

News and Prayer Update for 26th July

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

www.rosthernewithbollington.co.uk

www.stjohnshighlegh.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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FACE COVERINGS – We have been informed that the Church of England strongly advise that face coverings should be worn in church. Please check out the Church of England guidance on face coverings at

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-07///COVID%2019%20advice%20on%20face%20coverings%20v1.0.pdf>

Link for this week's service: <https://youtu.be/oBndm60TkxM>

HYMN: New Every Morning is the Love (John Keble 1792-1866)

New every morning is the love
our wakening and uprising prove;
through sleep and darkness safely brought,
restored to life and power and thought.

New mercies, each returning day,
hover around us while we pray;
new perils past, new sins forgiven,
new thoughts of God, new hopes of heaven.

If on our daily course our mind
be set to hallow all we find,
new treasures still, of countless price,
God will provide for sacrifice.

The trivial round, the common task,
will furnish all we need to ask:
room to deny ourselves; a road
to bring us daily nearer God.

Only, O Lord, in thy dear love,
fit us for perfect rest above;
and help us, this and every day,
to live more nearly as we pray.

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READINGS FOR 7th SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Psalm: Psalm 119: 129-136

¹²⁹ Your testimonies are wonderful; ♦
therefore my soul keeps them.

¹³⁰ The opening of your word gives light; ♦
it gives understanding to the simple.

¹³¹ I open my mouth and draw in my breath, ♦
as I long for your commandments.

¹³² Turn to me and be gracious to me, ♦

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- as is your way with those who love your name.
133 Order my steps by your word, ♦
and let no wickedness have dominion over me.
134 Redeem me from earthly oppressors ♦
so that I may keep your commandments.
135 Show the light of your countenance upon your servant ♦
and teach me your statutes.
136 My eyes run down with streams of water, ♦
because the wicked do not keep your law.

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First Reading: Romans 8: 26-39

- 26 Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words.
27 And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.
28 We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.
29 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family.
30 And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.
31 What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us?
32 He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else?
33 Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.
34 Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us.
35 Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?
36 As it is written, 'For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.'
37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.
38 For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers,
39 nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 13: 31-33, 44-52

- 31 He put before them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field;
32 it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.'
33 He told them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.'
- 44 'The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.'

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⁴⁵ ‘Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls;
⁴⁶ on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.
⁴⁷ ‘Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind;
⁴⁸ when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad.
⁴⁹ So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous
⁵⁰ and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.
⁵¹ ‘Have you understood all this?’ They answered, ‘Yes.’
⁵² And he said to them, ‘Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.’

New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised (NRSVA)

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REFLECTION ON THE READINGS by Revd Philip

Our Gospel reading this morning is a group of parables on the theme of the kingdom of heaven. When I studied RE at teacher training college back in the late 60's and early 70's I was taught that a parable is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning. That is a rather simplistic explanation. Perhaps a fuller description is that a parable is a short fictitious story that is presented to teach a religious principle, simple truth or moral lesson. In Jesus' time, the rabbis used parables as a means of teaching, but Jesus developed the art to perfection using things and concepts with which his hearers would have been familiar. We find parables in the synoptic gospels of Mathew, Mark and Luke, and also in the non-canonical Gospel of Thomas. The Gospel of Matthew contains 23, the Gospel of Mark 8 and the Gospel of Luke 24. All three Gospels have parables in common, and each has a varied number that are unique to that particular Gospel.

How parables are understood has changed in the years that I left college. One of my favourite course books that I used during my teacher training is 'The Parables of the Kingdom' by C H Dodd. When I was training for ordination in the early 2000's I quoted from it in an essay. When my tutor returned my marked work he had written by the quote, 'this is a very old book'. I learned that the college wanted me to use only books that had been published in the past 5 years or so. Where that leaves the Bible is open to question.

Since I left college there have been lots of books written on the subject of the parables of Jesus, and often they examine them from a particular perspective. Politics, ethics, feminism and patriarchal attitudes to name but a few. There is even a book of 'Politically Correct Parables' by Robert Walker, a rather tongue in cheek collection which the author claims continues the tradition of Jesus challenging the first century political correctness of the Pharisees. The parable of the 'geographically dislocated sheep' is one of my favourites.

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This morning we have 6 parables, one after the other. Two speak of how, given the opportunity, the kingdom of heaven has the capacity to grow and influence everything around us for good. Two portray the kingdom of heaven as something of infinite value that is worth giving up everything we have to possess. Incidentally, by our present understanding we might think the actions of the man who found the buried treasure to be ethically dubious. In the context of the period he was doing nothing wrong. The rabbis taught that, ‘If a man finds scattered money it belongs to the finder’. An early form of the saying, ‘finders keepers’. One parable continues the theme of judgement that we find in the two earlier parables of the sower and the weeds. The last one speaks of how the wise person, ‘trained for the kingdom of heaven’ as Jesus puts it, will give equal value to both the treasures of the past, the ancient wisdom of God’s guidance through the law and the prophets, and the new vision of the kingdom of God as taught by Jesus.

