

ST GUTHLAC'S COMMUNITY NEWS



CHURCH OF ST GUTHLAC

Holbrook Rd, Knighton, Leicester LE2 3LF

<http://www.stguthlac-knighton.co.uk/>

Minister: Revd Richard Bonney 2125677

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Churchwardens:

David Hunt

Tina Jarvis

5 July 2015

10.30 am Fifth Sunday after Trinity: All Age Worship

WELCOME TO ANY OF YOU VISITING US FOR THE FIRST TIME!

Please announce yourself to one of our welcomers and sign in the welcome book so that we get to know you by name! Also, please introduce yourself to Revd Richard or one of the Churchwardens. St Guthlac's is YOUR local church. We feel part of the local community and we hope that you will feel part of the church community. **We have a welcome sheet:** please ask for one if it is not handed to you on arrival.

Newsletter No 162

FORTHCOMING SERVICES AND MEETINGS

Thursday 9 July, 9.30 am

NO Holy Communion

Friday 10 July, 1.30 pm

Memory café

Sunday 12 July, 10.30 am

Matins

PRAYERS FOR THE FAITHFUL We have been asked to keep **Pamela, Ann Spring, Marjorie O'Neill, Dorothy Wollaston, Mirriam Norris, Phillip Squires, Helen, Saty French, and Kate Adams** in our prayers. Please also pray for the soul of **Dorothy Pridmore**, who has died recently. For other prayer requests, please speak to the Revd Richard.

THURSDAY MORNING HOLY COMMUNION. During the summer these services will continue as usual except for three dates when Revd Richard is unavailable: Thursday 9 July; Thursday 23 July; and Thursday 20 August.

THE REVD RICHARD WRITES The recent attacks by extreme jihadists in Tunisia, France and Kuwait (the latter an attack by Sunni extremists on a Shia mosque) once more brings to the fore what sort of enemy are we dealing with, and how do we do so? The attack on the tourists at Sousse led to the largest loss of British lives in a terrorist outrage since 7/7 a decade ago. An appropriately strong response is warranted. But how to do so without making matters worse? There are separate responses at home and abroad. At home, as one newspaper expressed it, 'Britain must mourn, but also stand true to its free speech traditions, and hope that its government can still be persuaded to do the same'. Abroad, there must be even more international collaboration in counter-terrorism than has previously been the case. There is no quick fix. It is a long, difficult journey which will require an ongoing commitment of resources to an agreed strategy. All of which requires statesmanship rather than grandstanding and the pursuit of the common good rather than narrow political self-interest.

Christians have a special responsibility, but particular care needs to be taken by all of us that the faith of Islam is not demonised in the conduct of the war on terror under another name. Dr David Garrison, who calls himself a historian, is a missionary pioneer with the Southern Baptist International Mission Board. He is presently touring the UK promoting his book entitled *A Wind in the House of Islam*. He seeks to document a Muslim 'movement to Christ' in more than 70 places across 29 countries. Converts, he says, now number between two and seven million. He claims that this represents the 'greatest turning of Muslims to Jesus Christ in history'. The trend, he contends, is underpinned by a 'tremendous amount of prayer'. Other elements include a 'yearning for something different' arising from violence within the Muslim world; the power of the internet; and the translation of the gospel and missionary materials (including videos) into the 'heart languages' of Muslim people. Translating the Qur'an into local languages has 'backfired', he suggests. 'It reveals to Muslims that there's no assurance of salvation in there, when it's so clear in the gospel.' Muslims can learn about Jesus

through the Qur'an, and can contrast what is said of him with what is said of the Prophet Muhammad.

Although Dr Garrison writes early on that the book is not 'a triumphalist account of Christendom's victory over the Muslim world', he does use the language of 'contest'. 'If you believe that people's eternal destiny is related to their relationship to God, obviously there's an element there in which you are saying, "This is vitally important; it's not an insignificant or inconsequential issue.'" In one passage he writes: 'Wherever Islam has triumphed, dissent has been silenced, and conversion to the Christian faith, or any other faith for that matter, has been punished by death. Islam, as both a religion and an ideology, is a threat.' He does not want to offend Muslims, Dr Garrison says, but to inform and encourage them, and 'perhaps awaken within them a realisation that God loves them, and [that] he is extending to them the gospel of Jesus Christ uniquely, in this day and age...' He reports that one Muslim man who read the book while in a plane in mid-air had decided to become a Christian by the time he landed.

