

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

Newsletter for 4 April 2021 – Easter Day

Dear Friends,

Alleluia! Christ is Risen. He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Welcome to our newsletter for Easter Eve and Easter Day.

Thank you to everyone who has prepared our churches for Easter and taken part in our Holy Week services.

We celebrate the new life which God gives to us and to the whole world. The resurrection of Jesus is a resounding affirmation of God's desire that we should have life in all its abundance for ever.

If you don't feel that you are yet able to return to main Sunday worship please consider joining one of our quieter weekday services or following our online prayers.

Easter services are:

Saturday 3 April, 8pm, Easter Vigil with Blessing of the Fire and Paschal Candle, Renewal of Baptismal Vows and Mass. Celebrant Nigel Guthrie.

Sunday 4 April, 9.30am Parish Communion at St David's (live streamed) with blessing of the Paschal Candle. Celebrant and preacher Nigel Guthrie

At 4pm **Thrive will continue on Zoom with time for learning, discussion and prayer today. Please click here to join:**

**[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88685738289?
pwd=WEh1dINCY3NRQTlCcXFjK2ZlejR0UT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88685738289?pwd=WEh1dINCY3NRQTlCcXFjK2ZlejR0UT09)**

Meeting ID: 886 8573 8289 Passcode: 159821

Thrive will then taking a break for two weeks starting again on Sunday 25 April.

Services in church and online this week

**Tuesday 6 April, 9.30am Zoom Morning Prayer (from Common Worship).
Please join us using this code**

Join Zoom Meeting

**[https://us04web.zoom.us/j/79186467242?
pwd=bGlmc3ZWNEN1enJyWUQ3MHhRR2Jjdz09](https://us04web.zoom.us/j/79186467242?pwd=bGlmc3ZWNEN1enJyWUQ3MHhRR2Jjdz09)**

Meeting ID: 791 8646 7242 Passcode: 7iLd6w

Wednesday 7 April, please note that there will not be morning services at St Michael's today

Thursday 8 April, 10.30am Holy Communion celebrated by Belinda Speed Andrews

Thursday 8 April, 6pm Vespers live at St Michael's and streamed on the Friends of St Michael's page.

Sunday 11 April

9.30am Parish Communion at St David's with celebrant Belinda Speed-Andrews and preacher Howard Friend

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

Collection for the Leighton Plom family

Thank you to everyone who contributed to a gift following the significant damage to the home of Ash, Deborah and Alfred and to their possessions. The collection has been presented to them with the assurance of our prayers as they prepare to move out to Thorverton Vicarage while their house is repaired.

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.

Electoral Roll Revision

Electoral Roll Revision: Between March 31st and April 13th we will be revising the electoral roll. If you would like to have your name added or if you have changed your address please let Sue Wilson know on electoralrollofficer@stdavidchurch.org.uk or in church.

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 re-housed. 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 available in church this weekend. 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!

Glynis would like to source **some shade loving plants** for inside St David's Church. If you might be splitting some plants and have spares she would like to try spider plant, mother-in-laws tongue and peace lily.

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

Hospiscare Men's Walk

The St David's team would like to thank everyone for their generous support. Our St David's Team *Just Giving* page we raised £1900 (plus £413 Gift Aid) plus another £100 given via Clive, which is amazing. And other donations have gone directly to Hospiscare. We are so pleased to be able to support one of our key local charities in this way.

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 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:

Daniel and Kaylie Rudge, Iviee-May and Lilly who died in the house fire at Clayton Road.

Stella Ugbo; Lesley, sister of Helen Drever; Elizabeth Hewitt

May they rest in peace.

In the Parish Cycle of Prayer this week please pray with joy as we celebrate the resurrection of Christ.

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;

those whose homes have been damaged by the detonation of the World War Two bomb found at Glenthorne Road, and those providing support for them;

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 Easter Day, 4 April 2021

Collect

Lord of all life and power,
who through the mighty resurrection of your Son
overcame the old order of sin and death
to make all things new in him:
grant that we, being dead to sin
and alive to you in Jesus Christ,
may reign with him in glory;
to whom with you and the Holy Spirit
be praise and honour, glory and might,
now and in all eternity.

First Reading – Acts 10: 34-43

Then Peter began to speak to them: ‘I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.’

Gospel Reading - St Mark 16: 1-8

When the sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. They had been saying to one another, ‘Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?’ When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. But he said to them, ‘Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is

the place they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you.' So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

Address from Nigel Guthrie for Easter Sunday, 4 April 2021

Last Easter Morning I stood at our dining room table to celebrate communion. Tina was there and did some lovely singing and our sons helped with the service too. It was a moving occasion for me, and perhaps some of you shared in it through our Facebook livestream. It wasn't Easter as we have ever known it before, but I was pleased to celebrate the feast in and for our parish.

