



Parish Leaflet

26/04/2020



Letter from the Rector

Five weeks ago, I wrote a letter in relation to Palm Sunday, Holy Week and Easter and how the restrictions imposed because of Covid-19 were going to affect our community. I had hoped that these restrictions would have been lifted and we would all be heading toward a normal life. Sadly, that is not the case and it seems we cannot be certain when and how the isolation restrictions will be lifted. Like everyone in our community the schedules, plans and services we had made as a benefice have been put on hold or cancelled. Like many small charities we find it difficult carry out our core functions and administration. However, we are adapting, and this leaflet is part of that. We would normally produce the Parish magazine every month but due to complications concerning delivery and printing etc, we have decided to produce a leaflet instead and distribute it in a different way. I would like to thank all those who have paid for the magazine and I would like to assure them we will return to our normal service as soon as possible. We are grateful, as always, to all who support the work of our Churches in our community. The leaflet can be obtained on our website <http://www.stjohnscil.org.uk/home>, at the three churches of our benefice St John's, St Luke's and St Marks and at the Rectory, 21 Grange Close, Carlton in Lindrick.

Although all churches are closed, there are numerous opportunities via the internet and social media to engage with church services. Many clergy are using Twitter and Facebook to engage with people in isolation, Christ Church and the Priory in Worksop are using this approach, please check out their websites for more details. I have not followed this approach because, I have a face best suited for radio, a voice best suited for silent movies and I have no idea how to utilise media in that way. It is probably better to leave that space to my more talented colleagues. However, we produce the Sunday readings and a commentary which is available by e-mail or can be collected from the same locations as the Parish Leaflets. Please contact me if you wish to receive the Sunday readings and commentaries via e-mail. (details below)

Most people have adapted to the restrictions placed upon us admirably. People are supporting their neighbours in a variety of ways; they seem more inclined to greet each other in the street, many are rediscovering the joys of walking and are learning new ways to conduct their lives. Hopefully when the restrictions are over, we will all value and hold on to the good things we have learned. We also need to remember that for many in our community this crisis has caused pain and misery and will have lasting effects into the future. Please keep those who are suffering now and in the future in your prayers. Also remember to thank God for the blessing we receive through his grace every day.

Over the last few weeks the daily scripture readings have covered readings from Exodus, Joshua, Colossians, Ephesians, Acts and of course the gospels. They have covered the liberation of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt and the entry into the promised land, and of course the resurrection of our Lord Jesus. A common thread running through them is the topic of Liberty.

When the Israelites were delivered from slavery, they spent a long time wandering in the desert. The book of Exodus records how they often complained to Moses about their situation and compared it to their time in Egypt; 'The Israelites said to them, 'If only we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and ate our fill of bread; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.'" (Exodus 16:3) In Exodus 16 we see one of several examples of the Israelites lamenting the security that came with their slavery and not realising that with Liberty comes responsibility. It took them forty years in the wilderness to learn that freedom is not the ability to do whatever you want, but the responsibility to do what is right. Over that forty years they learnt to be independent, to do what they ought and not what they want, to aspire for greater things, to be strong and courageous, and to trust in God.

Maybe we should be using our time in the wilderness of isolation as a nation, as communities and individuals to learn the same lessons, to look forward to the future and not become slaves to fear.

Be Bold, Be Strong
For The Lord Your God Is With You
Be Bold, Be Strong
For The Lord Your God Is With You
I Am Not Afraid, I Am Not Dismayed
Because I'm Walking In Faith And Victory
Come On And Walk In Faith And Victory
For The Lord Your God Is With You (Morris Chapman)

Here are a few inspirational and comforting scripture references for those who are interested; Psalms 23, 91, 103, 121. Isaiah 6:8, Jeremiah 29:11, Matthew 11:28-30, John 3:16, John 14:1-6, Romans 8: 38-39 & 10: 9-11. Hebrews 11:1,2. If you would like more, just open the bible on any page and you are likely to find something useful.

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace.

Rev Mark

Why not join spiritually at 9am every morning for Morning Prayer from your own homes (isolation capsules). The wonderful thing about prayer is that we can pray at all times and in all places, we don't need to be in church to do it. There are many websites, TV and radio channels that may be helpful if you need them. I would recommend downloading the C of E Daily Prayer phone app. It gives the liturgy for the daily prayer and the scripture readings in a simple easy to follow format.

For those of you who have access to the internet there are many useful resources available that also have interesting links to information and video services.

Useful websites.

Church of England website - <https://www.churchofengland.org>

C of E Facebook page - <https://www.facebook.com/thechurchofengland>

C of E Daily Prayer - <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer>

C of E guidance COVID-19 - <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-churches>

Southwell & Nottingham Diocese - <https://southwell.anglican.org>

Diocesan YouTube account - <https://www.youtube.com/user/dioceseofsouthwell>

Benefice website - <http://www.stjohnscil.org.uk/home>

Online Bible recuses - <https://www.biblegateway.com>

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Over the period of the 'Lockdown' I will be providing the Sunday scriptures readings with some of my thoughts on the readings in the form of a short commentary, do not worry it is not a sermon. If you or someone you know would like to receive the Sunday Scripture Readings and Commentary, please send me an e-mail stating 'Commentary request' so that I can add you to my list.

If you need to discuss anything or communicate with me, please do not hesitate to do so using my contact detail below.

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