

ST GUTHLAC'S COMMUNITY NEWS



Parish Church of St Guthlac
Knighton, Leicester LE2 3LF

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



Sunday 27 September 2020
Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity

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.

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.

PRAYERS FOR BEIRUT Please remember in your prayers the people of Beirut and all Aid Workers and Charities working in the capital and throughout Lebanon.

PRAYERS FOR HEALTH CARE WORKERS Please pray for all our local doctors, nurses, care workers and support staff, especially **Amy and Dan Barnes** and **Katherine Swanson**.

MALAWI In your prayers, please take time to remember the people of South America, the Middle East and Africa as cases of Covid-19 start to soar in all three areas. Thank you. *Fiona*

OUR HARVEST FESTIVAL ON SUNDAY 4TH OCTOBER

Next Sunday sees our Harvest Festival and there are several ways that we can all join in.

Firstly, there will be a service for all of us in the benefice, at St Mary's at 10am. This will have a traditional feel, with Harvest hymns, prayers and readings, and will end with a shortened Eucharist.

Alternatively you can choose a service of Morning Prayer at St Guthlac's at 10.30am, and there will also be a recorded, all age 'Virtual Harvest' for you to watch online.

There will also be activities for everyone to do at home, including an alternative 'Harvest Supper' – details will be included in the newsletter mailings and on the website.

As usual you will have the opportunity to be generous to others in response to God's generosity to us. Firstly, donations of tinned food to the local 'Open Hands' charity can be made in the blue collecting bin at St Mary's. Open Hands supports the most vulnerable and disadvantaged people of Leicester through practical help, advice and training.

Secondly, next week there will be details of how to make a financial donation to support the 'Growing Hope in Egypt' harvest project of Christian charity *Embrace the Middle East* (formerly 'Biblelands'). Embrace works with local Christians through the Salaam Centre in Cairo, helping the one million people of the Ezbet el Nakhl area, many of whom live in desperate poverty on the city's rubbish dumps.

We have much to be grateful to God for this Harvest time, and being grateful can grow hope at home and abroad. Do join us.

Adrian

MORNING PRAYER SERVICE & BOOKING SYSTEM

Sunday 27th September 10:30am

St Guthlac's will be open for Morning Prayer this Sunday 27th September at 10.30. Rev Janet Gaspar will lead the service. Yolanda will play the piano.

There will be Taize music before and at the end of the service as an aid to private prayer.

In order to maintain social distancing, we have to limit the number of people who can attend each service; our current calculation is that we can seat 21 individuals, small households or 'bubbles' safely at any one time. This is sadly very limiting. Consequently, we need to use a booking system.

If you would like to attend, you need to contact Tina to book a place. tina.jarvis@btinternet.com

THE MORNING PRAYER SERVICE

Before the service

- Please arrive by 10.25 to allow time to direct you to your seat.
- When you arrive, you may have to queue for a while - please maintain a distance of 2m from others.
- Please wear a face covering as you queue and all the time you are in the church - we have some extras for those who cannot obtain their own.
- You will be welcomed and asked to sanitise your hands.
- The steward will ask you to give or check your contact details. The Steward only will write these down. These

details will only be shared in the unlikely event that anyone develops symptoms. This is to protect everyone.



- You will be directed to a seat. Please sit only in this place as we need to maintain distances and reduce movement.
- Please note there are no toilets available.

The service

- You will find a service sheet and a book (*OCOFOL*) with the day's readings and prayers on your chair.
- A member of the Benefice Team will lead the service.
- The choir is not able to lead us in worship and we can't sing any hymns. However, Yolanda will be playing the piano for the service on 27th September and the organ on 4th October. There will be recorded Taize music before and after the service for a short time.

After the service

- Leave your service sheet and book on your chair
- Please keep your distance from others as you leave and do not linger in the building - sadly we can't offer refreshments.
- If you wish to leave a donation, please put it in the small box provided.
- You will be asked to sanitise your hands as you leave.

When we have all gone, the church building will remain unused for 72 hours to eliminate any virus.

