

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

**Newsletter for 12 July 2020**

Dear Friends

Welcome to this weekly update for the fifth Sunday after Trinity.

## **Sunday Worship**

Today we will have a Youtube recorded service which is available through this <https://youtu.be/8HnlDUFGkdl>

Ash Leighton Plom is reading the lesson, Belinda Speed Andrews is preaching and Glynis Harflett is leading the prayers. Thank you to them, and to Nigel Walsh for putting the service together.

Next Sunday the online service will be Holy Communion live streamed at 9.30am on the St David's Church Exeter Facebook Page and both our churches will be open for worship as set out below.

## **Churches Opening for public worship**

This week opening times are:

St Michael and All Angels – Wednesday Morning Prayer at 9.30am followed by Mass at 10am and Sunday Mass at 11am

St David – Thursday 10.30am, Holy Communion, Sunday 9.30am Holy Communion

## ***These are the special provisions to keep worshippers as safe as possible.***

Hand sanitizer must be used on entering and leaving church.

We are required to record the names and phone numbers of worshippers on arrival to help the NHS if anyone falls ill with Covid. These details will be destroyed after 21 days.

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. Please observe appropriate distancing from others at all times and the one-way systems through the churches.

Holy Communion will be distributed in 'one kind', that is only the bread, and the priest will say the words of distribution beforehand so that the sacrament will be distributed silently and the wafers dropped into the hands of communicants.

Services should be 'no longer than necessary'; in practice that means about 45minutes.

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

It is not essential to wear a mask to attend church but you may wish to, of course.

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

Thank you to our PCC and church members who have helped with this process and with cleaning and preparing our churches for re-opening, it is much appreciated.

### **Live Daily Prayers**

Please join us, if you can, for our streamed short prayer services during the week on our Facebook pages:

On 'St David's Church Exeter' page: Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday at 9am and Compline on Monday evening at 8pm.

On 'Friends of St Michael's' page: Wednesday Angelus and Mass at **10am**.

### **Zoom Coffee**

This Sunday we will hold a 'Zoom' coffee again at 10.30am for 40 minutes. It has been lovely to see people from both our churches there. You don't need to have a Zoom account to join in – just click on this link:

Join Zoom Meeting

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

Meeting ID: 660 226 1392

Password: 196651

Once we have gathered and said hello we will break into virtual rooms so that we can chat more easily and then come back at the end to round up and say the Grace together. When you first 'arrive' you will have to wait for me to let you in. I hope to see you there!

Unfortunately we will have to suspend Zoom Sunday coffee next week as services are restarting, but we might be able to run this at another time in the week. Let us know if you have any thoughts on that.

### **Bible Study**

This month we are holding a bible study on the psalms. This will be held on Tuesdays afternoons for an hour from 2pm. This Tuesday, 14<sup>th</sup> July, Bill Pattinson will be leading a study based on psalm 84. We got off to a great start last week! Please join us if you can by Zoom. Here is the link:

Join Zoom Meeting

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

Meeting ID: 660 226 1392

Password: 196651

or send me a phone message or email if you are not sure how to join.

## **Reopening of Churches for public worship – a continuing process**

The PCC agreed to open our churches for one midweek communion and one Sunday communion. This gives the chance for the churches to be ‘quarantined’ for 72 hours between times to minimize the risk of any infection.

We will keep this under review in accordance with national and diocesan guidelines. We would love to return to a full range of service but that is not yet feasible so please be patient as we need to do this as safely as possible!

Please keep this process in your prayers.

## **Emma White**

We are delighted to report that Emma White has been appointed President of YMCA Europe. Emma is already involved in YMCA at a national level but this new role covers no less than 37 countries - and at a time of great need for many young people across Europe. Emma had already let us know that she would need to stand down as churchwarden and we will be able to thank her for her work in that role in due course.

Please pray for Emma as she prepares for this new role and ministry and for our parish as we look for a new churchwarden. Many congratulations, Emma!

## **Phone Networks**

I know that 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 yet had any contact please let me know at [nigel.guthrie1@gmail.com](mailto:nigel.guthrie1@gmail.com) or by ringing me on 01392 660226 or Ash on 07855305519. Thank you to everyone who is helping to keep our church communities together by your care and concern.

