

St David's with St Michael's and All Angels, Mount Dinham, Exeter Newsletter for Sunday 19 September 2021 – Trinity 16

Dear Friends,

Welcome to this week's newsletter. We celebrate Harvest Festival today at St David's.

Thank you to everyone who helped at our Green Event at St David's last Saturday and the Heritage Open Days at St Michael's. Both events were very well attended and raised valuable funds for our churches. But most of all it was great to see our churches open to the community and offering a warm welcome. We also welcomed pupils from St David's School back into St Michael's Church for regular assembly this week – the first time for 18 months!

Given the relatively high number of cases in Devon we are keeping our current guidance about social distancing and face coverings.

So please wear a face covering in church if you can and be mindful of keeping a safe distance from others indoors. Please 'mingle' outside church after the service rather than inside.

However, along with many churches, we agreed that congregational singing should resume. At St David's where there is a larger congregation we will start by having a few shorter hymns. At St Michael's we can allow more singing.

Please be mindful not only of your own wellbeing (especially if you're not vaccinated) but also of your neighbours' safety and make sure that you are not sitting directly behind other people especially if you would like to sing.

Remember: "space, face, grace"! Thank you for your consideration.

Our services today are:

9.30am Parish Communion (live streamed on St David's Church Exeter's Facebook Page) with celebrant and preacher Nigel Guthrie and deacon Ash Leighton Plom

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

Thrive – Sundays 4pm - On Zoom

Season of Creation

From 1st September to 4th October, the Christian family globally celebrates God's gift of creation. Join in online this Sunday 19th September at 4pm to explore this theme and reflect on the web of relationships that sustain the wellbeing of the Earth.

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88685738289?pwd=WEh1dINCY3NRQTIcCk9jV0xvMDZWajZBQT09>

Meeting ID: 886 8573 8289 Passcode: 159821

Services in church and online this week

Tuesday 21 August, St Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist, 9.30 Morning Prayer on Zoom. 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?](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.aimermedia.dailyprayer&hl=en_GB&gl=US)

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

Wednesday 22 September, Ember Day, 9.30am Mattins and 10am Mass (also live streamed on St Michael's Facebook page) at St Michael's Church

Thursday 23 September, 10.30 Holy Communion at St David's Church

6pm Sung Vespers at St Michael's Church (also live streamed on Friends of St Michael's Facebook Page)

Friday 24 September, Ember Day, 9.30 Morning Prayer at St David's Church (also live streamed on St David's Facebook Page)

Sunday 26 September – Trinity 17

9.30am Parish Communion at St David's with celebrant, Belinda Speed-Andrews and preacher, Howard Friend (live streamed on St David's Exeter Facebook page)

11am Mass at St Michael's with celebrant and preacher, David Gunn-Johnson

3pm Ordination of Priests at St David's Church with the Bishop of Crediton. Pre-booking needed due to limited seating.

4pm Thrive on Zoom

Covid-19 Safe for Public Worship

Please avoid touching door handles – Thank you.

Please use hand sanitizer 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'; congregational singing is being re-introduced.

Toilet facilities are available. 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.

Harvest Gifts at St David's – 19th September

We will make a collection of good for the larder at the Esther Community on St David's Hill. There are quite a few items they **don't** use including:

Tinned Soup, Tinned Fruit, Kidney Beans, Lentils and Breakfast Cereal.

But they are always grateful for pasta and sauces and other long-lasting items that can be enjoyed by the young residents.

Thank you.

Food for the Vulnerably housed in Exeter

Working through St Petrock's we are providing 16 packed suppers each week for people who are in transitional accommodation at the Crescent. Thank you to the small team which has convened to buy and make them. We don't need any additional support at the moment as there is a significant amount in our 'Soup Evening' kitty which can fund this for the time being.

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)

Clearing up (if needed) the churchyard on Sunday mornings before the service (equipment provided). Thank you!