If you should feel unwell with any of the symptoms of coronavirus in the two weeks following the service, as well as seeking medical advice, please leave a message with Adrian or Matthew.

No doubt, over time, even these restrictions will begin to feel 'normal.' Please don't feel too put off by these necessary precautions – throughout history Christians have found themselves worshipping in many dangerous and unusual circumstances, making do with what they have and still praising God, as is our duty, calling and privilege.

NOMINATIONS FOR 2020 AGM

We are starting to plan for the AGM which was cancelled in April. Elections will take place for 2 churchwardens, 3 PCC members and 2 Deanery Synod representatives. If you would like to stand for any of these vacancies, or would like to find out more, please let me know. Thank you. **Lesley Meakin**

ELECTORAL ROLL.

If you are not currently on the electoral roll and would like to be entered on it, please contact Jane Wright administrator@stguthlac-knighton.co.uk for a form. Please see the 'Notice of Revision' on our website or the external church noticeboard for eligibility. Completed forms must be returned to Jane by 3rd October if you wish to be entitled to vote at the APCM. Thank you.

DIARY DATE: ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING

This will take place on Sunday 18th October immediately after the morning service. More details will follow soon.

Collect & Readings for the Sixteenth Sunday of Trinity

The Collect

O Lord, we beseech you mercifully to hear the prayers of your people who call upon you; and grant that they may both perceive and know what things they ought to do, and also may have grace and power faithfully to fulfil them; 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

Philippians 2:1-13

¹If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, ²make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. ⁴Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. ⁵Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, ⁶who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, ⁷but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, ⁸he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death – even death on a cross. ⁹Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

¹²Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; ¹³for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Matthew 21:23-32

²³When Jesus entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, 'By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?' ²⁴Jesus said to them, 'I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. ²⁵Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?' And they argued with one another, 'If we say, "From heaven," he will say to us, "Why then did you not believe him?" ²⁶But if we say, "Of human origin," we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet.' ²⁷So they answered Jesus, 'We do not know.' And he said to them, 'Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

²⁸What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, "Son, go and work in the vineyard today." ²⁹He answered, "I will not"; but later he changed his mind and went.

³⁰The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, "I go, sir"; but he did not go. ³¹Which of the two did the will of his father?' They said, 'The first.' Jesus said to them, 'Truly I tell you, the tax-collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. ³²For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax-collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.'

The duplicity of politeness versus reluctant virtue

A Reflection on Matthew 21

Revd Matthew Gough

Power. Authority. Status. Religion. Jesus, like a dazzling torch bursts onto the Jerusalem scene exposing and disrupting status quo privileges which come with belonging to the establishment

Those in authority amongst the Jews - the elders, the high priests, those most important in the ancient society - those who control and make the laws - question Jesus.

Who is this threatening our way of life? Who is this pointing to an authority away from the rules and rituals we have built up and established which we can expertly navigate?

Jesus does not answer. He rather replies with a question and then a parable. The parable of the two sons not only challenges the elders but has discomfort for us today.

Two sons in the vineyard. Often Jesus uses the metaphor of the vineyard as God's harvest, his kingdom, his work that he calls his children to complete.

The older and younger brother sibling rivalry is often used by Jesus as the allegory to distinguish those who should know better. The prodigal son exposes the mean spiritedness of the older brother. The older brother, those who should be closer to the father. The older brother trusted with the privileges of being chosen. The Jewish religious like the older chosen ones distinguished from the unrighteous, the outcast, the second class of the younger brother with no entitlements.

I see warnings here for those of us in church. More is expected of us. Those of us Christians, easy to hide behind the label. A warning to not pay polite lip service to God. Making a show of being seen to say the right thing, but our hearts not being unwilling to be open.

It is easy to say the right things. Notice the older brother shows great reverence, refers to his father as 'sir'. Unlike the lower status outcast clumsily honest about his unwillingness to visit the vineyard. The older brother smooth talker, polished, behaves superficially as the good boy. Virtue signaling?

