

News and Prayer Update for 21st February

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

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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.



News and Prayer Update for 21st February

New Worship at Home Booklet: Please note that there is now a new edition of the Worship at Home Booklet and it is available as a pdf for screening or printing off (see link on mailchimp e-mail) or as a hard copy which can be sent out to people if they prefer (please let Patricia or Trish know if you need a copy delivering).

Sunday morning 10.30 – Morning Worship This is live online via Zoom. Please join from 10.15 onwards and we will have time for a chat afterwards for those who wish to.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86189415560?pwd=Q21OSUtlZGFoWmJibUxrSDFJczljdz09>

If you require the ID and Passcode please contact Revd Patricia.
(this service is in addition to the weekly pre-recorded online service)

Link for this week's recorded service is:

https://youtu.be/zGF7G16Ge_g

HYMN: Forty Days and Forty Nights

(George Hunt Smytton 1822 – 1870 and Francis Pott 1832 – 1909)

Forty days and forty nights
thou wast fasting in the wild;
forty days and forty nights,
tempted, and yet undefiled.

Sunbeams scorching all the day;
chilly dew-drops nightly shed;
prowling beasts about thy way;
stones thy pillow, earth thy bed.

Shall not we thy sorrows share
and from earthly joys abstain,
fasting with unceasing prayer,
glad with thee to suffer pain?

And if Satan, vexing sore,
flesh or spirit should assail,
thou, his vanquisher before,
grant we may not faint nor fail!

So shall we have peace divine;
holier gladness ours shall be.
round us, too, shall angels shine,
such as ministered to thee.

Keep, O keep us, Saviour dear,
ever constant by thy side,
that with thee we may appear
at the eternal Eastertide.

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News and Prayer Update for 21st February

Collect for First Sunday of Lent

Almighty God,
whose Son Jesus Christ fasted forty days in the wilderness,
and was tempted as we are, yet without sin:
give us grace to discipline ourselves in obedience to your Spirit;
and, as you know our weakness,
so may we know your power to save;
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.

Psalm: Psalm 25: 1-9

- 1 To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul; O my God, in you I trust; ♦
let me not be put to shame; let not my enemies triumph over me.
- 2 Let none who look to you be put to shame, ♦
but let the treacherous be shamed and frustrated.
- 3 Make me to know your ways, O Lord, ♦
and teach me your paths.
- 4 Lead me in your truth and teach me, ♦
for you are the God of my salvation; for you have I hoped all the day long.
- 5 Remember, Lord, your compassion and love, ♦
for they are from everlasting.
- 6 Remember not the sins of my youth or my transgressions, ♦
but think on me in your goodness, O Lord, according to your steadfast love.
- 7 Gracious and upright is the Lord; ♦
therefore shall he teach sinners in the way.
- 8 He will guide the humble in doing right ♦
and teach his way to the lowly.
- 9 All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth ♦
to those who keep his covenant and his testimonies.

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Old Testament Reading: Genesis 9: 8-17

- 8 Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him,
- 9 'As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you,
- 10 and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark.
- 11 I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.'
- 12 God said, 'This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations:
- 13 I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth.
- 14 When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds,

News and Prayer Update for 21st February

¹⁵ I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh.

¹⁶ When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.'

¹⁷ God said to Noah, 'This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth.'

New Testament Reading: 1 Peter 3: 18-end

¹⁸ For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit,

¹⁹ in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison,

²⁰ who in former times did not obey, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight people, were saved through water.

²¹ And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you—not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

²² who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.

Gospel Reading: Mark 1: 9-15

⁹ In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.

¹⁰ And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him.

¹¹ And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.'

¹² And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness.

¹³ He was in the wilderness for forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

¹⁴ Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God,

¹⁵ and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.'

New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised (NRSVA)

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REFLECTION ON THE READINGS – Revd Philip

Last Tuesday was Shrove Tuesday, or pancake day, and instead of our usual pancake party at St John's Church we held a Zoom version with prizes for the best person at tossing their pancake, the most unusual pancake and the best filling. It went really well and the next day we went round distributing the well-earned prizes.

