

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

Newsletter for 11 April 2021 – The Second Sunday of Easter

Dear Friends,

Welcome to our newsletter for the Second Sunday of Easter. Thank you to everyone who decorated our churches so beautifully and contributed to our Holy Week and Easter worship.

Our services today are:

9.30am Parish Communion at St David's (live streamed) with Celebrant, Belinda Speed-Andrews, and preacher, Howard Friend

11am Mass at St Michael's with celebrant and preacher, Fr Robin Eastoe

Thrive is taking a break for two weeks, starting again on Sunday 25 April.

Services in church and online this week

Tuesday 13 April, 9.30am Zoom Morning Prayer (from Common Worship). Please join us using this code

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

Meeting ID: 660 226 1392 Passcode: 196651

Wednesday 14 April, 9.30am at St Michael's Mattins followed by 10am Mass in church (also live streamed on St Michael's Facebook page)

Thursday 15 March, 9.30am, Morning Prayer, on St David's Facebook Page
10.30 Holy Communion at St David's in church

Thursday 15 March, 6pm Sung Vespers at St Michael's Church (public worship)

Friday 16 March, 9.30am, Morning Prayer, on St David's Facebook Page

Sunday 18 April

9.30am Parish Communion at St David's with celebrant, Nigel Guthrie and preacher, Bill Pattinson

11am Mass at St Michael's with celebrant and preacher, Fr Dominic Cyrus

Covid-19 Safe for Public Worship

Please avoid touching door handles – Thank you.

Hand sanitizer must be used on entering and leaving church.

Please wear a face covering in church unless you are exempt.

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.

At St Michael's the priest will come to distribute Holy Communion to people in their seats.

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

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

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

Please avoid mingling inside church before or after services.

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.

Easter Week Services

Please note that Nigel and Ash will be off duty from 5-12 April so there will be reduced services.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting – could you contribute to our PCC?

We are planning to hold our APCM online on Wednesday 28th April 2021. Because of the continued uncertainty about meeting inside parishes are being encouraged to plan meetings to be held by Zoom. We will be looking for three new PCC members from St David's and one from St Michael's. Please think about whether you might serve our parish community in this way. We will also be seeking to elect a Churchwarden for the parish and a Chapel warden for St Michael's.

These are essential roles for the health of our parish please pray for the right people to come forward. Please speak to Nigel or one of our existing church and chapel wardens if you might be willing to stand.

Food for vulnerable community housed at the Great Western Hotel

A big thank you for the generous donations of food for our Tuesday packed suppers. The scheme is still set to continue until the end of March with reduced numbers as some of the residents are being rehoused. We are well provided with food at the moment, thank you! We have had a thank you message from St Petrocks which Roger Beer has passed on to me: *'Thank you all so much for the truly incredible energy, dedication and hard work you've poured in to keep this service running consistently for an entire year – it has been an absolute lifeline and had a transformative impact on many of the individuals there. Thank you!'*

Traidcraft Stall & St Michael's Bountiful Table

We are now restarting our regular stalls but please be careful to maintain social distancing and just approach the stalls one at a time. Thank you for your support.

Men's Breakfast

The date of our next virtual breakfast is Saturday 24th April at 9am, by Zoom.

Parish Magazine – New Leaves

The April magazine is in church. Thank you to our hard-working editorial team for another great edition!

Green Team

The Green Team met this week and are planning a morning focussed on the environment, with lunch, for 11th September 2021. Please keep the date!

Thanks to your support we have been able to twin three of the toilets at St David's Church. The money from this will provide a toilet for a family or community which lacks such facilities. We will be notified of the exact location of our twinned toilets in due course!

The PCC recently agreed that the parish investment funds that are not already held in Ethical Investments should be moved into Ethically Managed Funds.

Cleaning at St Michael's Church

We would love to recruit some more volunteers to help clean at St Michael's Church, especially in the Chancel and Lady Chapel. Cleaners usually go in every other week and Elizabeth Hughes is usually in church once a fortnight on a Tuesday morning. We would also like to arrange an occasional cleaning party but this will have to wait until restrictions loosen. Please have a word with Stephanie Aplin or Elizabeth Hughes if you would be able to help. Thank you.

Phone Networks

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, or would just like to talk, 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...

Please remember those who have died recently including:
Stella Ugbo

In the Parish Cycle of Prayer this week please pray for local cafés and coffee shops and pubs; all who work in hospitality in the parish.

A Prayer for Easter

God of glory, by the raising of your Son
you have broken the chains of death and hell:
fill your Church with faith and hope;
for a new day has dawned and the way to life stands open
in our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Please also pray for:
YMCA Exeter, all staff and residents at St David's Hill;

our Government, local and national, in the difficult decisions they must make and implement, wisdom to 'build back better' considering the human and environmental costs and benefits;

those working in care homes, hospitals and hospices - giving thanks for their commitment and courage;

those suffering from Covid around the world, and from long Covid;

those who are facing unemployment or economic hardship;

the people of Syria and Yemen longing for peace and security;

the people of Myanmar in their struggle for democracy;

Please give thank for:

the vaccination programme in this country and praying for the equitable distribution of vaccine throughout the world and the Covax programme;

the falling Covid case numbers in this country;

May God bless you and those you care for,

Nigel Guthrie

Prayers, Readings and Address for The Second Sunday of Easter, 11 April 2021

Collect

**Almighty Father,
you have given your only Son to die for our sins
and to rise again for our justification:
grant us so to put away the leaven of malice and wickedness
that we may always serve you
in pureness of living and truth;
through the merits of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.**

First Reading – Exodus 14: 10-18

As Pharaoh drew near, the Israelites looked back, and there were the Egyptians advancing on them. In great fear the Israelites cried out to the Lord. They said to Moses, ‘Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us, bringing us out of Egypt? Is this not the very thing we told you in Egypt, “Let us alone and let us serve the Egyptians”? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness.’ But Moses said to the people, ‘Do not be afraid, stand firm, and see the deliverance that the Lord will accomplish for you today; for the Egyptians whom you see today you shall never see again. The Lord will fight for you, and you have only to keep still.’ Then the Lord said to Moses, ‘Why do you cry out to me? Tell the Israelites to go forward. But you lift up your staff, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the Israelites may go into the sea on dry ground. Then I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go in after them; and so I will gain glory for myself over Pharaoh and all his army, his chariots, and his chariot drivers. And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I have gained glory for myself over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his chariot drivers.’