Garrison's *A Wind in the House of Islam* has divided opinion. There are those who believe that we should be even handed in conversion, rejoicing when Christians become Muslims or Hindus quite as much as when Muslims or Hindus become Christians: the importance here is the fulfilling spiritual path found by the individual convert. 'Only rejoicing when other people become Christian is partisan, and not a good example. The longer we talk competitively, and use the language of threat, the further away we push more constructive, loving interactions.' Related to this argument is the view that none can claim 'absolute truth, because God is greater than anything we can know. Salvation is in God's hands'. A different argument is that proselytism is inherent in both Christianity and Islam. A great deal of effort and money is devoted to *dawa* (conversion) around the world by Muslim groups. In these circumstances Christians should expect the same opportunities for seeking to convert Muslims in Muslim-majority countries as Muslims receive in non-Muslim-majority countries. There is every reason to celebrate when a person voluntarily decides to become a disciple of Jesus Christ. As long ago as 1991, a statement on inter-religious relations noted that many wish to share their faith with others and for some 'this entails inviting others to accept a belief or practice as their own'; but it is important that religious freedoms are not abused 'in order to pressurise others into changing their religious identities, beliefs or practices'. 'We also recognize the damage which has been done to inter-religious relations in the past by forced conversions and the use of unfair inducements to change religion, and we acknowledge the pain which this has caused'. Next week we will look more closely at Rowan Williams' arguments about the relationship between the faiths and our own Christian discipleship, which are to date the most profound Anglican statement in this area.

Cover image: <https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/e1/Ecologia.jpg>

FOR THE NEWSLETTER Please contact us at the latest by 9 am Friday for material to be included in the next weekly newsletter. administrator@stguthlac-knighton.co.uk

INVITATION FROM THE SHIA MOSQUE TO JOIN THEM FOR THE BREAKING OF THE FAST AFTER RAMADAN, SATURDAY 11 JULY. Masjid Al-Husayn has organised a Big Iftar (meal of breaking the fast) for their neighbours and the residents of Leicester. The Big Iftar is a nationwide initiative taking place in communities all across the country inviting people from all walks of life into their mosques, churches and synagogues to share a meal as Muslims break their fast. The Revd Richard has been invited to address the meeting on the theme of 'charity and sharing with humanity'. Members of the St Guthlac's congregation are invited to join him on this occasion. **Note: it will be quite a long event starting at 8.30 pm and the food will be served at 10 pm after dark, when Ramadan formally comes to an end. This is a very important opportunity for our church to liaise directly with a Muslim congregation.** Please let Richard or Margaret know if you would like/are able to come and if you need a lift to the mosque, which is in the centre of Leicester. **Numbers need to be firmed up by Friday 10 July am**

CREATIVE BLOOMS. Join us for a relaxing afternoon of flower arranging with a difference and maybe a chance to show off your skills too! To be held on **SATURDAY, AUGUST 1ST**, in the Parish Centre at 2.30 p.m., to 5.00 p.m. There will be a raffle and a mystery prize. Tickets £4.00, to include tea, coffee and biscuits, from Deborah Martin, Lorna Kirk and Margarete Booton . Proceeds to St. Mary's church funds.

SAMARITANS Molly Clarke will be doing a sky dive in aid of the Leicester Samaritans on Saturday 18th July. There is a sponsorship form at the back of church if you would like to support her.

MEMORY CAFÉ FUNDING Spare foreign coins are been collected to help meet the monthly cost of £250 for the two local memory café's If you have any coins please donate them and leave them in the box at the back of the church. We can arrange to convert them into sterling. Thank you.

KNIGHTON PLAYERS are looking for a **new Producer** for their next production in March 2016. If you think you can help, please contact David Hunt on knightonplayers@ntlworld.com for more information.

PLANNED GIVING Thank you to those people who have responded to the recent planned giving mailing. If you are still thinking about responding or would like further information, please speak to Mark Wyatt. Thank you.

RECYCLING FOR CHURCH AND HALL There is now an orange wheelie bin for recyclables, kept next to the general waste bin outside the hall. This is to be used for paper, cardboard, glass bottles and jars, food and drink tins and plastic food/drink containers (rinsed). Please put all suitable recyclable items in the plastic basket at the back of church or place directly into the orange bin. Thank you.