held on Tuesdays afternoons for an hour from 2pm. This Tuesday, 21th July, Charlotte Townsend will be leading a study based on psalms 127 & 128. Please join us if you can by Zoom. Here is the link:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6602261392?pwd=VzdOaU1XUFBjWk9jV0xvMDZWajZBQT09>

Meeting ID: 660 226 1392

Password: 196651

or send me a phone message or email if you are not sure how to join.

Reopening of Churches for public worship – a continuing process

The PCC agree to open our churches for one midweek communion and one Sunday communion. This gives the chance for the churches to be ‘quarantined’ for 72 hours between times to minimize the risk of any infection.

We will keep this under review in accordance with national and diocesan guidelines.

We would love to return to a full range of service but that is not yet feasible so please be patient as we need to do this as safely as possible!

Please keep this process in your prayers.

Phone Networks

I know that many of you have appreciated phone calls from other members of the church community. If you would like to be phoned by someone and haven't had any contact please let me know at nigel.guthrie1@gmail.com

or by ringing me on 01392 660226 or Ash on 07855305519.

Magazine

Our July magazine is available on our websites. I have a few printed copies which I would be happy to post to you if you are finding it hard to access the online magazine. If you would like one please let me know by phone or e-mail.

Your Prayers are asked for...

Charles Argall, Janine, Charles Speed-Andrews, Nicky Jarman and her husband Tim and their family, Jacqueline and her family, Joy and her family, Claude and Gillian Harbord, Elizabeth Hewitt, Grace Tointon, Pam Smith and her family, James and Katy Tyler, Andrew Wakley, Jill Wellbelove (recovering after receiving a pacemaker), Rosemary Willcox and Maurice Wright.

In the Parish Cycle of Prayer we give thanks for all businesses in the parish and pray for those facing financial difficulties.

We pray for those not yet able to return to church and all who are worshipping with us at home

Please also pray for:

those areas and countries suffering from through Covid-19, and those who are feeling lonely or isolated;

those who are facing unemployment;

children who are living in vulnerable settings;

Exeter Food Bank and Exeter City Council;

the people of Yemen.

May God keep you in peace and good health, Nigel Guthrie

Order of Service for the Sixth Sunday after Trinity (service on St David's Church Exeter Facebook Page and in St David's Church)

Greeting

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you
All and also with you.

All Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayers of Penitence

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith,
firmly resolved to keep God's commandments
and to live in love and peace with all.
All Most merciful God,
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
we confess that we have sinned
in thought, word and deed.
We have not loved you with our whole heart.
We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.
In your mercy forgive what we have been,
help us to amend what we are,
and direct what we shall be;
that we may do justly, love mercy,
and walk humbly with you, our God. Amen.

Priest Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy upon you,
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and keep you in life eternal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Gloria in Excelsis

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly king, almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer.
For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

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.

First Reading – Romans 8: 12-25

So then, brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh — for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, ‘Abba! Father!’ it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labour pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

Gospel Reading – Matthew 13: 24-30 & 36-43

He put before them another parable: ‘The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field; but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, “Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?” He answered, “An enemy has done this.” The slaves said to him, “Then do you want us to go and gather them?” But he replied, “No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.” ’

Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, ‘Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.’ He answered, ‘The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin

and all evildoers, and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!

An Address by Nigel Guthrie for Sunday 19th July 2020

I'm sure that any of you who have a garden or allotment will feel some sympathy for the person described in Jesus' parable today. We dig the soil and carefully remove the weeds. Then we plant our crops or flowers and wait for them to grow. But if we neglect them for a day or two the weeds we did not want are as tall of the plants we hoped for. I'm not sure who plants the weeds in my vegetable patch, but they do a pretty good job!

This parable of the wheat and the tares is about judgement. Jesus recognises that his disciples must live alongside evil people as well as good ones. But in the end The Son of Man will come to sort out the evil from the good, with appropriate rewards being allotted. Well that's one way, and perhaps the most obvious way, of reading the parable.

But perhaps the field with the good crops and the weeds growing together might also be an uncomfortably accurate picture of our own lives? All of us have the capacity for goodness, for kindness, for generosity and for patience. But we also have to come to terms with our less attractive features; our selfishness, our laziness, our greed and our desire always to be right; to mention but a few! Much as we would like our best aspects to flourish, it is not always the good that comes to the surface. Or as St Paul puts it so pithily in Romans chapter 7 *'For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do.'* The uncomfortable truth is that we must learn to live with our less attractive features and to manage them as well as we can to avoid harming others and ourselves.

And the good news of Jesus gives us real hope when we might despair at ourselves. He assures us that God loves us despite our failings. Jesus calls us to repentance, to turn away from sin and despair, and assures us that we are forgiven through his death and resurrection. This is why I deeply value the opportunity to make a confession during our acts of worship. We are openly admitting that we have fallen short of what God intends for us, but also acknowledging that nothing, not even our worst failings, can separate us from the love of God which is shown to us in Christ Jesus.

It is a different sort of mixed economy that St Paul addresses in today's reading from chapter 8 of his letter to the Romans. He teaches that alongside the hopes and longings of life we also have to come to terms with its sufferings. Our recent experience of the Covid 19 virus has reminded us that however sophisticated our society may seem and however advanced our medical knowledge, we can't always protect ourselves from the world around us. We have so much to be grateful for here in the south-west of England. Although there have been deaths from the virus we have had far fewer casualties than in many places. And whatever we may think of the government response to the pandemic we must be grateful that we live in a country where medical assistance is freely available. Yet the threat of further suffering is still with us. Back in March we hoped that the pandemic would be firmly behind us by now. But in fact, rather like the wheat and the tares, it looks as if we are going to be living with this threat in our midst for some time to come.

