

News and Prayer Update for 19th April

Rostherne with Bollington, St John High Legh and St Paul Over Tabley

www.rosthernewithbollington.co.uk
www.stjohnshighleggh.org
www.stpaulsovertabley.co.uk

Vicar: Revd Philip Robinson, Tel: 01565 830 595
Email: robinsonpj50@gmail.com

Assoc. Priest: Revd Trish Cope, Tel: 07703 470101
Email: trishcope2012@btinternet.com

Curate: Revd Patricia Robinson, Tel: 01565 830 595
Email: pmrobinson51@gmail.com

Reader: Mrs Chris Stanisstreet Tel: 01925 755 559
Email: stanbess2003@yahoo.co.uk

Pastoral Worker: Mr Stewart Jackson Tel: 07835 249 835

Do You Need To Talk To Someone? Call any of the above, we have other people who are also experienced in listening who are willing to help, so **please do call, we are here for you.** All conversations are in strict confidence.



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Link for this week's service: <https://youtu.be/Fkiq0W5kQc4>

Please note that the service will not be available to view until after 6am on Sunday morning.
Prior to that the link will not work.

READINGS FOR SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

Psalm 16

- 1 Preserve me, O God, for in you have I taken refuge; ♦
I have said to the Lord, 'You are my lord,
all my good depends on you.'
- 2 All my delight is upon the godly that are in the land, ♦
upon those who are noble in heart.
- 3 Though the idols are legion that many run after, ♦
their drink offerings of blood I will not offer,
neither make mention of their names upon my lips.
- 4 The Lord himself is my portion and my cup; ♦
in your hands alone is my fortune.
- 5 My share has fallen in a fair land; ♦
indeed, I have a goodly heritage.
- 6 I will bless the Lord who has given me counsel, ♦
and in the night watches he instructs my heart.
- 7 I have set the Lord always before me; ♦
he is at my right hand; I shall not fall.
- 8 Wherefore my heart is glad and my spirit rejoices; ♦
my flesh also shall rest secure.
- 9 For you will not abandon my soul to Death, ♦
nor suffer your faithful one to see the Pit.
- 10 You will show me the path of life;
in your presence is the fullness of joy ♦
and in your right hand are pleasures for evermore.

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New Testament Reading: Acts 2: 14a, 22-32

¹⁴ But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them:

²² 'You that are Israelites, listen to what I have to say: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with deeds of power, wonders, and signs that God did through him among you, as you yourselves know

²³ this man, handed over to you according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of those outside the law.

²⁴ But God raised him up, having freed him from death, because it was impossible for him to be held in its power.

²⁵ For David says concerning him,

"I saw the Lord always before me,
for he is at my right hand so that I will not be shaken;

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- ²⁶ therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced;
moreover, my flesh will live in hope.
- ²⁷ For you will not abandon my soul to Hades,
or let your Holy One experience corruption.
- ²⁸ You have made known to me the ways of life;
you will make me full of gladness with your presence.”
- ²⁹ ‘Fellow Israelites, I may say to you confidently of our ancestor David that he both
died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.
- ³⁰ Since he was a prophet, he knew that God had sworn with an oath to him that he
would put one of his descendants on his throne.
- ³¹ Foreseeing this, David spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, saying,
“He was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh experience corruption.”
- ³² This Jesus God raised up, and of that all of us are witnesses.

Gospel Reading: John 20: 19-end

- ¹⁹ When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the
house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came
and stood among them and said, ‘Peace be with you.’
- ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples
rejoiced when they saw the Lord.
- ²¹ Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I
send you.’
- ²² When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy
Spirit.
- ²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any,
they are retained.’
- ²⁴ But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when
Jesus came.
- ²⁵ So the other disciples told him, ‘We have seen the Lord.’ But he said to them,
‘Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the
nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.’
- ²⁶ A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them.
Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, ‘Peace
be with you.’
- ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, ‘Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your
hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.’
- ²⁸ Thomas answered him, ‘My Lord and my God!’
- ²⁹ Jesus said to him, ‘Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are
those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.’
- ³⁰ Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not
written in this book.
- ³¹ But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the
Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised (NRSVA)

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REFLECTION ON THE READINGS

We don't know what happened to the disciples after the arrest of Jesus in the garden of Gethsamene – except of course for Peter who we know denied knowing him three times in the courtyard of the High Priest; but they all abandoned him; they all left in fear and panic; so, no doubt, they were all left with that sense of disloyalty and betrayal of all that the last 3 years with Jesus had meant.

So, what drew them together on the evening of that third day?

None except John and Peter had visited the empty tomb though they may well all have heard those fanciful stories by grief-stricken women about an empty tomb and angels and strips of linen wrapping.

So why did they gather together?