Gospel Reading - St John 20: 19-end

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, ‘Peace be with you.’ After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.’ When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.’ But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, ‘We have seen the Lord.’ But he said to them, ‘Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.’

A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, ‘Peace be with you.’ Then he said to Thomas, ‘Put your

finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.' Thomas answered him, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus said to him, 'Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.' Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

Address from Howard Friend for the Second Sunday of Easter

Closing Prayer and Blessing

Lord God our Father, through our Saviour Jesus Christ
you have assured your children of eternal life
and in baptism have made us one with him:
deliver us from the death of sin and raise us to new life in your
love,
in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, by the grace of our Lord Jesus
Christ.

The God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord
Jesus,
that great shepherd of the sheep,
through the blood of the eternal covenant,
make you perfect in every good work to do his will,
working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight;
and the blessing of God almighty, the Father,
the Son and the Holy Spirit be upon us and remain
with us always. Amen.

Do join us next week for our services in church and online!

Sunday 11th April 2021

St David's and St Michael's, Exeter

A Sermon by Howard Friend for the Second Sunday of Easter

Exodus 14 v 10-18

John 20 v 19 - end.

In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Amen.

STOP - START

It's been the year for that - hasn't it

Stop - start – and then again but this time we're in Tiers – no pun intended – or perhaps so.

Then Stop a third time – and then we start again – but this time with a 'Road Map' and fortified by a jab in the arm.

And some have stopped altogether ~ 150,000 in the UK alone.

And we start to wonder what it's been all about.

Well - the short answer to that - is that various governments around the world have introduced Lockdowns as the sensible public health measure to deal with the Corona virus. And some have done it better than others – mainly because they stopped long and hard first and restarted only when it was sensible to do so.

When to stop – and how to start – that is the question or is it How to stop and when to start.

The Stop Start dilemma features prominently in our Old Testament reading as Moses was leading the Israelites out of Egypt towards the Promised Land.

They'd made a good start - eventually escaping from Pharoah - but were now stopped on the Western banks of the Red Sea. Sea before them and an army behind them – and they were not a happy band of pilgrims.

Did Moses have a Road Map for the way forward? Perhaps not in the Johnsonian sense. But - like any sensible God fearing person – in a crisis – he realised he had to Stop.

Vs 13 / 14

And Moses said

Do not be afraid. Stand firm. The Lord will fight for you. You need only to be still.

Caught in a very difficult position with many advocating a return to Slavery as the least worst outcome - being still was a tall order.

And we don't know exactly how long they stood still and reminded themselves that God was with them. But they did. They stood still. They stopped.

In my mind's eye I can almost see Moses like a patriarchal Lolly Pop man facing the Red Sea with the argumentative Israelites all around him and he patiently asking them to :

Stop - Look - Listen !

It's actually pretty good spiritual advice - not just for when you're crossing a busy road but especially for when you're facing a crisis.

– We have had plenty of opportunity during our Stops, our Lockdowns to Look and Listen

To Look to God in his Creation and in his written word and to listen to him in prayer and Meditation.

It's very important to Stop – Look and Listen in the spiritual realm before deciding on the way forward.

So in the middle of all this drama Moses says stop. Now comes the very interesting surprise. What did God say about this Stop that Moses had ordered?

Vs 15

God said to Moses, Why are you crying out to me. Tell the Israelites to move on.

In other words, Go Moses Go. Get your staff out and do your stuff. And you know what happened next. It wasn't a negotiated settlement for better conditions of service back in Egypt. It was Go, go forward.

Stop Look Listen Go

As we emerge from this Pandemic and the seemingly interminable Stop Starts I think there's a great danger for we Christians to get stuck in the Stop Look Listen phase and not move forward.

Do we really want to return to exactly the way we did things B C (Before Covid) ? What is the way forward.? That's an important question.

We need to ask ourselves what has worked for us during these Lockdowns - during these Stops - and build on that. Where is the Spirit moving amongst us? Perhaps some of those things we used to do but which we haven't missed – we could now leave behind.

We need to ask ourselves what new areas of ministry might God be calling us to. An important question for each of us to answer - and also for us as a church to consider.

Stop, Look Listen then - Go

Good practice for Moses and the Israelites. Good too for us.

Some of us are rather better at stopping and discerning God's will. Others better and getting up and going. We do need each other. And we need to understand our differences.

Finally: What about Thomas. Many of us have a soft spot for 'doubting Thomas'.

I think it's fair to say he Stopped. He stopped believing – told his friends so. But he had the great advantage over us, who were not there, to a third sensory input to restart his faith

For Thomas it was:

Stop, Look, Listen - Touch - and then go. And boy did he go. Tradition has it he went all the way to India with the good news of the Risen Christ.

I leave you with a riddle:-

I think there are several possible answers which you may tell me, email or message to me

Why did the Christian never get to cross the road?!

(And I won't accept :- because he was chicken!)

Howard Friend