## **Magazine**

Our July magazine available on our websites. I have a few printed copies which I would be happy to post to you if you are finding it hard to access the online magazine. If you would like one please let me know by phone or e-mail.

## **Your Prayers are asked for...**

Charles Argall, Janine, Charles Speed-Andrews, Nicky Jarman and her husband Tim and their family, Jacqueline and her family, Joy and her family, Claude and Gillian Harbord, Elizabeth Hewitt, Grace Tointon, Pam Smith and her family, James and Katy Tyler, Andrew Wakley, Jill Wellbelove (recovering after receiving a pacemaker), Rosemary Willcox and Maurice Wright.

In the **Parish Cycle of Prayer** we pray for all who make refreshments in our churches and those who decorate the churches with flowers

Please also pray for:  
those areas and countries suffering from through Covid-19, and those who are isolated;  
those who are facing unemployment;  
children who are living in vulnerable settings  
Exeter Food Bank and Exeter City Council;

**May God keep you in peace and good health, Nigel Guthrie**

**Order of Service for the Fifth Sunday after Trinity (service on Youtube)  
Confession and Absolution**

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith firmly resolved to keep God's commandments and to live in love and peace with all.

**Almighty God, our heavenly Father,  
we have sinned against you and against our neighbour  
in thought and word and deed,  
through negligence, through weakness, through our own deliberate fault.  
We are truly sorry and repent of all our sins.  
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, who died for us,  
forgive us all that is past,  
and grant that we may serve you in newness of life  
to the glory of your name. Amen.**

*The priest pronounces the absolution.*

Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent,  
have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins,  
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and keep you in life eternal;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Collect**

Almighty and everlasting God,  
by whose Spirit the whole body of the Church is governed and sanctified:  
hear our prayer which we offer for all your faithful people,  
that in their vocation and ministry  
they may serve you in holiness and truth

to the glory of your name;  
through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. Amen.

**First Reading – Isaiah 55: 10-13**

For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven,  
and do not return there until they have watered the earth,  
making it bring forth and sprout,  
giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,  
so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;  
it shall not return to me empty,  
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose,  
and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

For you shall go out in joy,  
and be led back in peace;  
the mountains and the hills before you  
shall burst into song,  
and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.  
Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress;  
instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle;  
and it shall be to the Lord for a memorial,  
for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

**Gospel Reading – Matthew 13: 1-9 & 18-23**

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the lake. Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he told them many things in parables, saying: 'Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Let anyone with ears listen!'

‘Hear then the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.’

### **An Address by Belinda Speed Andrews for Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2020**

‘The mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song,  
And all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

I’m sure there are many of you listening today who have climbed one, if not all the 3 major peaks in the British Isles and possibly many more besides. I had the joy a number of years ago, to climb Snowdon, Scafell and Ben Nevis over a 12 month period. As much as I love the gentleness of the hills in Devon and the coastline and the ruggedness of the moors it will always be for me the hills in Cumbria and Scotland that hold a very special place in my heart. Coming off at Junction 36 on the M6, and as I begin to see the mountains that begin to appear in front of me, my heart leaps. I don’t know what it is. Maybe it’s the majesty and grandeur that engulfs one or just the sheer mystery that is the heart of these two places, but when I see them again it is as if my heart bursts into song & and I can imagine as I read the passage from Isaiah this morning these two places I love so much and the trees of the fields clapping their hands.

It is a real shame that the lectionary begins the reading at verse 10 and not from the beginning of the chapter as this chapter of Isaiah is one of the most beautiful and hope-filled chapters of this book in the Old Testament - it is literally a chapter of hope. From a preacher’s point of view though I am really glad I am only dealing with 4 verses this morning!!

For many people across our nation, this pandemic has been an incredibly difficult time. There have been people left at home wondering if they will ever see their loved ones again as they are wheeled into the local ICU suffering with the horrendous effects of Covid-19.

There are people across our nation on furlough still, especially in the hospitality and tourism industry wondering whether they will ever return to the job they had at the beginning of the lockdown. And there are small and medium business owners who are not sure whether their business will survive the economic fallout from Covid. And the Church has not come away unscathed either.

For all these people, the carpet has been pulled out from under their feet and their worlds are in great danger of shattering into small fragile pieces if this hasn't happened already. So, to be honest and understandably so, this reading from Isaiah is far removed from these people's psyche.

