

# ST GUTHLAC'S COMMUNITY NEWS



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**Sunday 17 May 2020      Sixth Sunday of Easter**

## **A prayer for the Coronavirus outbreak**

Keep us, good Lord,  
under the shadow of your mercy,  
in this time of uncertainty and distress.  
Sustain and support the anxious and fearful,  
and lift up all who are brought low;  
that we may rejoice in your comfort  
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love  
in Christ Jesus our Lord.  
Amen.

## Endurance in Tough Times

*“For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope.” (Romans 15.4)*

As we know from watching the TV news, some people are called to extraordinary busy-ness in important roles during the coronavirus pandemic. Key Workers are keeping us all safe, protected, and supplied with the essentials that we need.

Many others of us though are called to quiet endurance and perseverance – a task that is also very challenging. This helpful article appeared recently in the Church Times, and is reprinted with permission:

***Quiet, brave endurance*** by Paul Handley

*RESIGNATION is an under-valued virtue. Indeed, among young people it might not be a virtue at all. It would be disappointing if the next generation simply put up with things as they found them.*

*In later life, however, people have a better grasp of what can be changed and what must be endured. It is perhaps surprising that endurance is praised when someone goes out and seeks it for sport. It is unnoticed when practised by countless people in the quiet of their daily lives.*

*One of the most moving examples of this that I have come across recently — moving because so modestly and simply expressed — is a passage in “The Last Wilderness,” by Neil Ansell (Tinder Press, 2018). The book relates the writer’s visits to a remote area on the west coast of Scotland.*

*On one occasion, far from help, he suffers the pain of a worsening heart condition:*

*“We all get ill, at some time or another, sooner or later. When it comes to our own decline, it is never a matter of if, only of when. And we all have to work within the confines of our own physical limitations. If I could no longer climb a mountain, then I would climb a hill. And if the only thing that was still a walk in the park was an actual walk in the park, then I would find a park. And when the time came that I could do nothing more than look out of a window, then I*

*hope I would have chosen for myself a room with a view worth watching.*

*“I had no complaints; I felt privileged and fortunate to have been born in a time and a place where most of the hardships I had endured and wounds I had suffered were, in large part, the consequence of decisions that I had freely made. I had never been compelled to go to war, and I had never been forced to flee my homeland for my own survival. I’d had the freedom to roam the world without the use of force; mostly I had been made welcome wherever I had found myself.*

*“Generations of people throughout history, and many people now, have had to live out their lives without these luxuries, without peace, without almost guaranteed access to enough food, or clean water, or medicines.*

*“My health might apparently be abandoning me, but I was able to be here, sitting under my tree in this most beautiful of spots, and I was grateful.”*

The only thing I might want to add is that, as Christians and as the Bible quotation at the top reminds us, our capacity to endure comes from *our faith* as taught to us through scripture and focused on all that God has done for us through Jesus. Our endurance is not based on sheer grit and determination, or our own power and strength – quite the opposite. Neither is our Christian endurance a dull, lifeless resignation or “Que sera, sera.” Our endurance has its roots in a deep gratitude to God for all he has done for us and his presence with us now. The evidence is *the hope* that we then have for both the present and the future.

Keep safe and stay well.

*Adrian*

**FOR YOUR PRAYERS** Please remember those whom we have been asked to keep in our prayers. Please remember those who have died recently and keep their family and friends in your prayers. For other prayer requests, please contact a churchwarden.

## **PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN MALAWI.**

As of 29 April, the World Health Organisation reported sporadic cases in Malawi with a total of 36 confirmed cases and 3 deaths. Please continue to prayer for our sisters and brothers in Northern Malawi and across the world as the nations of the world deal with the pandemic. Let us pray that the remoteness of many of these rural communities will provide an effective shield to the spread of the disease in areas where medical facilities would struggle to cope.

## **PRAYERS FOR HEALTH CARE WORKERS**

Please pray for all our local doctors, nurses, care workers and support staff, especially **Amy and Dan Barnes, Lesley Meakin, Katherine Swanson.**

## **FORTHCOMING SERVICES AND MEETINGS**

All services and meetings are cancelled for the foreseeable future. The church is closed until further notice. If you would like to keep in touch by telephone with others for a chat and support please contact Tina. (see front page)

## **How are the lockdown restrictions for churches changing?**

Once again, my thanks to everyone who has done their own bit to keep us all in touch with each other, and to provide support for each other during the coronavirus pandemic. These are challenging times indeed and it has never been more important to be part of the fellowship of the church.

