

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

Newsletter for 1 November 2020

Dear Friends

Welcome to this weekly update for the Sunday of All Saints.

Sunday Worship

This Sunday the 9.30am service from St David's will be live streamed on Facebook at <http://facebook.com/stdavidschurchexeter/>

Nigel Guthrie will be celebrating at St David's with Belinda Speed-Andrews preaching. Fr Robin Eastoe will be celebrating and preaching at 11am at St Michael's. Nigel will be celebrating at the All Souls Requiem this evening at St Michael's at 6pm. Belinda will also be celebrating at Mary Harris Chapel this evening at 7pm.

Services in the week ahead

St Michael and All Angels

Wednesday 4 November - Morning Prayer at 9.30am & Mass at 10am

Sunday 8 November - Mass at 10.55am for Remembrance Sunday

St David

Thursday 5 November - Holy Communion at 10.30am

Sunday 8 November - Parish Communion at 9.30am for Remembrance Sunday

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Thank you to everyone who attended on 27th October and those who stood for office. Emma White and Glynis Harflett were re-elected as our Churchwardens and Stephanie Aplin as Chapelwarden and we appreciate their generosity in serving in this critical role. I would especially like to thank our PCC secretary, Helena Walker, who made it possible for people to join by Zoom. This seemed to work remarkably well and is certainly a first for the parish!

Covid-19 Safe

These are the provisions we are making to keep worshippers as safe as possible.

We were reminded at our recent meeting with Bishop Robert that we should not mingle at the end of services. If you are buying something from Traidcraft or Bountiful Table please treat it like a small shop and just approach one at a time.

After consultation we have decided to encourage people to use both exits to get out of church rather than having a one-way system which doesn't work very well in our buildings. Please avoid touching door handles – Thank you.

Hand sanitizer must be used on entering and leaving church.

We should now wear face coverings in church. There are important exemptions which can be found at

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-08/COVID%2019%20advice%20on%20face%20coverings%20v3.0.pdf>

and which include those with a hearing impairment.

At St David's we are encouraging people to wear face coverings to come forward to receive Holy Communion and then to consume the host after moving away from the altar rail.

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, with notices on the pews that should be kept clear.

Please observe appropriate distancing from others at all times.

Services should be 'no longer than necessary'; and congregational singing is still not permitted.

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. Although we will do all we can to make the church safe you attend at your own risk.

Help with Track and Trace on Sundays

Thank you to those who have offered their help on Sundays and Thursdays – we really appreciate it. There is now a QR code which can be used with the NHS Covid app at St David's Church.

Food for vulnerable community housed at the Great Western Hotel

A huge thank you for the help and donations that have already been offered towards making our Tuesday packed suppers. If you would like to help make up the rolls at 5pm or provide small bags of crisps or individually wrapped chocolate bars towards this outreach work then please have a word with Phil and Moira Dale or Mary Quest, or me. This arrangement is likely to last until March and we may receive funding towards the food we provide.

Live Daily Prayers

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

On 'St David's Church Exeter' page: Tuesday and Friday at 9am. Compline on Thursday 5th November at 9pm.

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

Knit and Natter

Knit and Natter will take place on Saturday 14th November 11-1pm. All are welcome for knitting or nattering. Contact Glynis on 01392 214787 if needed.

Psalms Bible Study by Zoom

Our Psalms Bible Study on Zoom will start again in November. It will run on the following Tuesdays at 2pm: 3 and 10th November.

Here is the link:

Join Zoom Meeting

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6602261392?
pwd=VzdOaU1XUFBjWk9jV0xvMDZWajZBQT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6602261392?pwd=VzdOaU1XUFBjWk9jV0xvMDZWajZBQT09)

Meeting ID: 660 226 1392

Passcode: 196651

Advent Fair, Saturday November 28th, 11am -2pm

We are hoping to run a Covid secure Advent Fair at St David's on November 28th and would like to appeal for some assistance. Volunteers are particularly wanted to help decorate the church with ivy and seasonal colour and to help on the day. Please have a word with Glynis if you would like to help with this.

Thank you to...

A special thank you to Doug Allen who has mended and repainted the St David's noticeboard at the Queen's Terrace end of church. It is looking very smart now! Also, a big thank you this week to David Allin who has repaired the wooden flooring at the back of the nave at St David's. It had become a trip hazard but is now solid and smooth!