Men's Breakfast

The next Men's Breakfast will be Saturday 25th September at 10am at the Farmers' Union. We may have to be on two separate tables depending on numbers on the day. Please contact Nigel if you would like to be on a mailing list reminder for this.

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

Belinda is leading a study group based on 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 think and discern what God is calling us to for the next 5 years.

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

The dates for the meetings at 7.30pm are: Thursday 23 September and Thursday 14 October, before a parish meeting with Archdeacon Andrew Beane on Saturday October 16th. It would be good to have as many people as possible from both churches at that meeting when Andrew will outline possibilities for the future organisation of ministry in Exeter city and listen to our hopes and plans.

Grow Courses

The Diocese of Exeter offers courses to help *you* grow in prayer, make new disciples, and serve the people of Devon with joy. Sessions coming up include 'Sharing Our

Faith', 'Stewardship Advocates', and 'Pastoral Care'. For more information or to sign up, please see <https://exeter.anglican.org/ministry/lay-ministry/lay-learning/>

Piano free to good home

A good condition, compact, upright "Fazer" piano – is free to a good home (subject to cost of transport from Pewsey) - please contact Robert Mitchell.

School Caretaker needed

St David's School need to recruit a Caretaker for 10 hours per week over 52 weeks @£10.45 per hour. Full DBS is required. Uniform and training provided.

For more information please contact Lisa Heard on 07585 980724 or email Lisa at lisaheard@ncsgrp.co.uk

Parent and Toddler Group

We are looking at the possibility of setting up a weekly drop-in session at St Michael's Church for parents and toddlers associated with St David's School. If you could help regularly or on a more occasional basis please have a word with Ash. It would be great to open up St Michael's and welcome families associated with our parish school. Thank you for considering this.

Traidcraft Stall

The Traidcraft Stall is at St David's today.

Green Team

Thank you to those who have filled in the Survey on sustainable forms of transport. The results are now published and displayed on a board at the back of St David's Church.

Green Event

Thank you to everyone who worked so hard so make this a success, with organisation, setting up, the provision of stalls, activities and refreshments. Our visitors and guest were very positive about the morning, and about our aims, and the refreshments were greatly enjoyed!

Fruit trees for the churchyard

We are going to be working with the YMCA further to improve diversity and interest in the churchyard and we would like to raise money for a few more fruit trees, hopefully to plant this autumn. If you would like to donate a fruit tree for the

churtyard would you make your offer to Clive Wilson please? We estimate that they will cost in the range of £20-£30 each. Thank you to those who have already donated. This appeal will close next Sunday, 26th September so we can order and plant the trees this autumn.

Ordination of Ash Leighton Plom

Ash will be ordained along with three other candidates by the Bishop of Crediton on Sunday 26th September at 3pm. Unfortunately there will only be a very restricted number of places available. **If you would like to attend the ordination please contact Nigel on nigel.guthrie1@gmail.com**

We plan to buy a stole for Ash to celebrate his ordination and if you would like to contribute would you give your contribution to Glynis Harflett or Stephanie Aplin, please. Any excess money will be given to Ash as a gift for books or anything else that will enhance his ministry. Ash will celebrate his first communion on Michaelmas, Wednesday 29th September at 7.30pm at St Michael's when we plan to provide drinks, cake and a presentation.

Parish Magazine – New Leaves

Please pick up your magazine for September. Thank you to our magazine team and distributors, especially Richard Barnes who has moved to Scotland this week having given great support to the magazine team.

Phone Networks

If would like to be phoned by someone from the church community or would just like to talk, please let Nigel know at nigel.guthrie1@gmail.com or by ringing him on 01392 660226 or Ash on 07855305519.

St Michael's services and prayers

If you would like to access the service details and prayer list for St Michael's please contact Oliver Nicholson at virtualsaintmichaels@gmail.com and he can add you to that weekly mailing.

Your Prayers are asked for...

