

St David's with St Michael's and All Angels, Mount Dinham, Exeter

Newsletter for 6 June 2021 – Trinity 1

Dear Friends,

Welcome to our newsletter for the first Sunday after Trinity. In today's reading from Genesis we hear a lot of buck-passing; the man blames the woman and the woman blames the snake! But in God's economy we must take responsibility for our own actions and errors. We can do so without fear because God promises the help of his grace, not only in directing us the right ways, but also in finding God's forgiveness and mercy.

Our services today are:

9.30am Parish Communion at St David's (live streamed on St David's Exeter Facebook page) with celebrant, David James and preacher, Bill Pattinson.

11am Mass at St Michael's with celebrant, Nigel Guthrie and preacher, Bill Pattinson

Thrive is having a break this week but will return next week (see notice below).

Services in church and online this week

Tuesday 8 June, 9.30am Zoom Morning Prayer. Please join us using this code:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6602261392?pwd=VzdOaU1XUFBjWk9jV0xvMDZWajZBQT09>

Meeting ID: 660 226 1392

Passcode: 196651

(prayers are from Common Worship Book or Daily Prayer app which can be downloaded here:

https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.aimermedia.dailyprayer&hl=en_GB&gl=US).

Wednesday 9 June, 9.30am at St Michael's Mattins followed by 10am Mass in church (also live streamed on St Michael's Facebook page)

Thursday 10 June, 10.30 Holy Communion at St David's Church

Friday 11 June, St Barnabas the Apostle, 9.30am, Morning Prayer, on St David's Facebook Page

Sunday 13 June – Trinity 2

9.30am Parish Communion at St David's with celebrant, Belinda Speed-Andrews and preacher, Ian Cartwright as Ian celebrates the 50th anniversary of his licensing as Reader at Canterbury Cathedral

11am Mass at St Michael's with celebrant and preacher, Fr Dominic Cyrus

4pm Thrive: Jesus and boundaries

This session of Thrive, led by Christian counsellor and psychotherapist Carys Puleston will explore the tension of maintaining healthy boundaries as a Christian: how do we balance being a 'cheerful giver' without burning out? As ever, whether you're already a regular or have never been before, we'd love to welcome you and look forward to you joining us at Thrive.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88685738289?pwd=WEh1dINCY3NRQTlCcXFjK2ZlejR0UT09>

Meeting ID: 886 8573 8289

Passcode: 159821

Covid-19 Safe for Public Worship

Please avoid touching door handles – Thank you.

Hand sanitizer must be used on entering and leaving church.

Please wear a face covering in church unless you are exempt.

At St David's we are encouraging people to wear face coverings to come forward to receive Holy Communion and then to consume the host after moving away from the altar rail.

At St Michael's the priest will distribute Holy Communion to people in their seats.

Seating will be distanced to approximately 2 metres. Please sit on the seats where service books are placed. Seating is also marked by white labels at St Michael's.

Services should be 'no longer than necessary'; and congregational singing is still not permitted indoors.

Toilet facilities will be available and please follow the instructions for use.

Please avoid mingling inside church before or after services.

Please do not attend church if you are feeling ill or are shielding. Although we will do all we can to make the church safe you attend at your own risk.

School Assemblies

Nigel and Ash have continued to offer school assemblies (collective worship) throughout the pandemic. We have done this mainly on line with a short video being

sent to St David's School every week. We have already started visiting St Wilfred's School again in person and this week we also go into St David's School for the first time since the autumn. It will be a great pleasure to see the children face-to-face! However we won't be able to offer Thursday morning prayers on line as this clashes with the time of St David's collective worship. Please keep our assembly ministry in your prayers.

Living in Love and Faith – resumes this Tuesday

The Tuesday afternoon group is meeting this week to continue exploring and discussing these resources from the Church of England which are billed as 'Christian Teaching and learning about identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage'.