That next day was, of course, Ash Wednesday which marked the beginning of Lent. Lent is a season of penitence, prayer, abstinence and study of the scriptures as we prepare to commemorate Holy Week and ultimately celebrate

News and Prayer Update for 21st February

Easter. That was one the original reasons for Shrove Tuesday, to rid your store cupboard of all the rich ingredients that might tempt you away from fasting. The term Shrove comes from the word Shrive, because in medieval times Ash Wednesday was when you went to church to confess your sins to the priest and be shriven, an old word for receiving absolution.

Ash Wednesday derives its name from the ancient practice of being marked with ash as symbol of repentance, the ash traditionally being created by burning the palm crosses from the previous year. One of the traditions of church services on Ash Wednesday, which in normal times we keep to at St Mary's, is to recite the ten commandments with the response, 'Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law,' after the first nine, and 'Lord, have mercy upon us, and write all these thy laws in our hearts we beseech thee', after the tenth. At a communion service on a normal Sunday, possibly to the relief of our congregations, we opt for a shorter version referred to as the Summary of the Law. Love God with your whole being and love your neighbour as yourselves. This is a bit like the abstract of their theses that undergraduates must compose before they submit them for assessment. An abstract presents all the major elements of their work in a highly condensed form.

There is a sense in which our New Testament reading this morning is a form of abstract. It is as if Mark looked at the record of the beginning of Jesus' ministry that we find in various forms in the other Gospels, decided that those accounts were important but as he intended to focus mainly on Jesus' public ministry, death and resurrection, should not take up too much space at the beginning. So, he summarized what he considered the three most significant elements – we might describe them as Revelation, Temptation and Proclamation.

In the section we might describe as Revelation, he focused on what happened after Jesus had been baptised. At that point as Jesus came up out of the water the Holy Spirit descended on him like a dove and the voice of God proclaimed the true identity of the man everyone believed was the son of a carpenter from Nazareth, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.' As Jesus prepared for his ministry, God endorsed him as his Son. Later, as Jesus prepared to go to Jerusalem to suffer and die, God once again endorsed him at the Transfiguration.

In the section we might label Temptation all the details of what Jesus went through are omitted; we are not even told that Jesus overcame the temptations he faced. We are simply told the bare details, that Jesus was tempted in the wilderness for 40 days and was waited on by angels.

Finally, in the section we might label as Proclamation, we leap past all the details of the ministry and arrest of John the Baptist and hear Jesus taking up his imprisoned cousin's prophetic ministry. 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.'

As we journey into Lent and follow the events in the final weeks of Jesus' ministry as he walked the road to Jerusalem, we will find these three elements reaching their culmination. Jesus, who had been identified as the Son of God at his baptism was ultimately revealed as the divine Son of God through his resurrection. The temptations which he overcame in the wilderness are echoed in the ultimate

News and Prayer Update for 21st February

temptation he faced, the temptation to turn his back on the suffering and death that he must endure. Jesus overcame that temptation, just as he had the temptations in the wilderness. Finally, throughout the final weeks of his life, the proclamation of the kingdom of God and the call to repent and believe became ever more significant as all the powers of evil conspired to destroy him and bring an end to his ministry.

How we observed Lent last year was radically different as the world adapted to the threat of Covid 19. This year will also be different, although we hope to be able to open our churches from Palm Sunday onwards. What does not change is the call to us as the people of God to observe the season, to set aside time to focus on the accounts of Jesus as he walked to Jerusalem knowing what faced him there. May I suggest that Mark's abstract of the early days of the ministry of Jesus can become part of our lives over the next six weeks. We can witness to the revelation of Jesus as the Son of God in the way we live our lives. Focus more on loving God with our whole being and loving our neighbours as ourselves.

We can model the manner in which Jesus overcame temptation in the smaller temptations that we will encounter. Lastly we can echo the call of Jesus, repent and believe the good news of the kingdom of God. Above everything, may we all observe a holy Lent.

HYMN: Lead Us Heavenly Father Lead Us

James Edmeston (1791-1867)

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.

