

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

Newsletter for 25 October 2020.

Dear Friends

Welcome to this weekly update for the Last Sunday After Trinity.

Sunday Worship

This Sunday the 9.30am service from St David's will be live streamed on Facebook at <http://facebook.com/stdavidschurchexeter/>

Belinda Speed-Andrews will be celebrating at St David's with Nigel Guthrie preaching at St David's and at St Michael's. Nigel will also be celebrating at Mary Harris Chapel at 7pm.

Services this Week

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

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

This important meeting in our church life is on Tuesday 27th October at 7.30pm

in St David's Church. Please come along if you can in person or by logging in to the zoom code below. **The Agenda, Minutes of the APCM and EPCM and Accounts**

will be sent out using the usual Sunday mailing list.

Please let Helena know if you would NOT like to receive them.

Paper copies will not be available due to Covid restrictions.

Nomination forms for churchwardens and PCC members are available in church.

Please submit an activities report for your group as soon as you can to

Helena Walker, our PCC secretary: pccsecretary@stdavidschurchexeter.org.uk

Please consider if God might be calling you to stand as Churchwarden

for the parish or Chapel warden at St Michael's and speak to Nigel, Glynis or Emma if you might be willing to stand or to explore what this means.

If you would like to attend by Zoom here is the code:

Join Zoom Meeting

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

Meeting ID: 660 226 1392

Passcode: 196651

Covid-19 Safe

These are the provisions we are making to keep worshippers as safe as possible.

We were reminded at our recent meeting with Bishop Robert that we should not mingle at the end of services. If you are buying something from Traidcraft or Bountiful Table please treat it like a small shop and just approach one at a time.

After consultation we have decided to encourage people to use both exits to get out of church rather than having a one-way system which doesn't work very well in our buildings. Please avoid touching door handles – Thank you.

Hand sanitizer must be used on entering and leaving church.

We should now wear face coverings in church. There are important exemptions which can be found at

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-08/COVID%2019%20advice%20on%20face%20coverings%20v3.0.pdf>

and which include those with a hearing impairment.

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.

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, with notices on the pews that should be kept clear.

Please observe appropriate distancing from others at all times.

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

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

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.

Help with Track and Trace on Sundays

We would really appreciate a few more volunteers to help take names and numbers at the beginning of services at St David's. What it entails is being in Church from 9.05am and taking everyone's details as they arrive (including those already in the building) and then going to your seat as the service starts.

It would be good to share out the load over a month. **Please speak to one of our churchwardens or to Sue Wilson if you would be willing to help.**

Food for vulnerable community housed at the Great Western Hotel

A huge thank you for the help and donations that have already been offered towards making our Tuesday packed suppers. If you would like to help make up the rolls at 5pm or provide small bags of crisps or individually wrapped chocolate bars towards this outreach work then please have a word with Phil and Moira Dale or Mary Quest, or me. This arrangement is likely to last until March and we may receive funding towards the food we provide.

Live Daily Prayers

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

On 'St David's Church Exeter' page: Tuesday and Friday at 9am.

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

Funerals this week

The funeral of Maurice Wright will take place on Tuesday 27th October at 11am in St David's Church. Please let Nigel Guthrie know if you would like to attend. There should be some spaces.

The funeral of Pam Stephens will take place on Thursday 29th October at 2.30pm at Exeter Crematorium. Please let Paula Lawford know if you would like to attend.

Psalms Bible Study by Zoom

Our Psalms Bible Study on Zoom will start again in November. It will run on the following **Tuesdays at 2pm**: 3 and 10th November.

Advent Fair, Saturday November 28th, 11am -2pm

We are hoping to run a Covid secure Advent Fair at St David's on November 28th and would like to appeal for some assistance. Volunteers are particularly wanted to help decorate the church with ivy and seasonal colour and to help on the day. Please have a word with Glynis if you would like to help with this.

Thank you to...

A special thank you to Doug Allen who has mended and repainted the St David's noticeboard at the Queen's Terrace end of church. It is looking very smart now!

Also, a big thank you this week to David Allin who has repaired the wooden flooring at the back of the nave at St David's. It had become a trip hazard but is now solid and smooth!

Shoebboxes for Moldova

For many years we have, as a church, been supporting CREE (Christian Response to Eastern Europe) by sending Christmas Shoe Boxes to Moldova. We are doing it again this year. Our boxes need to be in church by the morning of **Sunday November 29th** for transport to Moldova.

For further information about box preparation can be found at:

www.cr2ee.org.uk

Please ring Ann Watts 01392 276948 for further information and look out for stories in the November magazine!

Reopening of Churches for public worship – a continuing process

Our churches are currently open for one midweek communion and one Sunday communion. We are keeping this under review in accordance with national and diocesan guidelines. The PCC has now agreed a Risk Assessment process to allow our buildings to be used by a small number of trusted groups. Thank you for keeping this process in your prayers.

Work on St David's Vestry Roof

Work will be starting shortly to make this roof watertight. Scaffold will be going up to enable safe access to the site.

Traidcraft Stall

Richard Featherstone will be taking orders for REAL advent calendars on the next three Sundays for delivery on November 22nd.

Many thanks for supporting Fair Trade producers.

Magazine

The deadline for contributions to our November October is this weekend. Thank you to our contributors, our editorial team and to those who distribute the magazine.

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 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...

Charles Argall, Janine, Charles Speed-Andrews, Maggs Bedford, Nicky Jarman and her husband Tim and their family, Jacqueline and her family, Joy and her family, Claude and Gillian Harbord, Elizabeth Hewitt, Anne Smith, Grace Tointon, Pam Smith and her family, James and Katy Tyler, Andrew Wakley, Rosemary Willcox, Hannah, David and Beryl.