The group starts at 2pm and will be running on the following dates:, 8th June and 15th June. The study course is based on videos which include personal stories and there is time for discussion and sharing of thoughts and feelings about the topics. Each session should last 90 minutes. Please let me know if you would like to join on nigel.guthrie1@gmail.com

This is a very significant consultation for the Church of England and all those taking part will be invited to make their responses to the Church of England as the House of Bishops will be considering their approach to these matters during 2022. All the material can be found online by searching for 'Living in Love and Faith' and accessed free through the LLF learning hub.

Time for Quiet Reflection

Belinda will next be leading a time of corporate Silent Reflection on Friday 11th June at 5.30pm in person and on Zoom. Please email her for further details and joining link at bspeedandrews@gmail.com

Help with Churchwarden tasks

Often Churchwardens pick up tasks which could be done by others. We have already had some kind offers but there are a number of jobs which we will advertise in the coming weeks.

Would you be willing to help with one of these, please, even if you can't do every week?

Opening and closing the church on Sunday (weekly)

Updating the church inventory which is now online (annual job)

Clearing the churchyard on Sunday mornings before the service (equipment provided).

Thank you!

Keep the Fête Date – 17 July!

We are planning a Parish Fête for Saturday 17 July from 11.30am to 2.30pm. It may not be on quite the usual scale but we hope it will be a wonderful parish and community event. It will include a fun dog show, thanks to the support of St David's Vets. Offers of help and raffle prizes would be most welcome. Raffle tickets are now available from church so please do collect and sell them! There is also a sheet at the back of St David's Church where offers of help can be recorded.

The next 5 years - who are we and where are we going?

In the last year our whole world has been turned upside down by COVID. It has created in most of us emotions that we never knew we had and for some it has been a strange blessing. Whatever the impact on each of our individual lives it has within church communities challenged us to think about how we are a community. What does community mean for us here in our parish? What is our ethos? How are we to live God's kingdom now? Covid has opened the door for all of us to re-think and re-set what it is we say we are. I would like to encourage an open discussion about what the next 5 years could look like for our parish.

The bible verse I would like us to hold on to is from John 14: 12:

“Those who believe in me will do what I do - yes, they will do greater things”

Are we a blessing to the community around us?

Are our two churches places of encounter, or just places for those who belong?

Often at the heart of all we want to do there is a question of resources, whether that is financial, time, space, or human input. But in the words of Sam Wells ‘God gives his people all they need to follow him, and following him is expressed in answering the call to worship him, to be his friends and to eat with him.’

In light of this I would like to bring together a group of 12 people from across the breadth of the community beginning at the end of May, to read through and discuss the book ‘A Future that's bigger than the past’

(https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/B07YNTLDKB/ref=dp-kindle-redirect?_encoding=UTF8&btkr=1) as we begin to think and discern what God is calling us to for the next 5 years. This

would of course mean a solid commitment to meet once a month for up to an hour and a half to discuss one chapter at a time, to pray together, to share openly and honestly about our life together as a parish and how we become a blessing to and receive gifts from the wider community.

If you are interested in joining in the conversation please do email me directly at bspeedandrews@gmail.com

5 places have already been taken by clergy, churchwarden and a Reader.

The dates for meeting at 7.30pm are: Wednesday 9 June, Wednesday 23 June, Thursday 22 July, Thursday 26 August, Thursday 23 September and Thursday 14 October, before a meeting with Archdeacon Andrew Beane.

Traidcraft Stall & St Michael's Bountiful Table

We are delighted that our stalls are running again but please be careful to maintain social distancing and just approach the stalls one at a time. Thank you for your support.

Men's Breakfast

We plan to hold the next Men's Breakfast on Saturday June 26th at 9.30am. Venue to be confirmed.

Parish Magazine – New Leaves

Magazine for June are ready to collect. A big thank you to all contributors and to our editorial team!

Green Team

Saturday 5th June is World Environment Day. How can we reduce our own environmental impact? When considering buying something new why not think about this saying offered by one of our Green Team? 'Use it up, wear it out, make it do, do without'.