News and Prayer Update for 21st February

Prayers for the coming week – #LIVELENT prayers and actions

Week 1 of Lent (Catching Up with God) – Action:

“Mission is finding out what God is doing, and joining in”. This quote, which is often attributed to Archbishop Rowan Williams, reminds us that whenever we think about mission, evangelism, or witnessing to our faith, God is already ahead of us. God is a missionary God, always reaching out in love to the whole creation. Jesus talked about this in stories.

This week, take time to read one of the synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark or Luke) and reflect on the love that Jesus shows there.

You might like to use a journal or notebook to record your observations.

Monday of Week 1:

Dear Jesus, thank you for the parables which open up our imagination to the wonders of your kingdom.

Please help me to live out your kingdom story today.

Amen

Tuesday of Week 1:

Loving God, thank you that you invite everyone into your great feast.

Please help all those whom you invite to hear your invitation and receive it with joy.

Amen

Wednesday of Week 1:

Lord, I bring before you something I feel I have lost in my life: whether that is a relationship, a possession, or a dream of how my life would go.

Be close to me in that place of loss.

Amen

Thursday of Week 1:

Loving God, I pray for all who are lost in some way.

I ask that you would find them and bring them back to yourself with great rejoicing.

Amen

Friday of Week 1:

Loving God, thank you that you look for us and that you find us and you welcome us into your family.

Thank you that you receive us with open arms.

Amen

Weekend of Week 1:

Loving Lord, please fill me with your love to such an extent that it overflows from me and touches other people, drawing them to you.

Amen

Prayer for February:

With Valentine’s Day coming in the middle of this month it is a good time to think about the virtue of love.

Father God thank you that you love and value everyone. Help us to follow the commandment of Jesus ‘to love one another as he has loved us’.

Please give us an awareness of your wonderful love for us so that an attitude of love may pervade our whole existence. Give us wisdom, patience, respect and kindness so that we follow the commandant of love in all our relationships.

News and Prayer Update for 21st February

NOTICES

❖ **Services – each of the PCCs in our United Benefice have decided to suspend worship services and private prayer in our Churches until mid-March due to the current situation with the pandemic.**

We will continue to stream a service each Sunday.

Services for you to join:

- **Sunday morning 10.30 – Morning Worship** This is live online via Zoom Please join from 10.15 onwards and we will have time for a chat afterwards for those who wish to.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86189415560?pwd=Q21OSUtlZGFoWmJibUxrSDFJczljdz09>

If you require the ID and Passcode please contact Revd Patricia.
(this service is in addition to the weekly pre-recorded online service).

- **Wednesday Morning 09.00 – Celtic Morning Prayer** This is live online via Zoom with Revd Trish Cope.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86430788721?pwd=dGVuMXpxWDkzTU5FbENraIB2Q09JQT09>

If you require the ID and Password for this meeting please contact Revd Trish: Tel: 07703 470101; Email: trishcope2012@btinternet.com

The reading and psalm for this meeting are included at the end of this Update. This service uses a separate order of service. If anyone would like a hard copy of this service booklet please email Trish and she will get one to you as soon as possible.

- **Thursday Evening 19.00 – Telephone Service for Evening Worship**
Please contact Chris Stanisstreet for details of how to join this service (you will need the telephone number, conference room number and pin number).
Tel: 01925 755559; Mob 07918 981 723; e-mail: stanbess2003@yahoo.co.uk
You can dial in any time between 6.45pm and 7.00pm.
The service will begin at 7.00pm and uses the new Worship at Home booklet. Please say the words in bold and try to ensure that there is no background noise.

- **Suggestions:**

If you have any other ideas please let us know - contact Revd Philip by phone 01565 830595 or email. robinsonpj50@gmail.com

❖ **Coffee and Chat Wednesday 24th February:** We are having a Zoom Coffee and Chat meeting on Wednesday mornings from 11.00 am to 12.00 noon. Just click on the link below to drop in for as long as you wish.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89014498190?pwd=WXJWU0JySGNqR05VRU1qOE1jbGwxQT09>

If you need the meeting ID and Password for this meeting please contact Patricia.

