

HOLY TRINITY AND ST PETER'S

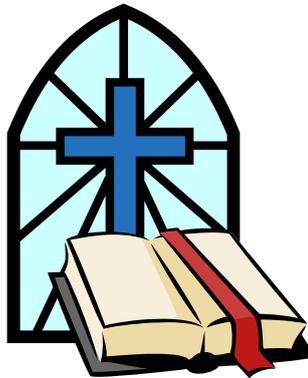


Sunday 3rd May 2020

4th Sunday of Easter

A very warm welcome to all those joining us in our virtual worship today.

If possible, use this service at 10am so we are worshipping together. Try saying the parts in bold aloud.



Introduction

The Great Fifty Days of Eastertide form a single festival period in which the tone of joy created on Easter Day is sustained through the following seven weeks, and the Church celebrates the gloriously risen Christ:
Triumphant in his glory now, his sceptre ruleth all, earth, heaven and hell before him bow, and at his footstool fall. (Fulbert of Chartres)

Opening Response

Here are words you may trust:

Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead: he is our salvation, our eternal glory.

If we die with him, we shall live with him; if we endure, we shall reign with him.

If we deny him, he will deny us; if we are faithless, he keeps faith.

For he has broken the power of death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. cf 2 Timothy 2.11–13

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you

and also with you.

Confession

Christ died to sin once for all, and now he lives to God. Let us renew our resolve to have done with all that is evil and confess our sins in penitence and faith. cf Romans 6.10

Let us start by reflecting on the week that has just passed.

Thank God for all the blessings you have received.

Consider the things which we have done, or not done, or even our thoughts, which we now wish to say sorry to God for:

Father, we have sinned against heaven and against you. We are not worthy to be called your children. We turn to you again. Have mercy on us, bring us back to yourself as those who once were dead but now have life through Christ our Lord.

Absolution: 1 John 1:8-9

May the God of love and power forgive us and free us from our sins, heal and strengthen us by His Spirit, and raise us to new life in Christ our Lord. Amen.

Collect for today

Almighty God, whose Son Jesus Christ is the resurrection and the life: raise us, who trust in Him, from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, that we may seek those things which are above, where He reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen

Let us pray for a closer union with Christ, in His suffering and in His glory.

Reading for today

Alleluia, alleluia.

Jesus said, 'I am the resurrection and the life.

Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.'

John 11.25,26

Alleluia.

Acts Chapter 2 verses 42 to 47 (perhaps read it twice)

The fellowship of the believers.

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ⁴³ Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. ⁴⁴ All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵ Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. ⁴⁶ Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Talk

Thursday, 8.00 p.m., there's a loud bang as a firework explodes in the sky. Set off by someone up the road, we respond by going out of our front doors, along with others all over the country, applauding in appreciation of NHS, Carers, and all those others we now recognise as doing great and essential jobs for the good of our community.

Thursday evenings we see neighbours, up and down the road, coming together (at the correct distance of course), greeting each other, waving to those we hardly ever see, as if they are long lost friends. We wonder about those who don't come out, are they alright?

The Thursday evening Clap for Carers is something that is beginning to bind us together as a community once again. Over recent times, people seem to have desired isolation, going home, closing the door, sitting down in front of the T.V. and keeping the world safely outside. So it surprises me that as soon as we're told to isolate ourselves, we suddenly discover a need to come together as community. It seems to be that taking community away has made us recognise how much we are part of it and how much we need it.

Luke has just ended his report of the events of Pentecost with 3,000 people coming to faith. He doesn't continue with further stories of great sermons, and missionary outreach programs, but concentrates instead on how the new community of believers has come together and is growing.

They are devoted to four things above all others: the teaching of the apostles, the fellowship, breaking of [The] bread (the word bread, in the Greek, is prefixed by a definite article 'the', which adds emphasis, THE Bread, i.e. Jesus' body, Communion), and prayer.

Luke doesn't give details of the apostles' teaching, but I think it is fair to assume they followed Jesus' command to teach converts to obey everything He commanded (Matthew 28:20)," Love God, love your neighbour as yourself, and to love each other as He loved us."

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." (John 13:34-35)

The letters reveal that much teaching was needed, explaining how we are saved through Jesus' death and resurrection and how to live as a fellowship of believers. Devoted to the fellowship, Luke tells us how they met daily in the Temple, supported each other in times of need, selling possessions if required, sharing meals and times together in each other's homes. They celebrated Communion together, and devoted themselves to prayer, both central parts of our spiritual needs.