Please remember Pam Stephens and Maurice Wright who have died recently. May they rest in the peace of Christ.

In the **Parish Cycle of Prayer** we pray for AGE UK services in the parish and city. Those providing informal support for vulnerable family and neighbours.

Please also pray for:

those not able to return to church and all who are worshipping with us at home;
all peoples suffering violence and conflict, including in Nagorno Karabakh and Libya
those areas and countries suffering most from Covid-19, and those who are feeling anxious or afraid;

our Government, local and national, in the difficult decisions they have to make and implement, our police service

those working in care homes and hospitals

those who are facing unemployment or economic hardship;

A Prayer for use during the Covid outbreak

Loving God, your Son Jesus Christ came that we might have life and have it abundantly;

pour out your blessing upon our nation;

where there is illness, bring your healing touch;

where there is fear, strengthen us with the knowledge of your presence;

where there is uncertainty, build us up in faith;

where there is denial, lead us into truth;

where there is discord, may we know the harmony of your love;

this we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

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

Collect, Readings and Address for Sunday 25th October

St David's Service will be live streamed on our Facebook page

Collect

Blessed Lord, who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning:
help us so to hear them,

to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them that, through patience, and the comfort of your holy word, we may embrace and for ever hold fast the hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our 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 – Colossians 3: 12-17

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Gospel Reading – Matthew 24: 30-35

Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see “the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven” with power and great glory. And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

‘From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see all these things, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

An Address by Nigel Guthrie, 25 October 2020

Tina and I were very fortunate to get away to Wales for a few days this week and to stay in a cottage right next to the river Usk. So instead of hearing the noise of traffic on New North Road in the morning and the sound of merry makers piling out of the Imperial in the evening all we could hear was the sound of birdsong and river tumbling over the stones and rocks. It was very much the same sound that our grandparents, and their grandparents might have heard. The scene was timeless,

serene and beautiful. It reminded me just how reassuring the natural world has been during these months dominated by the pandemic, and how much we should value and protect the green spaces around us.

But, of course the scene was not unchanging. As we spent a few days there we noticed that the red brown of the tree crowns were increasingly heralding the autumn and coming winter. And the river was different every day. After Wednesday's rain the rock in the river on which a dipper had been bobbing the previous day had completely disappeared under the current. And the couple who owned the cottage were upset that they would have to turn away the guests who had booked in over the next few weeks due to the Welsh lockdown. Even amongst the serenity of this Welsh valley we could not escape completely the realities of life and the inexorable passage of time.

In our readings from Matthew's gospel we have reached the section where Jesus warns his hearers of the end times. He gives them a series of pictures. Just as the tender stems and new shoots of the fig tree show that summer is near so the signs of the Son of Man show that a time of judgement is coming. Jesus needed to warn his hearers so that they could be prepared. Warnings are never comfortable but they are necessary, just like the bends ahead sign by the road!

These warnings of the end times are always disturbing to read, but perhaps they are especially disturbing at the moment when events in our world seem to be pointing to a time of trial and judgement. Covid 19 infection is on the increase and it seems that this country and many parts of the world will be very hard pressed in the coming months. Will we as individuals and as a country respond with compassion and kindness or will we seek to protect ourselves and not be so concerned about others?

And the changing climate points us to the possibility that all will not be well with our world unless we change radically the patterns of our life and especially of our consumption. The recent apocalyptic film by David Attenborough is a reminder that time is getting short for our human family to mend its ways.

Living in these times of warning and threat takes a toll on us all. How are we to live sustainably, not only in terms of the environment, but also in our emotional welfare and our relationships? Jesus says at the end of the Gospel reading 'Heaven and earth will pass away but my words will not pass away.' Resting in the word of God and allowing its meaning to move from our heads to our hearts is always a significant aspect of the Christian life, but now more so than ever. On this Bible Sunday it is

good to think about our own reading of the bible and listening to it. Are we digging deeply enough into it to find the nourishment and strength we need to sustain us? (if you would like to use Bible reading notes these can be ordered through Ann Barnett and if you would like to dig deeper with others do join us for our Tuesday Bible Study in the psalms on Zoom in November.)

Today's reading from Colossians gives us further guidance in how we might approach living in a time of warning and crisis. Paul urges us his hearers to clothe ourselves with some wonderful gifts: compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience. They are gifts to which we all aspire even if we don't always manage to showcase them! Paul then advocates forgiveness; that we should forgive each other just as the Lord has forgiven us; just like in the Lord's Prayer. He then reminds us to put on love which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

Finally in the passage Paul emphasizes the central place of thanksgiving in the Christian life. 'With gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs to God.' It has been a great loss to churches of all traditions that congregational singing has not been allowed due to the risk of Covid transmission. But it is great to have welcomed our choirs back in their distanced forms and perhaps their singing can remind us all of the joy of singing which will return in due course. Paul returns to that theme of gratitude in his final phrase too, 'Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.'

When we take time and trouble to thank God it doesn't mean that we are closing our minds and hearts to what is wrong or painful around us or within us. But it does mean that we continue to let our minds dwell on the love and goodness of God or we might say, to abide in God's love and goodness. Sustaining ourselves in testing times is essential if we are to support those around us and be of service. So switching off from the news, finding space to enjoy the natural world and whatever brings us joy is good. We cannot and should not ignore the warnings which come to us, but as we face them we must always keep in mind the goodness of God and his love shown to us in Jesus - and give thanks.

Closing Prayer

God of all grace, your Son Jesus Christ fed the hungry with the bread of his life and the word of his kingdom:
renew your people with your heavenly grace,
and in all our weakness sustain us by your true and living bread;

who is alive and reigns, now and for ever. Amen.

Do join us next week for our services in church or on Facebook

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