St Paul seems to me to reject the idea that suffering is a punishment from God. Because he sees that the whole creation is groaning in labour pains, as he puts it. Although I had

the intensely moving privilege of being present at the birth of both my sons I am very grateful not too have had to go through labour pains myself! But labour pains are usually necessary for new life to come into being. They are bearable because there is hope of the new child who will shortly come into the world.

And even in the darkness, suffering and anxiety of the Covid-19 pandemic there have been signs of hope all around. Many people, especially in the city have appreciated green spaces and paths for the first time and have enjoyed watching birds in their gardens. Sales of bird seed soared! And levels of pollution fell dramatically. And appreciation was expressed for those who serve us quietly and without fanfare year on year, not just the doctors and nurses, but the shop workers, delivery drivers and bin collectors. And then there was the extraordinary centenarian Captain Tom Moore who was knighted this week! How can we keep this spirit of hope alive?

When Saint Paul describes the whole creation groaning in labour pains he not only speaks of the inescapable suffering of the present time which afflicts human beings in many forms, but he also affirms that as Christians we suffer in hope of what God has prepared. In Paul's magnificent vision the whole creation will be set free from its bondage to decay and enter into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. This is a key text for us in these days of ecological anxiety when the climate crisis is increasingly part of our daily consciousness. On bad days it seems as if the world is hurtling towards melt-down with a good deal of help from our human family! But the suffering of the created order is not without hope and part of our calling as Christian is to keep hope alive for individuals and for our society and world.

The suffering of mental and physical illness, of bereavement and of loneliness often seems hard to bear. We wish to make it better, we wish to be free of it, sometimes we seek to numb it. But St Paul makes this extraordinary claim that we will free of suffering and will enter into the fullness of God's glory. He rejoices in the fact that the sufferings of the present cannot even compare with the glory that God has prepared for us. He also warns us that we can't see hope and that we have to wait for it with patience. But we do have glimpses of hope; in the best of human nature, in the beauty of creation and in the presence of God with us that breaks into our prayers and worship to bring, joy, hope and peace.

Prayers by Alison Whiting

As some of us return to St David's and St Michael's today, we give thanks for our church buildings ...and the way that architecture and history combine with our music, worship and prayer, to help us gain a glimpse of God. We ask that we would continue to care for and use our beautiful buildings for God's glory, never taking them for granted. May they be places of hospitality, welcome and peace to all who enter, and a sanctuary for those seeking solace, as we are increasingly allowed to open our doors. We pray for other churches too, around the world, as they begin to reopen.

Guide with your wisdom, Lord, those making important decisions about gradually reducing the lockdown – internationally, nationally and more locally. Lord in your mercy...

We give thanks for Ash, and pray for him and his family as they continue to settle into their home and the parish, asking that they would find a warm welcome at St David's and

St Michael's. Guide and bless Ash as he ministers to and with us; may his time with us be one of joy, blessing and fulfilment...

Remembering all those affected by covid, we lift to God those who work to relieve suffering; doctors, nurses, all care staff, counsellors, asking for strength, compassion and resilience in their duties. And we pray for healing for those who have been unable to say goodbye fully to their loved ones. Lord in your mercy...

We remember children and young people – both in and out of school - asking that this less structured time would be one of safety for them. Praying for those whose home life is difficult or painful, we ask your protection especially, and for the lonely and vulnerable.

And in a moment of silence, we lift to God those whom we know, in any kind of need – and those whose needs are known to God alone... Bring your healing touch and comfort, Lord, to all who suffer...

Finally, we pray for ourselves. As we heard Jesus' command at the end of our Gospel today 'Let anyone with ears, listen!' we ask that God would help us to listen - to God - and to other people; to what is said – and what is left unsaid.

Merciful Father...

The Peace

**Christ is our peace. He has reconciled us to God
in one body by the cross.**

We meet in his name and share his peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you

All and also with you.

The gifts of bread and wine are prepared on the altar.

***Priest Yours, Lord, is the greatness, the power,
the glory, the splendour, and the majesty;
for everything in heaven and on earth is yours.***

***All All things come from you,
and of your own do we give you.***

The Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord be with you: and also with you

Lift up your hearts: We lift them to the Lord

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God: It is right to give thanks and praise

The priest gives thanks and everyone says

***All Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.***

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

The priest continues, giving thanks over the bread and wine.

Great is the mystery of faith:

All Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again

The prayer concludes with Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Priest As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

All Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,

your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours

now and for ever. Amen

The Breaking of the Bread

Priest We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

**All Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.**

Jesus, Lamb of God, have mercy on us

Jesus, bearer of our sins, have mercy on us.

Jesus, redeemer of the world, grant us peace.

The Giving of Communion

Jesus is the Lamb of God

who takes away the sins of the world.

Blessed are those who are called to his supper.

**All Lord, I am not worthy to receive you,
but only say the word, and I shall be healed.**

***The priest says:* The body of Christ**

***Everyone replies:* Amen.**

Closing Prayers

God of our pilgrimage,

you have led us to the living water:

refresh and sustain us

as we go forward on our journey,

in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

All Almighty God, we thank you for feeding us

with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.

Through him we offer you our souls and bodies to be a living sacrifice.

**Send us out in the power of your Spirit to live and work
to your praise and glory. Amen.**

**The peace of God,
which passes all understanding,
keep your hearts and minds
in the knowledge and love of God,
and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always. Amen.
Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.**

All In the name of Christ. Amen.

Do join us next week in church or for our Youtube service!

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