The Green Team are planning a morning focussed on the environment, with lunch of locally sourced food, for 11th September 2021. Please keep the date!

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Cleaning at St Michael's Church

We will be holding a 'summer clean' on Saturday 3 July from 9.30-11.30am so please put the date in your diary and come along if you can to help. We hope to be able to provide refreshments (regulations permitting!).

Phone Networks

Many of you have appreciated phone calls from other members of the church community. If you would like to be phoned by someone and haven't had any contact, or would just like to talk, please let me know at nigel.guthrie1@gmail.com or by ringing me on 01392 660226 or Ash on 07855305519.

Your Prayers are asked for...

Please remember those who have died recently including:

David Walford (formerly hospital and hospice chaplain), Bill (Belinda's uncle)

In the **Parish Cycle of Prayer:** World Environment Day and our Parish Green Team.

Please also pray for:

the meeting of G7 leaders this week in Cornwall;

the people of Israel and the Palestinian Territories, giving thanks for the ceasefire and praying for reconciliation and a will to tackle underlying injustice;

the people of the Democratic Republic of Congo, especially those whose lives have been disrupted by the eruption of the Nyiragongo volcano;

those working to protect the environment, especially following the sinking of the ship of the coast of Sri Lanka, and the pollution in the Sea of Marmara;

the worldwide vaccination programme, giving thanks for all those who have enabled a rapid roll-out in this country;

those working in care homes, hospitals and hospices - giving thanks for their commitment and courage;

those suffering from Covid around the world, especially in India and Brazil;

May God bless you and those you care for,

Nigel Guthrie

Prayers, Readings and Address for Trinity 1, 6 June 2021

Collect

O God, the strength of all those who put their trust in you,
mercifully accept our prayers
and, because through the weakness of our mortal nature
we can do no good thing without you,
grant us the help of your grace,
that in the keeping of your commandments
we may please you both in will and deed;
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.

First Reading – Genesis 3: 8-15

They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, 'Where are you?' He said, 'I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.' He said, 'Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?' The man said, 'The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate.' Then the Lord God said to the woman, 'What is this that you have done?' The woman said, 'The serpent tricked me, and I ate.' The Lord God said to the serpent,
'Because you have done this, cursed are you among all animals and among all wild creatures;
upon your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life.
I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers;
he will strike your head, and you will strike his heel.'

Gospel Reading - Mark 3: 20-35

The crowd came together again, so that they could not even eat. When his family heard it, they went out to restrain him, for people were saying, 'He has gone out of his mind.' And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, 'He has Beelzebul, and by the ruler of the demons he casts out demons.' And he called them to him, and spoke to them in parables, 'How can Satan cast out Satan? If a kingdom is divided

against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but his end has come. But no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his property without first tying up the strong man; then indeed the house can be plundered.

'Truly I tell you, people will be forgiven for their sins and whatever blasphemies they utter; but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit can never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin'— for they had said, 'He has an unclean spirit.'

Then his mother and his brothers came; and standing outside, they sent to him and called him. A crowd was sitting around him; and they said to him, 'Your mother and your brothers and sisters are outside, asking for you.' And he replied, 'Who are my mother and my brothers?' And looking at those who sat around him, he said, 'Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother.'

Address by Bill Pattinson, 6 June 2021

When brother and I were just seven years old we moved house. One of the joys we discovered that, beyond the back wall of our new home, there was a beautiful playing field perfect for football in winter and cricket in summer. One side of that playing field fell into a hidden valley, a wild, expansive garden, full of bushes and trees. Many games of "Hide and Seek" would be played in "The Valley". Our own back garden brings similar joys to Avril and myself today, albeit for different reasons. Although small, Avril, for she is the gardener of the two of us, has designed places where you can hide, or at least not be easily seen. She believes gardens should be places of unexpected discoveries around corners and on different levels. Now, verdant and budding in blazing June, hiding is not so difficult even in our garden.