The lockdown restrictions that apply to church services have not changed however. Although one authorised person, normally the vicar, can now enter the church building to say prayers and celebrate the Eucharist on behalf of the whole congregation, there are no immediate plans to allow the people of the church to gather. We are at 'Level One' of easing lockdown restrictions and there is no thought about any church services happening until at least 'Level Three'. Whilst this is disappointing it is a wise and understandable caution of course. I will endeavour to keep you updated with any other changes.  
*Adrian*

**BBC 1 Sunday Worship 10.45am** (time may vary please check TV guide). This is also available for catch up on BBC iPlayer. The order of service is available at [bbc.co.uk/orderofservice](http://bbc.co.uk/orderofservice).

### **BBC Radio 4 Sunday Worship 8.10am**

You can listen to the Sunday service on the radio at the given time, or if you have the 'Sounds' App you can listen to it whenever you want.

### **BBC Radio 4 Daily Service each weekday 9.45am on long wave only** or at a time you want on the BBC Sounds App.

This 15 minute programme has three pieces of music: hymns, anthems, worship songs, psalms, as well as a reading and prayers including the Lord's Prayer. We have had it described as spiritually refreshing, topical, stimulating and comforting- - a little oasis in a busy day.



A free phone line of hymns,  
reflections and prayers

**0800 804 8044**

Are you in need of some daily  
hope during this lockdown?

We have a new FREE telephone  
line for you to ring to hear  
comforting hymns, daily prayers  
and reflections.

 THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND  Faith in later life **CONNECTIONS**

### **Don't forget to visit the St. Guthlac's website!**

'Church is Changing' on the home page includes copies of reflections and links to the You Tube recordings of virtual services. Newsletters can found on the news page. <http://www.stguthlac-knighton.co.uk/>

**Virtual Sunday Service for the Knighton Benefice.** Please look out for the email giving the link to this week's Sunday Service which will be available on YouTube from Sunday.

**Each week we are meeting virtually for Compline/ Night Prayer at 8pm on a Wednesday.**

It has proven a meaningful way to have fellowship and prayer together as well as being quite good fun, especially as we find our feet with the technology and more people join us each week.

You can join by just **phoning up** and inputting the code **or** using **'Zoom'** online. It has been democratic with several voices joining in with a line of liturgy each. If you would like to participate with a speaking part, please do contact Matthew by 4pm each Wednesday ([revgough@gmail.com](mailto:revgough@gmail.com)).

**For Phone only:** telephone this number **0131 460 1196**

When promoted input Meeting ID: **746 767 4408**

**For internet using Zoom:**

Join Zoom Meeting <https://leccofe.zoom.us/j/7467674408>

Input Meeting ID: 746 767 4408

**Other on-line worship sites:**

Every Sunday at 10am on the [@DioceseofLeicester Facebook page](#) there will be a short pre-recorded video providing an opportunity to engage with the Gospel reading of the day.

The Community of the Tree of Life, our own Diocesan prayer community based near the Cathedral, is praying three times a day at 8am, noon and 9pm with a short and very simple service. [www.leicestertreeoflife.org](http://www.leicestertreeoflife.org) or [www.facebook.com/LeicTreeofLife/](http://www.facebook.com/LeicTreeofLife/)

The Church of England has a dedicated web page [www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/church-online](http://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/church-online).

'Pray As You Go' ([www.pray-as-you-go.org/](http://www.pray-as-you-go.org/) ) each morning for a simple Bible reflection

## **Collect & Readings for the Sixth Sunday of Easter**

### **The Collect**

God our redeemer,  
you have delivered us from the power of darkness  
and brought us into the kingdom of your Son:  
grant, that as by his death he has recalled us to life,  
so by his continual presence in us he may raise us  
to eternal joy;  
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

### **Acts 17: 22-31**

<sup>22</sup> Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, "Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way. <sup>23</sup> For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, 'To an unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. <sup>24</sup> The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, <sup>25</sup> nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. <sup>26</sup> From one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, <sup>27</sup> so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him—though indeed he is not far from each one of us. <sup>28</sup> For 'In him we live and move and have our being'; as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we too are his offspring.'