What a lot of water has passed under the bridge since then! It's just as well we didn't know last Easter that a whole year on we would only just be emerging from a third lock down! Like many people living in Devon I feel very privileged to have avoided the worst ravages of Covid and to have received a first dose of vaccine. But we're all very aware of those who have suffered, those who have lost loved ones, and those suffering from long-covid which can be so debilitating. And we're also aware of the serious situation in many other countries including some of our closest neighbours. And in spite of being kept safe from the direct effects of Covid, many of us have felt either anxious and isolated, or indeed overworked and overstressed by the constant changes. We long to get back to a less restricted life. But we should acknowledge that returning to that life is going to be a challenge; it will be a journey for ourselves and for our church and society. Even in the midst of loosening restrictions we realise that we are not out of the woods yet and that even in recovery mode we are going to have to live with Covid as an unwelcome guest.

But for all this Easter 2021 brings a renewed sense of hope. As we celebrate the bursting of Jesus from the tomb, we see the signs of spring all around us and we can start to look forward to seeing people face to face once again. Perhaps this year the resurrection can be symbolic of the hope that never dies, the hope which we all need as we turn our minds and hearts to recovery and rebuilding?

St Mark's resurrection narrative is, like much of his gospel, brief and dramatic. Three women had come to bring spices to anoint Jesus. On their way they had been discussing who might be able to roll away the large stone so that they could gain access. But then, as they arrived, they saw the stone had already been moved and there was a young man telling them not to be afraid because Jesus had been raised. The angel commissioned them to be the first witnesses to the resurrection and to tell Peter and the disciples that Jesus was going ahead of them to Galilee. We might imagine that these first witnesses would have been

filled with joy but in fact they ran away full of terror and amazement and said nothing to anyone for fear.

What is extraordinary about this so-called shorter ending to St Mark's Gospel is that it was probably the original ending of the first gospel to be written. If you look in your bibles you will find another 11 verses which complete Mark's gospel as we have it now. But most biblical scholars agree that those verses have been added by another hand. As we might expect they record appearances of the risen Jesus to his followers but their style is quite different from the rest of Mark.

The early Christian who wrote the original ending to Mark's gospel was so confident that Jesus was alive that he didn't find it necessary to present us with anything other than the unvarnished experience of the women at the tomb. I find that very telling. There was no need in his mind for elaborate arguments, or even for tidying the account up. There was no need even to describe the resurrection appearances. Like his fellow Christians the author of Mark's gospel was utterly convinced in the resurrection because he had experienced Christ with him and because his life had been transformed. We have the evidence of the four gospels to the resurrection but we also have the witness of the early church and Christians throughout the ages who have had such a strong sense of the presence of Jesus with them that they have been strengthened and sustained to live his risen life (as the collect for Easter 3 puts it).

For Christians the resurrection is never just about belief it is about the whole of life. We are challenged to live as if we have hope even when it feels distant. We are challenged to look for a world in which everyone has the opportunity for fullness of life whatever their present circumstances. We are challenged to work for the resurrection of the natural environment where it has been degraded or destroyed. God wants new life and full life for the whole of creation and by raising Jesus he has shown that nothing is impossible for the one who has made everything out of nothing.

God longs to involve us in bringing new life and hope to others and to our world. We see huge injustice and inequality around us and it gets plenty of publicity. But let's look out all the more for signs of resurrection in the world, because when we see good new things happening we know that God is at work in them. They may not have a Christian label, or a religious label of any sort. But God doesn't need labels and perhaps doesn't even see them except when they are used to put down other people.

We know that the long tail of Covid brings with it inequality, sickness and poverty. But it has also led to great new initiatives in providing housing for

everyone, in bringing communities together through Whatsapp and through a sharper awareness of the environmental challenges that face us. Yes, plenty of huge challenges, but plenty of scope for resurrection too.

The resurrection of Jesus happened at one particular time and place. But its meaning resonates every day and everywhere. We say alleluia most of all in Eastertide but we must live out that Alleluia daily here as we prepare for a resurrection life that never ends in our true home in God.

Closing Prayer and Blessing

God of Life,

who for our redemption gave your only-begotten Son

to the death of the cross,

and by his glorious resurrection

have delivered us from the power of our enemy:

grant us so to die daily to sin,

that we may evermore live with him in the joy of his risen life;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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!