When it matters and actually doing what has been asked. It was the reluctant, the unwilling, the unexpected person of low status who did the right thing. Jesus is saying it is better to be resistant to his will and yet do the right thing in God's eyes than pretend, and go through the motions but do nothing.

Alongside the challenge, I find hope here, I find it realistic because often I find it hard to love and do the right thing. But Jesus seems to accept this. He prefers it to the outward show and pretense of respectability. The charade of being right with God but having no love, no regard for his will, his mission, his kingdom or his people.

Sometimes I worry that this focus on God's standards can breed cynicism. 'It's too hard. I don't want to be a hypocrite so I won't try'.

In this parable we are comforted that we do not have to always be willing or have the perfect motivation, or even a heart of sweetness of light. What matters is to realise what God wants and to do it anyway. Whether it be helping others, when we don't feel like it. Being generous with giving. God is a gracious, relational God-a God that wants us close and real. Not distant, polite, and religiously respectable.

Jesus uses extreme language-the socially immoral-the tax collector, the prostitute-those degraded and outside of social decency have more in common with Jesus than the religious leadership. Constantly Jesus points that the benefit of the

degraded, broken and least in society, they are more aware of their shortcoming. They know their need for God's grace. God works through our weakness and humility.

For the self-sufficient, the perfect or 'sorted' in their own eyes, they have no need or room for God. Perhaps status and outward appearance has become their God.

Let us guard our hearts against pride and squashing the need for God. Confess our sins, know who we are before God and enjoy the freedom and grace, he gives. AMEN

...but emptied himself...

Revd Canon Dr Stephen Foster

The text from Paul's Letter to the Philippians, is one of the most loved of the Pauline Corpus especially within the liturgical context...which is not surprising... as Paul has woven in (or what scholars call) 'interpolated' an early Christian hymn into his text.

It is worth just reminding ourselves that Paul's real letters often address concerns or problems in local congregations, for instance, First Corinthians. Like that letter, Philippians is probably a composite of three letters edited together by a later unknown writer. The passage we have before us today is what scholars refer to as Letter B from three such letters A,B, and C.

In Letter B, Paul is exhorting the Church to do all in its power to show an honest and visible unity to those around. He suggests in vs 3 and 4 that such unity is based on every member humbly regarding others as 'better' than themselves with no place at all for selfish ambition. This humility Paul sees as based on the all-consuming humility of Jesus himself in the Incarnation. In a process scholars call 'kenosis' (meaning self emptying,) Jesus, in becoming man, emptied himself of the divine glory he had

had with the Father from the foundation of the world. In a very real way he became 'one of us'...humility par excellence!

Of course, we all know that a congregation which has the qualities mentioned above has much more chance of growth than one riven by power struggles and dissent. It doesn't take a newcomer long to discover what sort of congregation they have stumbled across and how they might find a place in that congregation, or not, as the case may be.

We as Christians in local congregations should occasionally take a step back and honestly gauge how we measure up to the 'feel' expressed by Paul in this reading, how our personal ambience and humility reflects that of Christ himself, and therefore, how attractive we are to those who come alongside us hoping to find faith in the Risen Lord.

PLANNED GIVING SCHEME

Regular giving is an integral part of our church life supporting our day to day costs, ministry and mission. A good way to achieve this is through a weekly envelope or a monthly bank standing order as part of our Planned Giving Scheme. Scheme details can be obtained from David Hunt. . If you are a taxpayer and gift aid your giving, our church can claim an additional 25%.

During the current Coronavirus pandemic please put aside your weekly offerings ready to bring to church when things return to something like normal. The costs of the church are largely unchanged even though we cannot meet, so your regular giving is extremely important to our collective 'health' and the mission of God here.

WORSHIP INFORMATION

BBC Radio 4 Sunday Worship 8.10am

BBC Radio 4 Daily Service each weekday 9.45am on long wave only

Catch up available for all these on the BBC Sounds app.

St. Mary's Online Services St. Mary's are still working on making sure that we can access a live or recorded version of a worship service this Sunday. Currently there are still a few sound glitches to improve. Please check and visit <https://www.stmarysknighton.co.uk> or our Facebook pages on Sunday.