Now we know that Adam and Eve were not playing "Hide and Seek" when "they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze." - I love that sentence from our first reading this morning. Thank you, Emma. They were indeed hiding, but hiding because they knew they had done the one thing God had asked they must not do - eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge planted in the centre of the garden. They were ashamed of both their sin and their nakedness. And when God asks "Where are you?" we hear in that question that God knows not only where they are, but also what they have done. How can you hide from the all-knowing God? As Psalm 139 says:

“You have searched me and You know me
You know when I sit down and when I rise
Lord, you made me, understand me
You see where I walk and where I lie.”

Fat chance of winning an evening game of “Hide and Seek” with God or Jesus, because I like to think that the sound of God walking in the garden came from the footsteps of Jesus. Now one sin is exacerbated by another. Instead of admitting their guilt and seeking God’s forgiveness, Adam and Eve choose to play the “blame game.”

“It wasn’t me, it was her, whom **you** gave to me.”

“It wasn’t me, it was the serpent.”

How often have we heard that recently? How often have we played that game ourselves?

We also are presented with choices. We can blame someone or something for our wrong doings or seek God’s forgiveness. We can listen to other voices or we can listen to Jesus when he comes calling, “Where are you?” At difficult and challenging times we can try and hide from Jesus or we can put our faith in him, walk with him, place our hand in his, follow in his footsteps, dance and sing with him. But who is this Jesus? What does he offer?

In this morning’s Gospel Reading Jesus is accused first by his family of “being out of his mind.” Then secondly by the scribes, who had specially come to see Jesus from Jerusalem, of being in cohorts with Beelzebub, better known as Satan. Immediately prior to these accusations Jesus had been followed by great crowds as he performed miracles, cast out demons, chose his twelve disciples. So busy was he, so hemmed in by the crowds, there was neither time nor place to eat. Perhaps his family believed he was out of his mind because he had left a prosperous carpentry business to become an itinerant preacher or that popularity had gone to his head? They certainly would have questioned the most unlikely group of disciples he had just chosen. The last straw was that his ministry meant he was missing his regular meal times. But when Jesus was told that his family were looking for him, he questioned who his family was.

“Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother.” Obedience to God’s will would appear thicker than blood.

As for the accusation by the scribes that he drives out demons and performs miracles in the name of Beelzebub, Jesus questions how Satan can drive out Satan. The Devil would be fighting himself; Satan’s house would be divided and a divided house quickly falls. I’m reminded of another game we used to play as boys based on the three musketeers. With sticks held aloft, joined at the apex, we would cry out, “All for one and one for all” or, as Dumas first wrote it, “Un pour tous, tous pour un”. So powerful a statement that it is now the motto of Switzerland.

So, who is this Jesus? Viewpoints concerning the Lord Jesus Christ range from the sacred to the secular? As members of his family we call him Lord and Saviour. Jesus always stands before us as the image of unity, wholeness and integration. And what does he offer? He puts our lives, homes and families back in order. Whatever it is that shatters our lives, that causes us worry, anxiety or stress - be it anger, greed, insecurity, fear, guilt, loneliness, loss, illness, growing old, pandemics, - Christ is stronger than all of these. There is nothing that cannot be put together by the love of God in Christ. The message is clear. Stick with Jesus whatever the cost.

Thus God comes calling us in the gardens of our lives. He is calling us to cover our nakedness with the garments which he supplies: compassion, kindness, humility, quiet strength, discipline. He is calling us to be quick to forgive. And most of all he calls us to receive his garment of love, a garment so rich it will cover our brokenness, giving us wholeness and peace, when we receive it in humility and vulnerability. Leonard Cohen sings:

“Dance me to your beauty
With a burning violin
Dance me through the panic
Till I'm safely gathered in
Lift me like an olive branch
And be my homeward dove
Dance me to the end of love”

Closing Prayer

Eternal Father, we thank you for nourishing us
with these heavenly gifts:
may our communion strengthen us in faith,
build us up in hope,
and make us grow in love;
for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Do join us next week for our services in church and online!