<sup>29</sup> Since we are God's offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. <sup>30</sup> While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, <sup>31</sup> because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world

judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.”

## **Gospel Reading: John 14: 15-21**

Jesus said to his disciples: <sup>15</sup>“If you love me, you will keep my commandments. <sup>16</sup>And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. <sup>17</sup>This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.

<sup>18</sup>“I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. <sup>19</sup>In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. <sup>20</sup>On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. <sup>21</sup>They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them.”

## **Reflection, Fiona Wingate**

### **Readings:**

Acts 17: 22 – 31

Ps 66: 7 – 18

1 Peter 3:13 – 22

John 14: 15 - 21

As some of you will know I am an electrical engineer, so making connections for power to flow from power stations to our homes is part of my job.

But it's not just at work. I find myself looking for connections in most things like the lectionary readings for any given day. What might these passages have to offer us – how might they be connected?

Our reading from Acts tells of Paul addressing the Athenians about their “unknown god”. Paul tells how God creates humanity and gives it order. We're told we

“should seek God, in the hope that they might feel after him and find him. Yet, **he is not far from each one of us, for “In him we live and move and have our being”**”.

In these times of isolation, we can feel alone perhaps forgotten. Do we yearn for something? Is that God? And yet he is here with us. We are not alone; He is near if we seek him.

Ps 66 begins with a wonderful song of praise, but goes on to tell how the people suffer and struggle:

“You have tested us, you have tried us as silver is tried. You have brought us into the net, you have laid burdens on our backs”.

This might be a sense we can relate to. These times are challenging and we can also feel tried and burdened. But the psalmist asserts that “**I will come into your house.... I will pay you my vows.....I will make an offering**”. This speaks to me of hope – hope in the future. In that time when we will be able to worship God in his house again - to lament, to praise and give thanks. I’m encouraged to know that our situation is not unique in the history of God’s people. We will return and we can be confident because “God has listened, he has given heed to the words of my prayer”(V19).

The Revised Standard Version gives the reading in 1 Peter the heading, “Suffering injustice and the example of Christ”. This reminds me again that while we may feel we suffer in our present situation – we are not alone if we have Christ in our lives. Christ knows what it is to suffer. His example which can be tough, does shine a light for us to follow. Peter encourages us today to keep faith and to remember that we are a special, holy people. A reminder that God is with us, we are not alone, we do not suffer alone and that the risen Christ walks with us every step of the way.

Finally, our gospel passage. John recounts the moment when Jesus tells the disciples that he will ask the Father to send **another** Advocate/Counsellor/Paraclete to be with them in spirit forever. Jesus reminds the disciples that if they love him, they will follow his commandments; and that he will be in them. This passage offers us great hope on so many levels – Jesus won’t desert us, he won’t leave us desolate. The Holy Spirit (the Spirit of Truth) will come and live within us and be our guide, our counsellor, the one who is called to be alongside us through life’s journey. Again we hear – you are not alone, I am with you, you are mine.

So, what of those connections? Through the ages God's message has been the same – I am here, you are not alone, I am with you. It was true for the psalmist of the Old Testament, for the disciples and apostles of the early church and it remains true for us, the disciples of today. Take heart, we will once again come into God's house and worship together but for now we must love Jesus by following his commandments in the knowledge that He is with us.

Amen.

## **Ascension Day... Truth or Truth?!?**

On 21st May, the Church throughout the world celebrates Ascension Day bringing to an end the Great 40 Days of Easter, and setting off ten days of waiting for Pentecost or Whit Sunday and the coming of the promised Holy Spirit. The second Lukan story of the Ascension in the first chapter of the Acts is rich in theology set in a hugely symbolic story.

When teaching Biblical Studies at University 'up north', the Acts account of the Ascension was a 'set text' with a very talented group of undergraduates of all ages sitting in front of me one Friday afternoon.

