

St David's with St Michael's and All Angels, Mount Dinham, Exeter Newsletter for Sunday 21 November 2021 – Christ the King

Dear Friends,

Welcome to this week's newsletter.

Today at **St David's** we will bless the shoeboxes for Moldova and welcome Hugh Scudder from Christian Response to Eastern Europe. At **St Michael's** on we will hold a congregational meeting after 11am Mass to talk about the St Michael's Committee and the options presented recently by Archdeacon Andrew.

In view of the high incidence of Covid infections we are keeping our current guidance about social distancing and face coverings in place. So please wear a face covering in church if you can and be mindful of keeping a safe distance from others indoors. Please be patient, kind and respect the personal space of other people if they don't wish to get too close!

Our services today are:

9.30am Parish Communion at St David's (live streamed on St David's Church Exeter Facebook Page) with dedication of shoeboxes for Moldova with celebrant Ash Leighton Plom and preacher, Howard Friend

11am Sung Mass at St Michael's with act of Remembrance, celebrant Nigel Guthrie preacher, Howard Friend

4pm Thrive Meeting – Alpha on Zoom

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88685738289?pwd=WEh1dlNCY3NRQTlCcXFjK2ZlejR0UT09>

Meeting ID: 886 8573 8289 Passcode: 159821

Thank you to everyone who's been part of Alpha at Thrive so far, and a warm invite to you to drop in for this session if you've been missing out. This week, we talk about why and how to read the bible.

6pm Evening Prayer in St David's Lady Chapel led by Nigel Guthrie

Services in church and online this week

Tuesday 23 November, Clement of Rome, Martyr, 9.30am on Zoom

Please join us on this link:

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

Meeting ID: 660 226 1392

Passcode: 196651

6pm Sung Vespers at St Michael's

Wednesday 24 November, 9.30am Mattins and 10 Mass at St Michael's

Thursday 25 November, Isaac Watts, hymn writer & Catherine of Alexandria, Martyr,

10.30am Holy Communion at St David's Church followed by refreshments

11.30am Prayers for YMCA Exeter. Come and pray for the work of YMCA Exeter, their staff, and the young people they support. The Y report they've already seen prayers answered in the lives of team members and transformation of clients' situations across the city. We meet at St David's Church on the last Thursday of every month, 11.30am-12.30pm.

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

Friday 26 November, 9.30 Morning Prayer at St David's Church (live streamed on St David's Facebook Page)

10.30am Rededication of Mount Dinham Almshouses by Nigel Guthrie

Sunday 28 November – Advent Sunday

9.30am Parish Communion at St David's. Celebrant, Jonathan Draper and preacher, Nigel Guthrie (live streamed on St David's Exeter Facebook page) with the dedication of knitted angels for distribution around the parish

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

4pm Thrive – Alpha Course - on Zoom

6pm Evening Prayer (said) at St David's

Covid-19 Safe for Public Worship

Please use hand sanitizer on entering and leaving church and wear a face covering in church unless you are exempt.

At St David's we encourage 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. Services should be 'no longer than necessary'.

Please 'mingle' carefully after the service and chat outside rather than inside (weather permitting). 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.

Please mingle with care before and 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.

Fairtrade at St David's

There will be a Fairtrade Stall today at St David's and pre-ordered Advent Calendars will be available to collect.

Angel Tree Collection at St David's

A huge '**Thank You**' to everyone who contributed to the collection for 'Angel Tree' at St David's last week. We raised a superb total of £800 which will go to help inmates at Exeter prison buy presents for their children this Christmas.

Funeral Service for Mollie Curry

A service of remembrance and celebration of Mollie's life will be held on Wednesday 1st December. The funeral service will be at St David's Church at 10am and will be followed by a reception at Exeter Castle from 12 noon. Mollie's family have asked that everyone should feel welcome. Donations in memory of Mollie may be given to Hospiscare instead of giving flowers: www.justgiving.com/Mollie-Curry. Dress is not black, please!

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.

Men's Breakfast

The next Men's Breakfast will be next Saturday 27th November at 10am at the Farmers' Union. Please contact Nigel if you would like to be on a mailing list reminder for this.

Shoe Boxes for Moldova (advanced notice)

We are sending Christmas Boxes to Moldova again this year. Things are extremely difficult there at the moment, and anything we can do to brighten life is greatly appreciated. The boxes will be blessed by Ash this Sunday and Hugh Skudder (who has recently returned from Moldova) from Christian Response to Eastern Europe will be with us. Any questions, please speak to Ann Watts.

Coffee after Church

It's not too late to volunteer to help on the coffee rota at St David's. If you would be willing to help with this ministry of hospitality please contact Jenny Baker.

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?

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

Help with Stained Glass

The lovely stained glass panels in the south transept are usually changed with the season and John Wakley would like to instruct a few people on how to change them round safely. Please have a word with Nigel if you'd be willing to learn.

Green Team

Thank you also to everyone who has sponsored a fruit tree for St David's Churchyard. We have 21 trees coming! We plan to plant the first and main batch on the morning of November 27th after Men's Breakfast. If you'd like to help please meet in the churchyard at 11.15am

Exeter Wildlife Gardening Award

Could you contribute to biodiversity in Exeter by taking part in this award? There are many simple things we can do to give nature a better foothold in our city. Why not have a look at the award and see if you can adapt your garden?

<https://www.devonwildlifetrust.org/take-action/garden-wildlife/exeter-wildlife-gardening-award>

Parish Magazine – New Leaves

The magazines for November are now available. Thank you to our dedicated magazine team for their hard work.

Phone Networks

If you 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...

those participating in our Alpha Course on Zoom

Please remember those who are suffering including:

all those suffering with Covid.