People saw how this new community were living, and were attracted to it, to find out more and become believers themselves, and join them. The people were in awe of signs and wonders that were performed by the apostles, and how the people hold everything in common, helping those in need. This was a community of hope in a time of Roman occupation and control. These believers offered a hope that could win through suffering, because Jesus had suffered, died, was buried but rose again, alive for evermore.

The 'Clap for Carers' is, I believe, a recognition of a deep-rooted need to be part of something greater than ourselves. A search for hope in a suffering world. We as Church offer this hope that people are searching for.

Therefore, we have an opportunity to ask ourselves, do those who are searching see it when they look at our fellowship? Are we as devoted to learning, to the fellowship, to the breaking of the bread and to prayer as that original community of believers? What in our behaviour could God use to attract those who are lost and searching to belong?

Belinda and I have used the 'lock down' time to catch up on some T.V. programs we missed. One was 'Britain's Easter Story' with choirmaster Gareth Malone and gospel choir conductor Karen Gibson, travelling around the country looking at the music and traditions we use to celebrate Easter. Karen's mother told of her search to find a church when she first came to this country from the Caribbean. She visited her local church, who said they were pleased to see her, but could she not visit too often because it would upset the regular fellowship.

Every church fellowship I've been to believes it is welcoming, and yet those outside the church feel this is not the case, many believe the church has nothing to offer them. Perhaps we should make more of the fact that church is here for everyone, including sinners. The fellowship Luke describes is one that offered hope and love during times of suffering and hardship and was ready to welcome newcomers. Isn't this what our community badly needs at this time? St. Francis of Assisi's advice to 'Preach the Gospel always, use words only when necessary', is good, practical advice for us today. It is of little use just talking the Gospel of Jesus, people need to see how we live it! Our devotion to God, to each other, to sharing Communion and to prayer, will demonstrate the love we have for God and for one another.

Love that is for all the world.

Love that Jesus encouraged us to share.

Love that does not judge or condemn.

Love that is for everyone.

Love that the world needs to witness us living.

Love that God will use.

Love that brings hope.

Please pray that God, through his Holy Spirit will mould us into a fellowship devoted to Him, and for the wider community to find Him and receive the hope and belonging He offers through witnessing the life of our fellowship.

Amen

The Peace

Alleluia. Christ has been raised from the dead.

1 Corinthians 15.20

The peace of the Lord be always with you -
and also with you.

Statement of Faith

Let us declare our faith in God:

We believe in God the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.

We believe in God the Son, who lives in our hearts through faith and fills us with his love.

We believe in God the Holy Spirit, who strengthens us with power from on high.

We believe in one God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Amen.

A prayer of thanks for our giving to God

Yours, Lord, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the splendour and the majesty; for everything in heaven and on earth is yours.

All things come from you, and of your own do we give you.

Prayers of Intercession

When St Ignatius teaches about prayer, he suggests that we speak to God 'as one friend speaks to another' and to ask the Lord honestly and openly what is on our hearts. So now let us turn to God in prayer.

After each section pause - - - - - to add your own prayer requests.

Lord, we place into your hands our families and loved ones, especially those who are elderly or sick, anxious or lonely. You know their needs, and we ask you to be close to them. - - - - -

Help us Lord to love one another

Strengthen and uphold our Bishops Christopher and John, Heather our vicar and Sharon our curate. May they know your leading and sustaining Spirit as they seek to encourage and help their Churches at this time. Help them as they find new ways to connect with their congregations. - - - - -

Help us Lord to love one another

We place into your hands the people in our medical and emergency services, and their families. We pray too for those researching a vaccine - - - - -

Help us Lord to love one another

We pray for the key workers, whose day to day work protects and helps us. We give thanks for them and ask you to uphold them in health, strength and courage. Be with volunteers, thank you that our local communities are prepared to help each other- - - - -

Help us Lord to love one another

We pray for those in leadership and governance during these days. We ask you to give them the wisdom to lead and to listen, and the vision to act for the common good. - - - - -

Help us Lord to love one another

We pray for ourselves as a Church. Now, more than ever, we recognise our dependence on one another. Teach us how to sustain our faith and hope at this time as we worship in new ways. Help us to care and show love for one another. - - - - -

Help us Lord to love one another

We ask Lord, that you will be in with the people who find themselves in difficult situations, as we continue to be in lockdown and there is the need to respect social distancing. Help the angry, anxious, lonely, and abused. Be close to those who are sick, in physical pain and those who suffer from mental anguish. Take care of our young people. - - - - - let us name in our hearts those whom we know are in difficulty at this time.

Help us Lord to love one another

You have loved each of us into life and counted every hair on our heads. We place into your hands those who have died. Comfort and sustain their families and friends in their sorrow - - - - - let us name in our hearts those whom we know who have died.