I gave them a photocopy of a German woodcut picturing the Ascension scene. The footprints of Jesus were on the floor, his feet were disappearing into a cloud, the disciples were looking upwards in awe and angels seemed to be pulling Jesus through the cloud, presumably into heaven.

Amidst quite a number of smiling faces, I asked the students how they saw 'truth' in the story.

Most said this was a pictorial representation of an event with the text/picture surrounding whatever happened or didn't happen by much symbolism. However, one student, an ex junior school headmistress, disagreed, by saying that she had always thought that the picture and the text were literally true in that this in her view was precisely what had happened. Then, with a smile on her face, she said that her Vicar had warned her about the corrupting influences of theologians at University, and that she ought to stay away! We all laughed, and then got back to the question at hand. Is the 'literally true' all that there is to 'truth' in Holy Scripture?

Well, my own view is that biblical writers use the medium of 'story' to explain and example theological truth, and indeed theological truth from their own perspective. One could say that they are not overly concerned about getting literal detail right especially if it doesn't serve their theological purpose.

This may come as a bit of shock to some...after all we are talking about the Bible here!

But it does serve to highlight a very big tension in people's minds and hearts within the Church.

Theologically, the Ascension is about the Resurrection of Jesus being consummated as King and Lord of all creation in the presence of his heavenly Father.

It is about our own destiny in that we are intimately part of the risen, ascended and glorified Christ.

It is about waiting, here waiting for the promised gift of the Spirit to be fulfilled at Pentecost.

It is about the further promise of Jesus returning from heaven at the end of time.

I could go on.

How such truth is communicated by story, as it is here, seems to me to be of ultimate importance. Therefore to assume that the story which communicates such truth is itself 'literally true' seems secondary and often at the very least very debatable indeed.

SAF

## **Ascension Day Readings**

### **Acts 1: 1-11**

<sup>1</sup> In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning <sup>2</sup>until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. <sup>3</sup>After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. <sup>4</sup>While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. "This," he said, "is what you

have heard from me; <sup>5</sup> for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

<sup>6</sup> So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?” <sup>7</sup> He replied, “It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. <sup>8</sup> But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” <sup>9</sup> When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. <sup>10</sup> While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. <sup>11</sup> They said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.”

## **Luke 24: 44-53**

<sup>44</sup> Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.” <sup>45</sup> Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, <sup>46</sup> and he said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, <sup>47</sup> and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. <sup>48</sup> You are witnesses of these things. <sup>49</sup> And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.”

<sup>50</sup> Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. <sup>51</sup> While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. <sup>52</sup> And they worshiped him, and<sup>[a]</sup> returned to Jerusalem with great joy; <sup>53</sup> and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

**MINISTRY TEAM NEWS** During the coronavirus pandemic the Benefice Ministry Team have met regularly online using Zoom to talk and to pray. Much of our time is taken checking that everyone in the two churches is well and safe, and thinking about the best ways to help us all stay connected and worshipping together in some way.

We would love to hear from everyone else directly too:

- if you feel isolated or would just like a chat then do please let us know;
- if you are concerned about someone else then again please let us know;
- please give us feedback about the 'virtual services' and the Reflections in the newsletters;
- please let us know if there is something else you would find helpful- we are particularly interested to know if you would like a recorded Eucharist to follow at home;
- and please pray for us! Leading is a strange and unfamiliar task in these strange days.

Thank you – *Adrian*

**THY KINGDOM COME-24 HOUR PRAYER-VOLUNTEERS WANTED** For the last 3 years, the Church of England has led a global prayer initiative between Ascension and Pentecost for 11 days of continuous prayer. The focus of prayer is twofold-to grow the Kingdom for more people to have faith in Christ and for the Church's to deepen its spirituality with the focus on the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Could you commit to an hour of prayer? Please sign up below very simply or email/contact me for more information [revgough@gmail.com](mailto:revgough@gmail.com)  
**07754961997**

<http://www.24-7prayer.com/signup/9e7297>

You can pray alone at home but we also want to encourage people to pray together online through Zoom-where we can be creative-more details to follow for those who are interested. We aim to pray through the night which is particularly great for those who struggle to sleep. Our 24 hours starts **May 27th Wednesday 7pm (1 hour before our corporate Compline-open to all at 8pm) and will finish 7pm with an online Eucharist 7pm Thursday May 28th.**  
Matthew

## **Ride+Stride 2019**

- Last year's Ride+Stride was a great success thanks to the hard work of all the church and area organisers, helped by lovely warm and sunny weather for participants and welcomers.
- Over £42,600 was raised across city and county, an amazing 20% increase on the previous year

## **Ride+Stride 2020**

For this year's Ride+Stride the coronavirus situation is being monitored carefully. Normally at this time of year, registration forms would have been sent out for this year's Ride+Stride, registration is postponed until the situation becomes clearer.