Please remember those who have died recently including:

Alan John Taylor, Adam Smethurst, Mollie Curry

In the **Parish Cycle of Prayer:** Exeter College Staff and Students

Please also pray for:

the COP26 conference in Glasgow - for purposeful follow-up;
those worried about the rising costs of energy and housing in this country;
those working to make social media platforms safer and more respectful places;
the work of Christian Response to Eastern Europe and those who receive Christmas shoeboxes and other aid;
those living in poverty in Eastern Europe and refugees on the borders of Europe;
the refugees from Afghanistan staying in Exmouth and Exeter;
the people of Ethiopia facing severe food shortages due to the conflict there;
the worldwide Covid vaccination programme, and the roll-out of booster vaccines;
those working in care homes, hospitals and hospices and the ambulance service;
those suffering from Covid around the world.

With every blessing,

Nigel Guthrie

Prayers, Readings and address for Remembrance Sunday, 14 November 2021

Collect

Eternal Father,
whose Son Jesus Christ ascended to the throne of heaven
that he might rule over all things as Lord and King:
keep the Church in the unity of the Spirit
and in the bond of peace,
and bring the whole created order to worship at his feet;
who liveth and reigneth with thee,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

First Reading – Revelation 1: 4b-8

Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.
To him who loves us and freed us from our sins by his blood, and made us to be a kingdom, priests serving his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.
Look! He is coming with the clouds;

every eye will see him,
even those who pierced him;
and on his account all the tribes of the earth will wail.
So it is to be. Amen.

‘I am the Alpha and the Omega’, says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

Gospel Reading – John 18: 33-37

Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, ‘Are you the King of the Jews?’ Jesus answered, ‘Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?’ Pilate replied, ‘I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?’ Jesus answered, ‘My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here.’ Pilate asked him, ‘So you are a king?’ Jesus answered, ‘You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.’

Address for 21 November by Howard Friend

Christ the King

On the subject of Kings. How well do you know your Jungle Book – the Disney film version that is?

Do you perhaps remember King Louie's song? (Ah I see some of you do!)

Now - it may not be immediately obvious what this has to do Christ the King. But - stay tuned - as they say - and you'll find out.

And talking of tunes – from memory - I think his song goes something like this.

Well - I'm the King of the Swingers Yeah – a Jungle VIP

I've reached the top and had to stop and that's what bothering me.

I wanna be a Man – man cub – and stroll right into town

And be just like the other men

I'm tired of monkeying around

Oh - Oe be do I wanna be like you.etc etc

And I won't ask you to join in the chorus for fear of lowering the tone around here - in this sacred space!

But - if you're lucky you might get another verse later!

Well now - King Louie's dilemma - what exactly is it? - perhaps it's something we can all identify with. – What he's got - just isn't enough any more.

His little kingdom doesn't hack it, it doesn't satisfy. He wants more, he wants better. Does that feel familiar?

Let's look at it another way - maybe our little world, our kingdom, which seemed so secure just a short while ago - now – suddenly - seems very fragile, rather wobbly. Maybe that best describes your position – you're in a world turned upside down by grief or illness or circumstance and worry. Your little Kingdom is in a mess. It's in decline.

Cos that's the thing about Kings and Kingdoms isn't it? They come and they go – principally because they're built on top-down power, might and ruthless acquisition. Eventually another stronger power exploits a weakness and takes over.

Our own personal Kingdoms - too are often built on self interest, acquisition, and if not a disregard for others then at least a prioritisation of self.

And sometimes, just now and again, we have cause to question their permanence.

So whether you think you've reached the top and had to stop and are bothered, whether you want something more - or whether your kingdom, your world is in a mess - what exactly does the Kingdom of God with Christ as King have to offer.

What is the truth Pilate so famously sought in that conversation he had with Jesus in his Palace that we read about in our Gospel reading just now.

Well here's the answer Jesus just might have given – perhaps:

Yeah they say I'm the King of the Jews but perhaps it's harder to see that I'm the King of the whole wide world from now to eternity.

So if you've got some sense Man – get up and follow me – cos I'm the King of Love and Peace from here to Eternity. .

Oh do be dee - you gotta be like me, (walk like me, talk like me and pretty soon you'll see).

And - I could go on – but for those of you who are perhaps not Disney fans – and care not for King Louie.

Let me finish on a more orthodox note.

The Feast of Christ the King, the culmination of our liturgical year, was instituted not that long ago in 1925 by Pope Pius XI – as a counterbalance - to what he saw as the twin dangers of rising secularism and nationalism. He got that right didn't he?

This feast was and is a call to recognise Christ as King of our Hearts and King of our World.

His is a Kingdom of Love and Peace, and Justice.

Perhaps most importantly the King is no ordinary King, as he intimates in his reply to Pilate's question. He is a Servant King, a King who washes his own disciples feet. It's an upside down Kingdom. Where the ruler of all is the Servant of all.

This Kingdom is not geographic it's spiritual.

It is the place where God's love rules: in our hearts, in our community here at St David's / St Michaels.

Whatever the state of our world, our Kingdom – today – I urge us all to get our priorities right to allow God's Holy Spirit to refocus our lives on what is really important:

When we pray as we will shortly:

Our Father who art in Heaven,

Hallowed be thy name

Thy Kingdom come

Let's take those words a little more seriously than we normally do as we skip through the prayer.

Today of all days:

Christ the King invites us all to be part of his present reality and future hope.

Christ the Servant King.

Do be doo!

Closing Prayer

Stir up, we beseech thee, O Lord, the wills of thy faithful people; that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may of thee be plenteously rewarded; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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

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