Help us Lord to love one another

We give thanks and praise for the salvation and restoration that is now possible for us through Christ's victory over death.

Merciful Father -

Accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

Prayerful reflections:

Spend some time thanking God for what you have and have received.

Pray for those on the front line who are still serving so faithfully.

Pray for those whose livelihoods have been impacted.

Pray for those on your heart.

Pray for yourself – be honest with God about your fears and feelings.

The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour taught us so we pray

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Closing Prayers

Merciful Father, you gave your Son Jesus Christ to be the good shepherd, and in his love for us to lay down his life and rise again: keep us always under his protection, and give us grace to follow in his steps; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Alleluia. Christ is risen.
He is risen indeed. Alleluia.
Praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.
He has given us new life and hope.
He has raised Jesus from the dead.
God has claimed us as his own.
He has brought us out of darkness.
He has made us light to the world.
Alleluia. Christ is risen.
He is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

The Blessing

God the Father, by whose love Christ was raised from the dead, open to us who believe the gates of everlasting life. Amen.
God the Son, who in bursting from the grave has won a glorious victory, Give us joy as we share the Easter faith. Amen.
God the Holy Spirit, who filled the disciples with the life of the risen Lord, empower us and fill us with Christ's peace. Amen.
And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among us and remain with us always. **Amen.**

Commission

We are raised to new life with Christ.
Go in His peace. Alleluia, alleluia.
Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

Diocesan prayer:

*Father, pour out your spirit upon us,
Grant us a new vision of your glory, a new experience of your power,
a new faithfulness to your word and a new consecration to your service,
that your love may grow among us and your kingdom come:
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen*

Notices for the week ahead

For us all

Coronavirus Guidance

Following Church of England advice, there are no services of public worship at Holy Trinity or St Peter's Church for the foreseeable future. This sadly includes all baptisms and weddings. The situation with funerals is also extremely difficult for those mourning the loss of a loved one.

Please hold in your prayers all those couples and families who are affected by this.

The Churches' Premises are closed to everyone- please do not attempt to access them with any keys that you may have.

Daily Hope

Daily Hope is a free phone line of hymns, reflections and prayers launched by the Church of England this week. It has been set up particularly with those unable to join online church services during the period of restrictions in mind. So, if you know someone in this situation, please phone them and tell them about free-phone **0800 804 8044**, and why not try it for yourselves.

Food Bank

Obviously due the measures taken to deal with the coronavirus we are not able to continue with the bringing of items to Church or deliveries to the warehouse.

This is at a time when the Food Bank is going to be under huge pressure especially now the schools are closed.

In the last month, the Food Bank has distributed food to 573 people including 227 children.

The Food Bank is still working with its volunteers and there are collection points in most supermarkets. If you are visiting a supermarket for your own shopping please consider adding a few items to donate in this way. A list of the most urgently required items can be found on the food bank website. Please note, they are no longer able to accept infant formula milk or baby food due to a UNICEF directive.

Can we urge everyone to consider if they can give a donation of money?

Please visit their website- www.nuneaton.foodbank.org.uk and click on the Donate button at the top right of the page.

This is a really valuable way we can collectively, as a Church, show our love to vulnerable people in our society.

Scams - Be careful

Please be aware there are an increased number of scams doing the rounds trying to take advantage of these difficult times. Before clicking on links, giving out bank details etc... do check they are genuine as there are some very plausible and convincing scammers.

Library Books and Services

As you all know libraries are currently closed to the public and you may run out of reading material during the lock down / isolation.

However WCC Library is still working remotely and anyone who is not already a member can join remotely. In particular it is possible to access and download e-books through their services.

All you need to access these for free are your library card number and email address. Visit <https://library.warwickshire.gov.uk/> to find out how.

If you're not already a Warwickshire Libraries member you can join online, visit <https://library.warwickshire.gov.uk/> and click 'Join Online'. Our library staff will send you your membership number and then you can get started straight away!

If you are running out of books and have not access to a computer or tablet then use this notice sheet to see if anyone in the Churches have the type of books that you normally read and maybe they can deliver them to your door – of course respecting social distancing requirements.

Parish Giving Scheme- Launch of New Telephone Service

The Parish Giving Scheme (PGS) is delighted to announce the launch of a new telephone service, designed to enable prospective donors to set up a regular Direct Debit donation to your parish **over the phone**.

How will it work?

The service will go live on Monday 27th April 2020 and will operate weekdays between 9 - 5pm.