**Christian Aid Week 10<sup>th</sup> -16<sup>th</sup> May** Christian Aid Week is officially over but it's not too late to make a contribution. Now more than ever our gifts, prayers and action are desperately needed. "We invite you to join us in prayer for all those affected by this new virus, both in Britain and overseas, for all those working on the frontline and for wisdom for our leaders. Coronavirus impacts all of us. But love unites us all. The world's poorest countries have the weakest health systems, and many of the most vulnerable people will be exposed to this deadly virus. They will struggle to cope with any costs of healthcare, and the costs of being unable to earn a living while ill or quarantined. We have launched a Coronavirus Appeal to help us limit the impact on the communities we work with".

You can donate to Christian Aid either via the Christian Aid website (<http://www.christianaid.org.uk/givemoney/make-donation>) or by phone on 020 7523 2269. If possible please quote the Leicester committee reference number OR182430 when donating.



**The Ardley's** are delighted to announce a new addition to the family. Frankie was born on 12<sup>th</sup> May to Gemma & Pete, a brother for Florence. All are safe and well.

**JIGSAW LOAN** Are you desperate for a different jigsaw puzzle to do? Do you have a complete puzzle that you could lend out? If you do, please contact Matthew 07754 961997 or his [email revgough@gmail.com](mailto:revgough@gmail.com). We have been donated a range of landscapes, city-scapes and iconic images-500-1000 piece. Matthew can deliver or you can collect from his house. The puzzles are left in his garage for 5 days for any potential hazardous bacteria to die off, then bagged up for delivery or collection.

**JUST Fairtrade** have found new ways of working, and I'm sure would appreciate your support in these strange times. See below and check out their website: [shop.justfairtrade.com](http://shop.justfairtrade.com)

Three new ways to shop with us;

**Local Delivery**

**Click and Collect**

**Royal Mail Post**

The shop will be open on Fridays and Saturdays from 11am till 2pm for click and collect pick up and limited shopping.

Order by 2pm Tuesday for local delivery on Wednesday (LE1 LE2 and LE3 only)

Order by 2pm Wednesday for click and collect pick up the following Friday or Saturday.

Order by 2pm Tuesday for postage. Parcels will be sent out once a week on Wednesdays.

Our on line shop has most of our basics; food & drink, toiletries & cleaning products and we are busy adding more. We have a lot of products in our physical shop, it takes time to add them to our online shop but we will keep adding them! If you have something you particularly wish for, get in touch and we'll see what we can do.

## **ARE YOU ABLE TO SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESSES?**

### **The Allotment (Queens Road)**

Open Tuesday-Saturday 1-4pm

You can order veg boxes online to collect two days later or ask for what you need in the shop

They are also offering local delivery for those who are self-isolating

[allotmentleicester.co.uk](http://allotmentleicester.co.uk)

### **The Tiny Bakery (Clarendon Park Road)**

Open Tuesday-Saturday 9am-12pm

They are also offering local delivery for those who are self-isolating

[thetinybakeryleicester.com](http://thetinybakeryleicester.com) 0116 319 2882

### **Nada - Zero Waste Shop (St Martin's Square)**

Open Tuesday-Saturday 11am-2pm

Click and collect or shop in store

Delivery on orders over £15 for customers in LE1 and LE2

[zerowasteleicester.co.uk](http://zerowasteleicester.co.uk)

**FOR THE NEWSLETTER** Please send material to be included in the next newsletter by **Thursday 10pm** to [administrator@stguthlac-knighton.co.uk](mailto:administrator@stguthlac-knighton.co.uk)