Please remember those who have died recently including:

Sylvia Pritchard, David Rabson

In the **Parish Cycle of Prayer**: Please give thanks for our food, Traidcraft Stall and Edibles Stall at St David's, the Bountiful Table at St Michael's and our overseas missionary links

Please also pray for:

the farmers of Devon, giving thanks for their work in producing food and enhancing the environment;
the Diocese of Melanesia as they remember the 150th anniversary of the martyrdom of Bishop John Coleridge Patterson and his Companions;
for the people of Melanesia whose islands are threatened by rising sea level;
the people of Afghanistan, especially girls being denied their right to schooling;
the humane and generous treatment of migrants and refugees arriving in this country;
the worldwide Covid 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;
those suffering from Covid around the world;
those working towards a more sustainable future;
the forthcoming COP26 conference.

With every blessing,

Nigel Guthrie

Prayers and Readings for Trinity 16, 19 September 2021 for Harvest (at St David's only)

Collect

Eternal God,
You crown the year with your goodness
And you give us the fruits of the earth in their season:
Grant that we may use them to your glory,
For the relief of those in need and for our own well-being;
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 – James 3:13 - 4:3, 7-8a

Who is wise and understanding among you? Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not be boastful and false to the truth. Such wisdom does not come down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, devilish. For where there is envy and selfish ambition, there will also be disorder and wickedness of every kind. But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy. And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace.

Those conflicts and disputes among you, where do they come from? Do they not come from your cravings that are at war within you? You want something and do not have it; so you commit murder. And you covet something and cannot obtain it; so you engage in disputes and conflicts. You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, in order to spend what you get on your pleasures. Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you.

Gospel Reading – Mark 4: 1-9

Again Jesus began to teach beside the lake. Such a very large crowd gathered around him that he got into a boat on the lake and sat there, while the whole crowd was beside the lake on the land. He began to teach them many things in parables, and in his teaching he said to them: ‘Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seed fell on the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and it sprang up quickly, since it had no depth of soil. And when the sun rose, it was scorched; and since it had no root, it withered away. Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain. Other seed fell into good soil and brought forth grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirty and sixty and a hundredfold.’ And he said, ‘Let anyone with ears to hear listen!’

Address for 19 September ‘Harvest Festival’ by Nigel Guthrie

I’ve recently been enjoying the book ‘Wilding’ by the aptly named Isabella Tree which tells the recent story of the Knepp Estate in West Sussex. I’ve found it a fascinating and inspiring read, bristling with alternative thoughts about what constitutes a healthy environment. The 3,500 acre estate was intensively farmed from the second world war until the year 2000. By then it was very apparent that the heavy clay soils were never going to produce sufficient yield to break even in the

modern world, let alone make a sustainable profit. So Isabella and her husband, Charlie Burrell, took the dramatic and controversial decision to turn the estate over to nature and run it with minimal human intervention. Now the herds of free roaming longhorn cattle, Tamworth pigs, Exmoor ponies, deer and most recently beavers manage the ecology of the landscape.

Within five years the number species and density of wildlife had increased massively and the site has since become a very significant model for conservation in the UK, showing how much can be achieved through low intervention management of the land. Species such as the turtle dove and nightingale find refuge there together with such important insects as the Purple Emperor butterfly. In a number of ways the project at Knepp has set the scene for the conservation projects we are now seeing around us. Their work on their short section of the river Adur, reminded me of the current projects on the river Otter and on the Tamar where rivers are being allowed to reclaim previously drained land to mitigate against increasingly heavy and unpredictable rainfall.

If you are my age or older you probably remember coming home from car journeys in summer with the car plastered with dead flies. That hasn't happened for many years and it's just one small indication of the collapse of biodiversity which was outlined in the 2013 State of Nature report. Intensive land use, loss of varied habitats, overuse of pesticides and urban development have all taken their toll. Perhaps above all the fragmentation of viable areas of habitat has made it harder for species to maintain viable breeding populations.