Shoeboxes for Moldova

For many years we have, as a church, been supporting CREE (Christian Response to Eastern Europe) by sending Christmas Shoe Boxes to Moldova. We are doing it again this year. Our boxes need to be in church by the morning of Sunday November 29th for transport to Moldova.

For further information about box preparation can be found at:

www.cr2ee.org.uk

Please ring Ann Watts 01392 276948 for further information and look out for stories in the November magazine!

Reopening of Churches for public worship – a continuing process

Our churches are currently open for one midweek communion and one Sunday communion. We are keeping this under review in accordance with national and diocesan guidelines. The PCC has now agreed a Risk Assessment process to allow our buildings to be used by a small number of trusted groups. Thank you for keeping this process in your prayers.

Work on St David's Vestry Roof

Work will be starting this week to make this roof watertight. Scaffold is now up to enable safe access to the site.

Traidcraft Stall

Richard Featherstone will be taking orders for REAL advent calendars on the next three Sundays for delivery on November 22nd.

Many thanks for supporting Fair Trade producers.

Magazine

The magazine for November should be available on our websites shortly with paper copies from next weekend. Thank you to our contributors, our editorial team and to those who distribute the magazine.

Phone Networks

Many of you have appreciated phone calls from other members of the church community. If 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.

Your Prayers are asked for...

Charles Argall, Charles Speed-Andrews, Maggs Bedford, Nicky Jarman and her husband Tim and their family, Jacqueline and her family, Joy and her family, Claude and Gillian Harbord, Elizabeth Hewitt, Anne Smith, Grace Tointon, Pam Smith and her family, James and Katy Tyler, Andrew Wakley, Rosemary Willcox, Hannah, David and Beryl.

Please remember Janine, Pam Stephens and Maurice Wright who have died recently. May they rest in the peace of Christ.

In the Parish Cycle of Prayer we pray for our MP, Ben Bradshaw, and our city and council councilors.

Please also pray for:

the people of USA as their election process concludes;

those not able to return to church and all who are worshipping with us at home;

all peoples suffering violence and conflict and victims of terrorism;

victims of the earthquake in Turkey and Greece;

those areas and countries suffering most from Covid-19, and those who are feeling anxious or afraid;

our Government, local and national, in the difficult decisions they have to make and implement, our police service

those working in care homes and hospitals

those who are facing unemployment or economic hardship;

A Prayer for use during the Covid outbreak

Loving God, your Son Jesus Christ came that we might have life and have it abundantly;

pour out your blessing upon our nation;

*where there is illness, bring your healing touch;
where there is fear, strengthen us with the knowledge of your presence;
where there is uncertainty, build us up in faith;
where there is denial, lead us into truth;
where there is discord, may we know the harmony of your love;
this we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.*

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

Collect, Readings and Address for Sunday 1st November

St David's Service will be live streamed on our Facebook page

Collect

Almighty God, you have knit together your elect in one communion and fellowship in the mystical body of your Son Christ our Lord: grant us grace so to follow your blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living, that we may come to those inexpressible joys that you have prepared for those who truly love you; 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.

First Reading – 1 John 3: 1-3

See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is. And all who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.

Gospel Reading – Matthew 5: 1-12

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

'Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

'Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

'Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

'Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

'Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

'Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

An Address by Belinda Speed-Andrews, 1 November 2020

May I speak in the name of the living God, Father, Son & Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Irish government have decided on a new policy for driving. Next week all cars will start to drive on the left hand side of the road and if all goes well, the week after lorries, buses and other vehicles will then join cars on the left hand side of the road.

I don't remember many jokes, it's not how my brain works but this joke is one that I still remember from my very early teenage years -as you can imagine it took me a while to work out what was so funny! My apologies if there is anyone here today with an Irish background.

A bit of a weird joke for All Saints day, but I'll come back to the reason for my joke in a bit. But today we come together to celebrate All Saints day. Throughout the liturgical year we celebrate both major and minor saints on given days. Today though, there is no one particular saint mentioned. Today is a reminder to all the faithful of our collective identity in Christ. All those who have gone before us in faith, all of us now who declare Jesus Christ as our Lord and all those to come, are all saints. In fact today's focus is perhaps more on those who never made it onto the liturgical calendar. There may be someone in particular that you remember, or who is still alive who gives you courage and hope to continue believing and living in faith, in spite of all the challenges you may currently be facing? But what today does demonstrate for us, I hope, is that we are all connected to one another in Christ; those who have died, those present here today and across the world and those yet to come; we are all the body of Christ and therefore saints.