Virtual Compline/ Night Prayer at 8pm on a Wednesday. You can join by just phoning up and inputting the code or using 'Zoom' online. If you would like to participate with a speaking part, please do contact Matthew by 4pm each Wednesday (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



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 TRUST IN GOD'S CARE **CONNECTIONS**

Don't forget to visit the St. Guthlac's Facebook page and website <http://www.stguthlac-knighton.co.uk/>

Whilst work is being carried out on the webserver it may be necessary to access the website via

<http://82.22.25.16/StGuthlac/>

CONTACT DETAILS

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Revd Aphro McCullough

Revd Janet Gasper

Reader: Fiona Wingate

Churchwardens:

David Hunt

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churchwardens@stguthlac-knighton.co.uk

Knighton Benefice Magazine: Nigel Siesage
stmaryknighton.magazine@gmail.com

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

A THANKYOU FROM YOUR NEW PRIEST!

Counter-intuitively, being ordained in a time of pandemic has felt more precious. Having a stripped back occasion has meant more focus on meaningful commitment than the pomp and celebration of the ceremony. The delay and eventual ordination has been intense and I have physically sensed the power of prayer supporting me. I have been so blessed by the countless number of cards and I am so grateful for your kind words and tokens of support. It is humbling and I am looking forward to using your generous financial gift to getting a couple of seasonal stoles designed and a visiting communion set for me to use in my ministry going forward which will always remind me of my time in Knighton. Matthew

SHAPED BY GOD - DEADLINE 30TH SEPT

Shaped By God (<https://www.leicester.anglican.org/news/we-want-to-hear-about-your-experience-of-lockdown.php>), whereby we consider what have been the main lessons about how to do church ministry differently? Do consider contributing to this exercise via the link as it will hopefully inform how the Diocese manages decisions about the future direction of ministry that the pandemic may have altered forever.

Where have you gained spiritual nourishment during this time? -What story would you tell?

See weblink, email or phone-

<https://leicester.anglican.org/about-us/sbgt/gathering-stories--generating-insights.php>

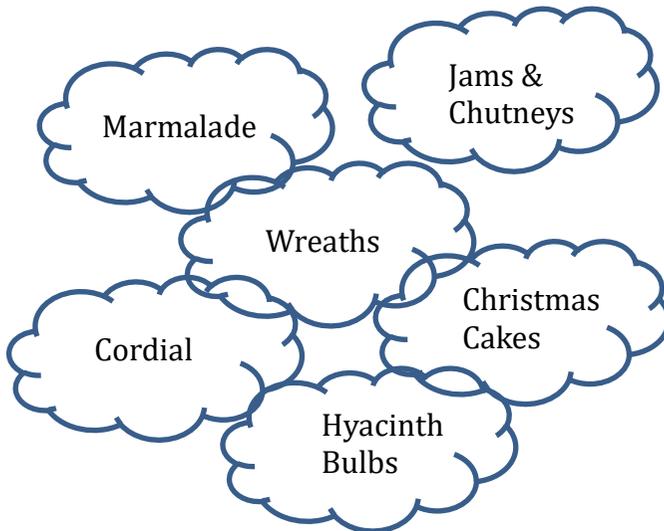
josh.crickdeboom@leccofe.org or 0116 270 8985.

Typo from a Church Newsletter

“The ladies of the Church have cast off clothing of every kind. They may be seen in the basement on Friday afternoon.”

Thanks to Margaret for forwarding from City of Leicester Singers. More to follow!

St Guthlac's Virtual Christmas Fayre Home-made Christmas Gifts



Although St Guthlac's won't be able to hold a Fayre this year, we are pleased to be able to offer some of our popular makes and bakes..... We are aiming to have a sale of home-made items that can be ordered in November. They can then be either collected or delivered early December. The items available will be long lasting and can be made Covid-safe.

If you can help with making jams, chutneys or Christmas wreaths please contact Tina. Thank you.
churchwardens@stguthlac-knighton.co.uk