Please encourage prospective donors to set up a regular gift to your parish by calling our dedicated telephone line: **0333 002 1271**

One of our administrators will take them through the sign up process – this normally takes around 15 minutes. They will need to have the following information to hand:

- Personal bank account details
- The name of the parish they wish to donate to
- They will need to confirm if they want to increase their gift in line with inflation each year
- Confirm if they are eligible for Gift Aid

- The PGS code for their parish (usually 9 digits in length) *

****Note: This is the one piece of information that the donor will not have. Please ensure they have this information, to guarantee the gift goes to the correct parish.***

What happens next?

Donors will receive written confirmation (by email or post) of their Direct Debit, including details of the parish they are supporting, the amount of their gift and the date of their first donation.

Please note that if they currently give to the church via standing order, we advise them to wait until receiving the confirmation letter from PGS before attempting to cancel it.

How will our parish be notified of the donation?

The parish's Planned Giving representative will receive a monthly statement, detailing the names of those who have donated (unless they choose to remain anonymous) and all the gifts given through the PGS.

What if they need to change their donation?

If donors wish to make any changes to their Direct Debit, they should notify a member of the PGS team by phone 0333 002 1260, email info@parishgiving.org.uk or in writing to the address below.

Praise for the new service:

"I found the ease of using the new telephone service very satisfactory. The whole process was efficient and only took 15 minutes. The staff were very helpful and I would thoroughly recommend this service."

Dr Simon Thorp, Eastbourne St Saviour

© Parish Giving Scheme, 76 Kingsholm Road, Gloucester GL1 3BD

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www.parishgivingscheme.org.uk

Birthdays and Anniversaries

You might like to let Nick B-B know of any person who is celebrating a birthday, anniversary or other special occasion. It would be lovely to do this as we have to celebrate these events in isolation, but this is a way we can collectively celebrate with them.

Happy Birthday to Penny, from Holy Trinity, who is celebrating a 'special' birthday on Friday. We hope that despite restrictions you can find a lovely way to celebrate your birthday.

Holy Trinity Church



Holy Trinity Church Magazine

In view of the coronavirus and that it cannot be printed as the Church Premises are closed, Sue has prepared the magazine for May which will be e-mailed with Sunday 3rd May Order of Service.

If you deliver and can get an e-mail address **without visiting the people** you deliver to, we can add that to the circulation list. Also those due to contribute items should continue to send them to Sue.

Hartshill Community Centre, Community Library and Café

Following Government Advice all of these are currently closed.

Isolated but not alone- Hartshill Community Helping each other

In line with the Government appeal help is needed for those self-isolating and volunteers are needed.

During this time many elderly or ill people are self-isolating due to the spread of Covid-19 (coronavirus).

If you can offer any time to help out people on your street by picking up groceries, prescriptions, emergency supplies or offering a friendly phone call to ease loneliness, then please phone Olwyn on 07927141037.

Please also remember your local shops are well stocked.

For any more details on how to help or if you need help finding your local volunteer again call Olwyn.

St Peter's Church



If you are self-isolating you are not alone

If you need help during this time, please be encouraged to make contact with local Counsellor Daniel Gissane who is putting together a team of volunteers to support those in need, on 07771 340650.

Age UK's website has some fantastic advice about how to stay safe and well at home. Take a look at: <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/coronavirus/staying-safe-and-well-at-home/>

Age UK is also encouraging "neighbourly volunteering" and has some great advice on how to do this during the COVID-19 pandemic. Have a look at <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/get-involved/volunteer/neighbourly-volunteering/>

Any items to be included on the weekly notice sheet and messages please email Nick Blamire-Brown at njbb@hotmail.co.uk

Please be aware that all documents are now going to be much more in the public domain (emailed out and they have been posted too on Facebook and possibly church websites in the future.) Please be careful to get permission from any person you wish to mention.

Messages

We really do want to encourage our church members (both Churches) to use this section to give messages of encouragement to others or items of reflection so we will continue to do that and hope some of you will join us.

Message from Heather

One of my favourite Christian writers is Adrian Plass. I like his books because they are honest, real and often poignantly funny. He and his wife Bridget are doing daily reflections at the moment under the theme "no shore in sight" accompanied by a picture of them both in a boat! I love the title as it reflects the feeling of the unknown reality that we are living in at the moment...in a boat...but a little adrift....not sure exactly where or when we will land. This got me thinking about Jesus and boats...which gave me great hope... that even when there is no shore in sight....as long as Jesus is in sight....we will be ok. Why? Well as long as we stick with Jesus.... the storms will be stilled, the nets will be filled and still if in doubt – remember that Jesus could walk on water! The same was true for his disciple Peter as Jesus invited him to get out of the boat and walk towards him...which was ok until he got scared. At that point

Peter turned his eyes away from Jesus and instead gave his focus and attention to the wind and waves....and sadly he began to sink! An important lesson for us all to learn...what are we focusing our time and energy on at the moment? I'm not saying ignore the storm...it is a living reality...but let's keep our eyes fixed on Jesus first – the author and perfecter of our faith.