Therefore you may wonder why I am preaching on this passage today. For me, if there is one thing I would like to take away from my experience of this pandemic, it is that God is a God of abundance, of unfathomable mercy and above all a God of hope: hope in a future that is bigger than the past; 'Truly, truly I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do because I am going to the Father'. (John 14: 12)

It was Pentecost Sunday all but a few weeks ago, a time when the church waits expectantly for the Holy Spirit to fill us again; a time of great joy and celebration, a time of hope, of bigger and better things to come; a time to re-energise & re-centre our focus on all that Jesus has taught us. But how easy it is, as we move through 'Ordinary time', the name itself suggests boredom, that we can lose our passion, our excitement, our thoughts, our hope of living God's kingdom now. And yet this morning's reading from Isaiah bursts in with this joyful melody, an uplifting song of hope in a time that has been, for several months, desperate, sad, frustrating for many, many people.

Now, some weeks after Pentecost, to think about and imagine new possibilities feels somewhat beyond our capabilities and a challenge for the church. And yet God clearly says to the Israelites, through Isaiah, 'For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there until they have watered the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and succeed in the thing for which I purpose'.

God promises never to leave us unequipped for the tasks for which he has called each of us to; even if we fail it is not beyond God to turn it to success. We have seen this time and time again throughout the Bible.

The reading from Isaiah this morning is written at a time when the Israelites are in exile in Babylon and it is from here that God gives this message of hope. The Israelites have lost everything, their home, their land, their Temple and their King. It couldn't get any worse than this; this is a time of maximum deficit. Yet in Babylon the Israelites see a face of God they've never seen before, one that they weren't even looking for. Here was a God who suffered with them, who met them far from home, far from the promised land. They looked back at the time in Egypt and realised that God was with them; it was God who brought them out from slavery and travelled with them into the promised land. Now here in Babylon they experience a covenant relationship of companionship where both they and God suffer, and they begin to see their God in a transformative way. Is this perhaps what we have seen in our nation in the last few months? God has shown up in the ICU, in our communities and in our neighbourhoods, in our supermarkets, across the nation in acts of kindness and generosity. God has walked this awful walk with us in solidarity, in his love for us; in his desire to be with us always in all situations.

This hope that Isaiah talks about is not some fantasy, something imagined. It is real, very real and Isaiah points us toward this hope in his words to us this morning. It is grounded in the rhythmic nature of creation. God's ways maybe higher than our ways, his thoughts higher than our thoughts, but things on high come down to earth, as rain and snow come down to nourish the earth and feed us. God is not a God who created the world and all that is in it and then sat back with his feet up to watch what happened next. God comes to us and he promises that his creative acts will 'not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose & succeed in the thing for which I sent it'.

Our challenge is we have been in exile now for four months and this is going to continue for some time yet. We may never go back to the way we were. So how in this situation, this time of exile, do we encourage people to hang on to hope? How do we inspire hope in those who are broken-hearted, down-trodden, forgotten and neglected or just down-right broken at the moment?

As lockdown begins to ease, as infection rates decline and death rates are now below 100 every day. There is light at the end of the tunnel even if it is just a chink of light.



We are coming home. We are coming back, but life will never be the same again for many of us, maybe for none of us. We are not who we were 4 months ago and we cannot I suggest, be squeezed back into our former shape.

Hope, in part for us, is for the first time in many weeks, being allowed to gather under one roof to worship God, to give thanks for his abundant blessings and to be strengthened by the gift that each is to the other. Our hope is not ethereal. Our hope is grounded in the witness of creation and it's beauty that surrounds us. It is in all that we have witnessed in the kindness & compassion of humanity, in the devotion by those whose job it has been to care for the sick and dying. It is grounded in each of us gathered today as we return time and time again to be with God. Let us find together as a community called by God that place where our hearts sing and we can imagine the trees of the field clapping their hands; a joy that is rooted in the very core of who we are, because we are, by grace called by the One who loves us.

### **Closing Prayers**

Grant, O Lord, we beseech you, that the course of this world may be so peaceably ordered by your governance, that your Church may joyfully serve you in all godly quietness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The peace of God,  
which passes all understanding,  
keep your hearts and minds  
in the knowledge and love of God,  
and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord;  
and the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

**Do join us next week, in person, or for our Facebook service!**

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Preview external media