News and Prayer Update for 21st February

❖ Lent Course: God's Story Our Story

Tuesday Evenings from 19.00. First session on Tuesday 23 February.

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81871970480?pwd=SEJ3R2FZL0RaTW5eUV0MWR2OE92QT09>

If you need the meeting ID and Password for this meeting please contact Patricia.

Email: pmrobinson51@gmail.com or Tel: 01565 830 595

Our Lent Course this year is based on two publications. The booklet:

LiveLent: God's Story Our Story

which invites each of us to reflect on our own story of God and how we might share it through our everyday lives as part of our Christian witness.

All through Lent and up to Easter Day there is a short Bible reading, a reflection and a prayer.

You can also access it online or buy your own copy. Let us know if you would like a copy and we will arrange to let you have one.

The second is the book that #LiveLent: God's Story Our Story is based on and which is the Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent Book for this year:

Living His Story – Revealing the extraordinary love of God in ordinary ways by Hannah Steele

This book is particularly appropriate as it was written during the pandemic and demonstrates ways in which we can all convey God's love to others.

It isn't essential to read this book to be part of the course, but it is certainly worth it. *(Copies are available from various booksellers but the best price we have seen is £7.99 from the Publishers SPCK.)*

Sessions will start at 19.00 and last up to an hour and a half – part of the time will be spent in smaller discussion groups.

The first session will be on Tuesday 23 February 2021. There will be opportunities to discuss what we have read over the week before, there will be review of the chapter from Hannah Steele's book and questions that we will use as points for discussion.

*If there is demand for a **daytime course**, we will provide one – just let a member of the Ministry Team know – Philip, Trish, Patricia, Chris or Stewart.*

❖ 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 Chris Stanisstreet know:

Tel: 01925 755559; Mob 07918 981 723; stanbess2003@yahoo.co.uk

News and Prayer Update for 21st February

❖ Shrove Tuesday Pancake Party

The Pancake Party was very successful. Yes, it is possible to hold a pancake tossing competition via Zoom! We all enjoyed ourselves and the winners have all received their prizes.

Competition winners were:

- Harry and Max Wakefield for tossing pancakes – you should have seen them.
- Brenda Folds for the tastiest way to serve pancakes – they looked delicious layered with cream, raspberries and raspberry syrup.
- Christa Chadwick for the most interest recipe – a German pancake recipe – quite different - which you will be able to find in the March Magazine.

❖ **Offering and Fund Raising** – Please continue to give if you can

❖ **Homemade Jams For Sale:**

There are various Jams and Marmalade available at prices between £2.00 / £3.00 per jar depending on size - please order by telephoning the Vicarage we will deliver them to you as we go about our duties.

St Mary's are offering: Freshly made Chunky Seville Orange Marmalade £2.50.
Also available – Finely Shredded Marmalade, Strawberry, Raspberry, Damson and Gooseberry Jams

St Paul's are offering: Strawberry, Strawberry +Gooseberry, Greengage, Gooseberry and Raspberry jams.

❖ **Morning and Night Prayer**

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.

Bible Readings and Psalms for the Coming Week from the Lectionary.

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

Readings for Morning 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).

Mon 22nd February – Psalm 11; Jeremiah 4: 19-end; John 5: 1-18

Tues 23rd February – Psalm 44; Jeremiah 5: 1-19; John 5: 19-29

Weds 24th February – Psalm 6; Jeremiah 5: 20-end; John 5: 30-end

Thurs 25th February – Psalm 42; Jeremiah 6: 9-21; John 6: 1-15

Fri 26th February – Psalm 22; Jeremiah 6: 22-end; John 6: 16-27

Sat 27th February – Psalm 63; Jeremiah 7: 1-20; John 6: 27-40

Readings for Night Prayer

News and Prayer Update for 21st February

Short Reading during Lent:

Isiah 58: 6-7

⁶ Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke?

⁷ Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin?

Psalm during Lent: Psalm 139 1-18

¹ O Lord, you have searched me out and known me; ♦
you know my sitting down and my rising up; you discern my thoughts from afar.

² You mark out my journeys and my resting place ♦
and are acquainted with all my ways.