Jesus used parables to intrigue people and start them on a journey of discovery as they teased out their meaning. There were occasions when Jesus took his disciples aside and explained their meaning. Perhaps that is why, when he asked them, ‘Have you understood all this?’ they answered with such an emphatic, ‘Yes’. I suspect that Jesus thought, Hmmm. Understanding with the mind is one thing. Allowing that understanding to transform the heart is another. Ultimately the disciples became apostles and the kingdom of God did indeed become of infinite worth to them, more valuable even than their own lives. However, we come to them, however familiar we are with them, parables always have more to teach us. To use the words of the Prayer Book collect for the second Sunday of Advent, may we ‘hear, read, mark, learn and inwardly digest’ them, and allow them to transform us into citizens of the kingdom of God.

Collect for 7th Sunday after Trinity:

Lord of all power and might,
the author and giver of all good things:
graft in our hearts the love of your name,
increase in us true religion,
nourish us with all goodness,
and of your great mercy keep us in the same;
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.

HYMN: Jesus is King (Wendy Churchill)

Jesus is King, and I will extol him,
give him the glory and honour his name.
he reigns on high, enthroned in the heavens,
Word of the Father, exalted for us.

We come to him, our Priest and Apostle,
clothed in his glory and bearing his name,
laying our lives with gladness before him;
filled with his Spirit we worship the King.

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O Holy One, our hearts do adore you;
thrilled with your goodness we give you our
 praise,
Angels in light with worship surround him,
Jesus, our Saviour, for ever the same.

Storytelling Service.

This week's link: <https://youtu.be/z8bKSj8FPeg>

Please email Revd Patricia for the sheet for this service and for the craft if you are not on our regular email list.

PRAYER in the coming week:

Below are the words of the hymn: "Lord of all hopefulness" which can be said as a prayer throughout this next week.

Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy,
Whose trust, ever childlike, no cares could destroy,
Be there at our waking, and give us, we pray,
Your bliss in our hearts, Lord, at the break of the day.

Lord of all eagerness, Lord of all faith,
Whose strong hands were skilled at the plane and the lathe,
Be there at our labours, and give us, we pray,
Your strength in our hearts, Lord, at the noon of the day.

Lord of all kindliness, Lord of all grace,
Your hands swift to welcome, your arms to embrace,
Be there at our homing, and give us, we pray,
Your love in our hearts, Lord, at the eve of the day.

Lord of all gentleness, Lord of all calm,
Whose voice is contentment, whose presence is balm,
Be there at our sleeping, and give us, we pray,
Your peace in our hearts, Lord, at the end of the day.

Jan Struther (1901-1953)

Good News – We're Holding Services Again!

Please wear a face covering if you are attending services unless you are exempt from doing so. Please inform the service leader if you lip read.

Sunday 26th July:

10.00 Holy Communion at St John High Legh
11.00 Holy Communion Holy Trinity

Sunday 2nd August:

10.00 Holy Communion at St John High Legh
10.30 Holy Communion at St Mary Rostherne

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Wednesday Mornings

09.00 Celtic Morning Prayer at St John High Legh

We regret that we are unable to open St Paul's just yet because of building work taking place.

We will continue to stream services each week from St Pauls for the time being, alongside streaming live from St Mary's.

It is important that no one feels they must come to services if they are reluctant, for whatever reason, to mix with a group of people.

The Weekly News and Prayer Update will Continue.

NOTICES

❖ Coffee and Chat Wednesday 29 July

There will be no meeting this week. We meet again on Wednesday 5 August.

The link is:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89021657184?pwd=Qm50VnpQck5CRkpackxUWTVjNFFLZz09>

Magazine:

The magazine for August is now available and will have been sent out by e-mail to those whose e-mail addresses are known. Paper copies can also be collected from the Churches, from the Farm Shops at Rostherne and High Legh and from the petrol station opposite The Swan Inn, or posted to people who are not online.

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 Stanistreet know:

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

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

The best and safest way to give is by monthly standing order (the most helpful for our Treasurers) or direct payment into the bank account and to do this please contact the Treasurer of the Church you attend for the account details. You may also send a cheque – please contact the relevant Treasurer.

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

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

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Holy Trinity Treasurer: Mrs Hilary Girardier: Tel: 01925 754 717
St Paul's Treasurer: Judy Hancock Tel: 01565 733246

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

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:

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 27th July: Psalm 1; 1 Samuel 10: 1 – 16; Luke 22: 24 – 30

Tuesday 28th July: Psalm 5; 1 Samuel 10: 17 – end; Luke 22: 31 - 38

Wednesday 29th July: Psalm 119: 1 – 32; 1 Samuel Chapter 11; Luke 22: 39 - 46

Thursday 30th July: Psalm 15; 1 Samuel Chapter 12; Luke 22: 47 - 62

Friday 31st July: Psalm 19; 1 Samuel 13: 5 – 18; Luke 22: 63 – end

Saturday 1st August: Psalm 23; 1 Samuel 13: 19 – 14:15; Luke 23: 1 - 12

Night Prayer from the Day of Pentecost to All Saints Day

This Collect can be used at Night Prayer on any day throughout the year.

Lighten our darkness, Lord we pray,
and in your great mercy
defend us from all perils and dangers of this night,
for the love of your only Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Psalms:

Sunday: Psalm 104: 1, 21-33; 134

Monday: Psalm 4

Tuesday: Psalm 143

Wednesday: Psalm 31: 1-5 [19-end]

Thursday: Psalm 16

Friday: Psalm 139: 1-18

Saturday: Psalm 91 (this is the one in the Worship at Home Booklet)