Message from Nick B-B

I find it hard to believe that this is our 7th virtual service. It still feels new but it has become firmly established in mine and Jan's Sunday morning routine.

At 10am you will find us sitting in our lounge with our 'I' pad and telephone tablet ready for action. We go through the service - I pretend I am still helping/assisting in services at Holy Trinity and we join in all the responses- at first we were very self-conscious but not so much now.

Occasionally I wear a tie in Church (it goes back to my upbringing when everyone wore their Sunday best to Church) and did so last week just to do something special for our worship. I know Nick M traditionally wears a suit and tie on Palm Sunday to mark the first time he and Carol came to Holy Trinity. If you have access to his face book page have a look at what he was wearing this Palm Sunday in our virtual service. I think it is important to think how we can avoid worshipping in a routine way – it does not take much perhaps lighting a candle or playing some background music.

Nick M in his message a few weeks ago said how doing the service brought joy to him and Carol and also that it could be quite emotional. Jan and I would agree with that and we also feel very connected to all of you doing the service on a Sunday.

We do miss the fellowship of worshipping together in Church and socialising after the service with tea and biscuits. We also miss the singing of hymns which can be so uplifting. However one positive of reading the written talk and prayers is it does enable you to focus on and absorb God's word.

I will let you into a secret- sometimes in Church I do not focus as I should and my mind will wander into other passions (Last week's message!). That is definitely not happening at present and I think my worship is richer for that.

We are also reaching many more people in our virtual service on a regular basis (including in Northern Ireland).

I am sure most of us are looking forward to Church Services starting again whenever that may be but I think we will need to think about some of the positives of our current services in reaching out to people who cannot attend church for any reason.

Lastly we have received a number of positive messages about the services- thank you for those, but we would love to hear from others on what their experience is. Just e mail Heather, Sharon or me. Even better put in a message for us all.

Please pray for the following in the coming week:

You may wish to print this section off for use during week

Coronavirus Crisis

Keep us, good Lord, under the shadow of your mercy.
Sustain and support,
be with those who care for the sick, the anxious
and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may find comfort
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love
in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

Lord God, as you know the whole world is trying to deal with the impact of the coronavirus. We pray for all countries and communities as they consider what steps they can take to care and support each other. We pray in particular for the elderly, vulnerable and isolated as they face the fear and consequences of catching the virus. We pray also for all leaders who are having to make difficult decisions to deal with the crisis and all those working in the health sector which is under such pressure. Amen

Leaders and Clergy

Heather and Sharon in their ministries in Hartshill and Galley Common;
Kate and Debbie our St Peter's churchwardens, Nick and Sally our lay readers
and Holy Trinity's churchwardens; Ruth & Rob Kinderman in their youth work;
Michael Brandsma in his ministry in Atherstone; and Bill Walton in his curacy.

Pray too for our Archbishops, Bishops and Bishops' Staff team as they lead
the nation and diocese.

Pray for the government and local/national/international leaders as they
make life changing and potentially life-saving decisions.

Those on our hearts at Holy Trinity

Rachel M and Family; Mark J; Maureen; Olive; Julie; Jan & Tony; Mark P;
Rebecca; Jane.

Also for care firms who are under severe pressure to protect both staff and
residents.

Those on our hearts at St Peter's

Lucy W, Lucy and Michael B, Mark, Brian V, Peter (Nick L's dad – and so
please do pray for Nick L & all the family too) and others known to us.

Family and Friends of those recently deceased

Some of you may know / remember Irene (Hopkinson) from the Quaker church – who lived directly opposite the vicarage. It is with sadness that I have been asked to let you know that she sadly died on Friday evening. Her niece was with her and I was told it was a peaceful end...and may she indeed now rest in peace and rise in Glory. Amen.

Please do keep her family and friends in your prayers – as well as her church family at the Society of Friends where she will be very sadly and deeply missed.



Prayer List

Please notify Nick B-B of the names of anyone for whom you would like prayer and any thanks for prayers answered (njbb@hotmail.co.uk or 02476395467)

NB. Please ensure that you have the person's permission first.

If you want to be added to the email prayer chain/group or have any prayers you want to put on the prayer chain please email:-

prayers.holytrinity@gmail.com