³ For there is not a word on my tongue, ♦
but you, O Lord, know it altogether.

⁴ You encompass me behind and before ♦
and lay your hand upon me.

⁵ Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, ♦
so high that I cannot attain it.

⁶ Where can I go then from your spirit? ♦
Or where can I flee from your presence?

⁷ If I climb up to heaven, you are there; ♦
if I make the grave my bed, you are there also.

⁸ If I take the wings of the morning ♦
and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,

⁹ Even there your hand shall lead me, ♦
your right hand hold me fast.

¹⁰ If I say, 'Surely the darkness will cover me ♦
and the light around me turn to night,'

¹¹ Even darkness is no darkness with you; the night is as clear as the day; ♦
darkness and light to you are both alike.

¹² For you yourself created my inmost parts; ♦
you knit me together in my mother's womb.

¹³ I thank you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; ♦
marvellous are your works, my soul knows well.

¹⁴ My frame was not hidden from you, ♦
when I was made in secret and woven in the depths of the earth.

¹⁵ Your eyes beheld my form, as yet unfinished; ♦
already in your book were all my members written,

¹⁶ As day by day they were fashioned ♦
when as yet there was none of them.

¹⁷ How deep are your counsels to me, O God! ♦
How great is the sum of them!

¹⁸ If I count them, they are more in number than the sand, ♦
and at the end, I am still in your presence.

Collect during Lent:

Almighty God,

may we, by the prayer and discipline of Lent, enter into the mystery of Christ's sufferings;

that by following in the Way,

News and Prayer Update for 21st February

we may come to share in the glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

Blessing during Lent:

May God bless us,
That in us may be found love and humility,
Obedience and thanksgiving,
Discipline, gentleness and peace.
Amen

Psalm and Reading for Celtic Morning Prayer, 24th February:

Psalm 6:

- 1 O Lord, rebuke me not in your wrath; ♦
neither chasten me in your fierce anger.
- 2 Have mercy on me, Lord, for I am weak; ♦
Lord, heal me, for my bones are racked.
- 3 My soul also shakes with terror; ♦
how long, O Lord, how long?
- 4 Turn again, O Lord, and deliver my soul; ♦
save me for your loving mercy's sake.
- 5 For in death no one remembers you; ♦
and who can give you thanks in the grave?
- 6 I am weary with my groaning; ♦
every night I drench my pillow and flood my bed with my tears.
- 7 My eyes are wasted with grief ♦
and worn away because of all my enemies.
- 8 Depart from me, all you that do evil, ♦
for the Lord has heard the voice of my weeping.
- 9 The Lord has heard my supplication; ♦
the Lord will receive my prayer.
- 10 All my enemies shall be put to shame and confusion; ♦
they shall suddenly turn back in their shame.

Reading: John 5: 30 - end

- 30 'I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge; and my judgement is just, because I seek to do not my own will but the will of him who sent me.
- 31 'If I testify about myself, my testimony is not true.
- 32 There is another who testifies on my behalf, and I know that his testimony to me is true.
- 33 You sent messengers to John, and he testified to the truth.
- 34 Not that I accept such human testimony, but I say these things so that you may be saved.
- 35 He was a burning and shining lamp, and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light.
- 36 But I have a testimony greater than John's. The works that the Father has given me to complete, the very works that I am doing, testify on my behalf that the Father has sent me.

News and Prayer Update for 21st February

³⁷ And the Father who sent me has himself testified on my behalf. You have never heard his voice or seen his form,

³⁸ and you do not have his word abiding in you, because you do not believe him whom he has sent.

³⁹ 'You search the scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that testify on my behalf.

⁴⁰ Yet you refuse to come to me to have life.

⁴¹ I do not accept glory from human beings.

⁴² But I know that you do not have the love of God in you.

⁴³ I have come in my Father's name, and you do not accept me; if another comes in his own name, you will accept him.

⁴⁴ How can you believe when you accept glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the one who alone is God?

⁴⁵ Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; your accuser is Moses, on whom you have set your hope.

⁴⁶ If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me.

⁴⁷ But if you do not believe what he wrote, how will you believe what I say?'