But I found the book very hopeful, offering just the sort of hope which is much needed at the moment as we realise what an enormous challenge it is to tackle the human causes of climate change and adapt to a warming and less reliable climate. The dire warning this week about the projected warming should certainly sharpen our prayer in the lead up to the United Nations Climate Change Conference, COP 26 in Glasgow in early November.

But for me the story of Knepp illustrated two very striking things. Firstly, the interdependence of so many species and varieties of plants and animals. This web of life is easily disturbed and its hard to predict what the outcome of the removal of any one species will be. When the larger animals are taken out of the environment many other plants and animals lose habitats which are created by their behaviour. And the

same is true of plant life, too. I'd never heard the old woodland saying 'the thorn is the mother of the oak' which refers to the way in which oak saplings can be protected from grazing animals by growing up through dense thorns. The creation which God has made is an extraordinarily intricate web. We cannot possibly survive as a species without learning to live with and respect our fellow creatures, whether they are animals or plants. Learning to let other species thrive must surely be an absolute priority for us and must inform all of our activities. And that will be quite a change. Although the Wilding book is not overtly spiritual the author quotes from the 2015 encyclical of Pope Francis at the beginning of the final chapter:

'We have come to see ourselves as lords and masters of the Earth, entitled to plunder her at will. The sickness evident in the soil, in the water, in the air and in all forms of life symptoms that reflect the violence present in our hearts. We have forgotten that we ourselves are dust of the Earth; that we breathe her air and receive life from her waters.' (Laudate Si, 2015)

And secondly the story of Knepp brought home to me what an incredible capacity the earth and its species have to survive and regenerate. The speed at which species returned to Knepp and their variety and abundance surprised even those who were enthusiasts for the project. I wonder if you've seen programmes about the area around the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Station, the site of the world's worst nuclear accident in 1986. Where people have abandoned the area nature has taken over and flourished in a way that seems almost incongruous; it's now the third largest nature reserve in mainland Europe! God has not only entrusted us with a beautiful and bountiful earth but has created it with an extraordinary potential to recreate and renew itself.

The earth has been deeply traumatized before, as when the dinosaurs became extinct. I'm sure that it has the capacity to survive the current climate crisis, but at what cost to the human family and to many other parts of the created order?

Harvest Festival is a time for thanksgiving for the provision which we receive from God. This spirit and practice of thankfulness is good for our souls. When we say grace before meals we are carrying this good practice and the spirit of Harvest thanksgiving into each day.

And at Harvest we give thanks for the abundance of the earth, for the work of farmers, lorry drivers and shop workers who provide food in the city. But we are also aware of the threats to food production; the prolonged droughts in north America and many other places, the extreme heat which causes fires and desiccates the landscape, and the sudden flooding that washes away crops and livelihoods. Our failures in stewardship are becoming all too apparent and yet there are also hopeful signs springing up all around us that change can happen. The wilding of Knepp certainly struck me as one of those hopeful signs. And perhaps you saw the joyful video of a huge pod of more than a hundred humpback whales feeding off the Australian coast this week? A real conservation success.

So, alongside the need to lobby our politicians and pray for the forthcoming COP26 must run those essential Christian works of thanksgiving for all that is good and the fostering of hope for the future. Because the positive change that is so badly needed will come from a place of hope not despair. God has given us a wonderful, interdependent and resilient world which gives us grounds to trust in his loving provision and the incentive to leave this world in a state fit for those who will come after us.

Closing Prayer

Lord of the Harvest,

With joy we have offered thanksgiving for your love in creation

And have shared in the bread and wine of the kingdom:

By your grace plant within us a reverence for all that you give us

And make us generous and wise stewards of the good things we enjoy;

Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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

--

Prebendary Nigel Guthrie

95 Howell Road

Exeter EX4 4LH

nigel.guthrie1@gmail.com