

News and Prayer Update for 3rd May

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.



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Link for this week's service: <https://youtu.be/u8KmdcdGxbU>

READINGS FOR FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Psalm 23

- 1 The Lord is my shepherd;
therefore can I lack nothing.
- 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures
and leads me beside still waters.
- 3 He shall refresh my soul
and guide me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
- 4 Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil;
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
- 5 You spread a table before me
in the presence of those who trouble me;
you have anointed my head with oil
and my cup shall be full.
- 6 Surely goodness and loving mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

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New Testament Reading: Acts 2: 42-end

- ⁴² They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.
- ⁴³ Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles.
- ⁴⁴ All who believed were together and had all things in common;
- ⁴⁵ they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need.
- ⁴⁶ Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts,
- ⁴⁷ praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

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Gospel Reading: John 10: 1-10

¹ 'Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit.

² The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep.

³ The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

⁴ When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice.

⁵ They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.'

⁶ Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

⁷ So again Jesus said to them, 'Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep.

⁸ All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them.

⁹ I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture.

¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.

New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised (NRSVA)

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REFLECTION ON THE READINGS

Sheep are funny things aren't they? Either they huddle together for protection within the herd, or they wander off alone, leaving the protection of the flock and shepherd and face danger and death. Or sometimes they just follow each other, mindlessly and without considering whether the path they are following is the right one or not. Anxious but reckless, going with the flow or disregarding the risks. Sheep are rather like human beings – don't you think?

No wonder Jesus likened us to his flock and he to our caring shepherd!

Although in the verse that follows today's reading, Jesus calls himself "the Good Shepherd", the focus of this parable is not the shepherd but the gate. A closed gate functions to keep the sheep safely shut in – no doubt that is important at times. But the open gate leads the way to lush and exciting pastures. Unless the sheep are prepared to trust the shepherd and follow him they will be stuck in an arid sheepfold – follow him and yes – there are risks BUT the joys of abundant life are there for all.

All too often, we may be tempted to see God as a safety device – a closed gate that keeps the danger out and keeps us secure. But God does not guarantee to keep us protected from all danger. Even his Son was subject to the pain and suffering of crucifixion and the cross is our way to life in Christ. Jesus tells us that the OPEN gateway allows Him to come and lead us out into his life-giving pastures. There is something that is even more valuable than safety and that is abundant life in Christ.

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He calls us by name and we must choose if we will follow him trusting in him to take us to new and exciting – if sometimes somewhat scary – opportunities. Will we follow or stay in the safety of our own limited life choices?

And if we choose to follow Christ, it is a choice that we will be called to time and time again.

We must listen to his voice at all times – in all we think, say and do – in all our choices – in all our decisions, we must choose – to stay where we are or to step out into the new world of self-giving love.

PRAYER

Collect for Fourth Sunday of Easter:

Risen Christ,
faithful Shepherd of your Father's sheep:
teach us to hear your voice
and to follow your command,
that all your people may be gathered into one flock,
to the glory of God the Father.

Amen.

THE LORD'S MY SHEPHERD (Psalm 23)

The Lord's my shepherd I'll not want
He makes me lie in pastures green
He leads me by the still still waters
His goodness restores my soul

*And I will trust in You alone
And I will trust in You alone
For Your endless mercy follows me
Your goodness will lead me home.*

He guides my ways in righteousness
And He anoints my head with oil
And my cup it overflows with joy
I feast on His pure delights.

And I will trust in You alone....

And though I walk the darkest path
I will not fear the evil one
For You are with me and Your rod and staff
Are the comfort I need to know.

Stuart Townend

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Prayer suggestion from Bishop Keith:

PRAYER FOCUS DURING THE COVID 19 CRISIS

Take **one hand** and look at:

Your thumb-pray for your church community and family.

Your first finger-pray for the NHS and those medical researchers looking for a vaccine.

Your second finger-pray for the Government and all those making tough decisions.

Your third finger-pray for those in care homes and working with the most vulnerable in our communities.

Your little finger-pray for yourself and those known to you.

Take **the other hand** and read out loud

“As God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience” (Colossians 3:12) and let your thumb and each finger represent one of these “clothes” we are to put on.

Thumb-Compassion
First Finger-Kindness
Second finger-Humility
Third finger-Meekness
Little finger-Patience



When you pray, put your hands together and let the “clothing” of one hand touch the people and places in the other and see what God does!

NOTICES

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 am each Wednesday.

Meeting ID: 777 1980 5127

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

The link above will take you straight to our meeting.

Contact Patricia for the password or more details on 01565 830595
or email: pmrobinson51@gmail.com

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Magazine

The Magazine has been sent out by pdf during this last week and you should by now have received yours. It is a special United benefice edition with contributions from all the parishes. If you have not received it, then we probably don't have your email address on our magazine list, so please let us know. If your neighbours would like to receive it, please send the email address and house address to Patricia on pmrobinson51@gmail.com

We will continue the magazine in this form until we are able to return to paper ones. **Please send in interesting news and pieces for the next magazine** to your usual Editors who will work to put the June magazine together for us.

We have put in the advertisements of firms who are able to work. Please support our advertisers as and when you can to help them through this difficult time.

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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Christian Aid Week 10-16 May

Love never fails. Coronavirus impacts all of us. But love unites us all.

You may be wondering how we can donate funds for the vital work of Christian Aid while we are in lockdown. Please do send in anything you collected during Lent. Money can be paid online. If you aren't able to do that then keep your collection until you are able to pay it in at a bank or eventually bring it to Church (the first two options are the most helpful).

Go to the Christian Aid Website to find out how you can donate this year.

www.christianaid.org.uk

This work is even more important at the moment because the poorer countries and people are hit hardest by the current crisis.

THANK YOU

The Treasurers would like to thank all those who have sent in an offering. This is very helpful as we still have to pay the bills for each of our churches even though we are not able to use the buildings at the moment.

The best way to give is by direct payment into the bank account and to do this please contact the Treasurer of the Church you attend for the account details. Better still, if you are able, because your income is not affected, please set up a monthly direct debit.

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

If your income has been affected by the current situation, please do not worry about giving to the Church just now.

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.

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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:

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 4th May: Psalm 103 Exodus 32: 1-14 Luke 2: 41-end

Tuesday 5th May: Psalm 139 Exodus 32: 15-34 Luke 3: 1-14

Wednesday 6th May: Psalm 135 Exodus Chapter 33 Luke 3: 15-22

Thursday 7th May: Psalm 118 Exodus 34: 1-10,27-end Luke 4: 1-13

Friday 8th May: Psalm 33 Exodus 35:20-36:7 Luke 4:14-30

Saturday 9th May: Psalm 34 Exodus 40: 17-end Luke 4: 31-37

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

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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.