Was it to hear more about those stories from the women? Was it to share their grief and guilt? Was it to say final goodbyes?

We can't be sure but we know that they met behind a locked door – all except Thomas but his is a different part to this story.

They locked the door as perhaps we lock our hearts against Jesus when we think that the call to follow him is too tough / too demanding / too costly.

But locked doors are no barrier to Jesus and he enters, greets them and breathes on them.

Breathing is something that we have heard a lot about recently; those who react adversely to Covid 19 develop breathing problems; many of those who become very poorly need help with their breathing – an oxygen mask / support from Continuous Positive Airway Pressure, or a ventilator to breathe for them.

Breath – inhaling oxygen exhaling carbon dioxide is vital to life; breath speaks of life itself; “to breathe our last” is to die.

Genesis has the beautiful story of God breathing his life into humankind – and the essence of God's life is love.

And here in John's gospel we have God's Son breathing HIS life into his disciples – his breath is to provide their new life.

Jesus is breathing into them a new way of living and the pattern for this new life is in the next words he speaks to them – forgiveness. Forgiveness is to be the heart of this new way of living because that is how these disciples will identify themselves as followers of Jesus – by loving others as he loved everyone – by forgiving others as he himself has forgiven - not only their desertion and betrayal of him but those who, three days earlier performed the cruellest of offences – his crucifixion. He told them “Father forgive them for they do not know what they are doing.”. As he died Jesus continued to reveal what his kingdom, his way of life looks like. It is one where, instead of retaliating and seeking revenge, we forgive and in doing so we find we can redeem the past and walk positively into the future.

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Being a Christian means trying to live as Jesus did with his kind of loving, his kind of forgiving, his kind of thankfulness, his kind of trust.

Last Sunday we celebrated the living resurrected Jesus – now we need to open the locked doors to our hearts and be ready to receive the breath of new life from Jesus himself.

Revd Trish

Lead Us Heavenly Father Lead Us

Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us
o'er the world's tempestuous sea;
guard us, guide us, keep us, feed us,
for we have no help but thee;
yet possessing every blessing,
if our God our Father be.

Saviour, breathe forgiveness o'er us;
all our weakness thou dost know;
thou didst tread this earth before us;
thou didst feel its keenest woe;
lone and dreary, faint and weary,
through the desert thou didst go.

Spirit of our God, descending,
fill our hearts with heavenly joy;
love with every passion blending,
pleasure that can never cloy;
thus provided, pardoned, guided,
nothing can our peace destroy.

James Edmeston (1791-1867)

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PRAYER

Collect for Second Sunday of Easter:

Almighty Father,
you have given your only Son to die for our sins
and to rise again for our justification:
grant us so to put away the leaven of malice and wickedness
that we may always serve you
in pureness of living and truth;
through the merits of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.

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Please continue to pray for:

- The Government, as they lead the country at this time
- The scientists who are trying to develop vaccines etc
- Those who are ill
- Those at the forefront of treating those who are ill
- Those who are at the forefront of caring for the vulnerable
- Those who are alone and face months of isolation
- Those who are anxious about their jobs and/or finances
- The families and friends of those who have died
- Our Clergy, as they seek to provide support for those in their Church Families and Parishes at this time

A prayer for all those affected by coronavirus

(from the Church of England website)

Keep us, good Lord,
under the shadow of your mercy.
Sustain and support the anxious,
be with those who care for the sick,
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.

Coffee and Chat

We are having a Zoom Coffee and Chat meeting every Wednesday morning from 11.00 am.

Topic: Coffee and Chat

Time: 11.00 on Wednesday 22nd April 2020 and then each Wednesday.

Meeting ID: 777 1980 5127

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/77719805127?pwd=VTFEWmdWNVBwdStKemxxRUIBK2dwQT09>

Contact Patricia for the password which you will need to join us. Phone 01565 830595 or email: pmrobinson51@gmail.com

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NOTICES

Magazine

There will be a pdf magazine and all information will be on the websites as well. **We need pieces for the** magazine to go to your usual Editor as quickly as possible.

Have you any photographs, poems, stories, thoughts to share? Perhaps you have set up a small area for prayer in your home. Maybe you have been helped by someone and would like to say thank you. Perhaps you have written a prayer or made up a new recipe. Let us know what you have been doing so we can encourage one another. All ages are welcome to contribute.

Email Addresses

We need the email addresses of people you know who aren't on our list. We will make a temporary circulation list for the present circumstances. Ask you neighbours and other people you know in the Parishes if they would like to receive the magazine.

Join the Prayer Chain:

Our Reader, Chris Stanisstreet has organised a **Prayer Chain** which is done by email and telephone. The idea behind this, is that when a specific prayer request is made, it is passed on by group e-mail to the people on the list who then pray for the particular situation.