In the first letter of John we heard today how we are all children of God; through God's generous, lavish love for us we are considered as children of God. In Paul's letter to the Romans, he writes of God's spirit 'bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ'.

We are all children of our earthly parents. Most of us, but I acknowledge not all children, learn from their parents or from their adopted parents or foster parents or careers, how to behave and to live in this world. We may even know what it is to be or to have been deeply loved by our parents. We know what it is to be a child. But what does it mean to be a child of God?

I now return to my joke. All joking aside though. How many of you have driven in a country where you have to drive on the right-hand side of the road? Quite a few of you I should imagine. I haven't though because in Malaysia where I lived for a good number of years, they too drive on the left-hand side of the road. And so I was trying to think how discombobulated my brain would be initially if I had to drive on the other side of the road when trying to remember that the inside is

on the right not the left and that turning left is harder now and most of all going round a roundabout in the wrong direction. So what has all of this got to do with our readings today?

Our gospel reading is the well known Beatitudes, the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount. We heard in the letter to John that we are children of God and it is this teaching from Jesus that begins to expound what that means to be a child of God. Jesus is teaching the good news of the Kingdom and this means we are blessed. You may well be thinking, how can we be blessed by being poor in spirit or if we mourn? The meaning of the word blessed in the context of the Sermon on the Mount means to be placed on the right road. It doesn't mean to confer favour. In some translations the word happy is used, perhaps not ideal when you think of those who mourn or who are persecuted.

In this particular teaching Jesus is telling us how we can be on the right road; he is telling us how we can live his Kingdom now. But this teaching is totally disorientating for his followers as they thought that they knew how to live because Moses had given them the 10 commandments + all the other 603 commandments contained in the Torah. And for us too, living in a world where 'me' is the most important thing, where power, money and sex rule the world - you only have to look at the Epstein affair to see how sordid and despicable this way of life is - this teaching from Jesus is disorientating. Jesus is teaching us a way of life that is totally counter-intuitive; he is teaching us about a new way of being human some of which may already over-lap with the way we already live & some which exposes how totally messed up the way we live is. Jesus is calling his followers, he is calling us to re-train and this requires an enormous amount of intentional effort both individually and communally.

Let's go back to the joke about driving on the wrong side of the road then. Imagine if we as a community left here this morning having made a pact to live god's kingdom now and this meant that we all had to drive on the right-hand side of the road. Well we all know what the result would be. Collisions, accidents, tension, fines and more than likely, jail time. But this is exactly what Jesus is challenging us to do. To go out and be members of a new and different kind of Kingdom, a kingdom that has a totally upside down value system and then just go and live it. It's a bit like learning a new language. You spend hours memorising new words and phrases to internalise it; to acquire a new nature and then ideally you become proficient. It will not happen over night; it takes time and effort and an intentionality.

Where do we begin? Perhaps on this day, All Saints day, we can look back at those of faith who have gone before us? They may be well known saints, they may be people of history; Ghandi, Mother Theresa, Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela or just someone you have known over the years who has demonstrated to you a way of living where generosity, peace-making, humbling oneself, serving one another, & seeking others well-being are the highest values that they live by -

these are Kingdom values but whoever you are thinking of, they have shown you how to live these values in their day to day lives. These saints are those who have struggled to live out this alternative way of life. They belong to the past, present & future of God's kingdom, including all of us here today who struggle to practise the Christian counterculture today.

We are in communion with the saints and when we come closer to Christ by living his kingdom values, the more we are deeply connected to those who have gone before us. But we are reminded today that it is through Christ, as children of God that we become a part of the communion of saints and it is this communion that declares to us that we are not left alone to struggle to live the life Jesus calls us to. It is to him, with all the saints that we set our sights and focus our lives.

Closing Prayer

Lord of heaven, in this eucharist you have brought us near to an innumerable company of angels and to the spirits of the saints made perfect: as in this food of our earthly pilgrimage we have shared their fellowship, so may we come to share their joy in heaven; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Do join us next week for our services in church or on Facebook!

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