If you would like to receive prayer requests or would like to make a prayer request, please let her know.

Chris Stanisstreet Tel: 01925 755559; Mobile 07918 981 723;
Email: stanbess2003@yahoo.co.uk

Access to services:

While self-isolating or in the current situation of cancelled services it is still possible to access services using the radio or internet, eg:

- Daily Service on Radio 4 long wave at 9.45am Monday to Friday
- Sunday Worship on Radio 4 at 8.10am on Sunday morning
- Church of England website www.churchofengland.org – if you click on the purple box: “Coronavirus (COVID-19) guidance for churches” you will be able to access various on-line services and other resources
- Premier Christian Radio (on-line station), website: www.premierchristianradio.com

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A Message about Giving for Our Regular Congregation

If you are able to continue to give please consider helping us by contacting our Treasurers and arranging to set up a (possibly monthly) direct debit or make a bacs payment directly into the church bank account. (It is possible to send a cheque but it means that someone will have to pay it into the bank.) If you already give by direct debit or standing order, we hope you will be able to continue to do this. We still have to meet the costs of running the churches although we do not want people to give what they cannot afford or have not got. So if you find your income is affected, and you are unable to afford to give normally please do not worry about giving to the church for the time being.

St Mary's Treasurer: Mr Christopher Tetlow Tel: 0161 928 2137

St John's Treasurer: Nick Whimpany Tel: 07905 741969

Holy Trinity Treasurer: Mrs Hilary Girardier: Tel: 01925 754 717

St Paul's Treasurer: Judy Hancock Tel: 01565 733246

Christian Aid Collection

If you have been using the Count Your Blessings material during Lent and have collected money for Christian Aid, please pay this online if possible. Otherwise count it up and send in a cheque or, just put your collection to one side and pay it in when daily life returns to a more normal pattern or bring it to church then.

Morning and Night Prayer

If you would like to join with us, we are saying Morning Prayer at 9.00am Monday to Saturday and Night Prayer at 9.00pm Monday to Saturday. Whenever you are able, why not say it at the same time as we do, then we will be joining together in prayer and worship.

If anyone does not yet have access to the "Worship at Home" booklet containing the Order of Service for Morning Prayer or Night Prayer, please contact the Vicarage, as there are large print copies and ordinary size ones that can be posted out or versions that can be e-mailed.

Here are some suggestions for more Psalms and Bible readings to use with Morning and Night Prayer:

These readings usually follow on from each other so you get a bit more of the story each day (except on special Saints Days).

Monday 20th April: Psalm 19 or Psalm 1; Exodus 15: 1-21; Colossians 1: 1-14.

Tuesday 21st April: Psalm 8 or Psalm 5; Exodus 15: 22-16:10; Col. 1: 15 to end.

Wednesday 22nd April: Psalm 30; Exodus 16: 11-end; Colossians 2: 1-15.

Thursday 23rd April **St George's Day**: Psalm 5; Joshua 1: 1-9; Ephesians 6:10-20.

Friday 24th April: Psalm 61; or Psalm 19; Exodus 18: 1-12; Colossian 3: 12-4:1.

Saturday 25th April **St Mark The Evangelist** : Psalm 148; Isaiah 62: 6-10;

Acts 12: 25-13:13.

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Night Prayer Easter Season

Psalm 104:1, 21 – 33

¹ Bless the Lord, O my soul.

O Lord my God, how excellent is your greatness!

²¹ You appointed the moon to mark the seasons,
and the sun knows the time for its setting.

²² You make darkness that it may be night,
in which all the beasts of the forest creep forth.

²³ The lions roar for their prey
and seek their food from God.

²⁴ The sun rises and they are gone
to lay themselves down in their dens.

²⁵ People go forth to their work
and to their labour until the evening.

²⁶ O Lord, how manifold are your works!
In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.

²⁷ There is the sea, spread far and wide,
and there move creatures beyond number, both small and great.

²⁸ There go the ships, and there is that Leviathan
which you have made to play in the deep.

²⁹ All of these look to you
to give them their food in due season.

³⁰ When you give it them, they gather it;
you open your hand and they are filled with good.

³¹ When you hide your face they are troubled;
when you take away their breath, they die and return again to the dust.

³² When you send forth your spirit, they are created,
and you renew the face of the earth.

³³ May the glory of the Lord endure for ever;
may the Lord rejoice in his works;

Short Reading

The servants of the Lamb shall see the face of God, whose name will be on their foreheads. There will be no more night; they will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for God will be their light, and they will reign for ever and ever.

Revelation 22:4,5

Bishop Keith is encouraging us all to join together as a diocese every Sunday at 8pm by placing a lit candle in one of our windows and praying for the diocese and our nation.