

Dear Friends

'God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.' (Psalm 46.1, NIV)

It seems extraordinary to think that we're now into week seven of lockdown! It seems odd to think that just three months ago it would have been almost impossible to imagine what we are now experiencing as 'normality'; life can change much more quickly than we expect.

Earlier this week, the States released details of the various stages of exiting the lockdown. Churches may be open for private prayer in Phase 3 – though this will be subject to various conditions (yet to be formulated). It looks like Phase 4 may include the re-opening of church buildings for worship, however it is highly likely that this will not be for worship as we knew it!

When we first entered lockdown, I imagined it would be for a few weeks and then everything would be back to normal. However, as time has moved on, it has become clear that this cannot be the case.

Although it's an odd time in this 'in-between' place, I have begun to get used to our 'new normal' and it's been heartening to see many of you at our weekly Zoom service.

This week, please do take the time to pray for, or check in with, people who you might not have been in touch with since lockdown began, and particularly those who you have assumed will be fine! Seven weeks is a long time, even for the most resilient introverts among us; allow your perceptions of them to be changed! And if you're one of those resilient introverts whose resilience is running low, be kind to yourself and have the courage to ask for the support that you need.

Liberation Day

To remind you, the Liberation Day Church Service takes place at 11.00am and is led by the Very Reverend Tim Barker, Dean of Guernsey. Hymns and prayers will be published in the Guernsey Press on May 7th and a full Order of Service can be found at www.liberationday.gg. The service is being broad cast on BBC Radio Guernsey and on Facebook.com/LiberationGSY and www.liberationday.gg.

It would be lovely if people could decorate their homes and front gardens with bunting and flags. Please send us photos of your decorations taken on Liberation Day and we will put them on the website.

Worship this week

Our weekly worship takes place via Zoom every Sunday at 10.30am.

This week's order of service is attached. As you will see, it is very similar to last week's (except the Collect and hymn are updated). I am also attaching the Collect and hymn as a separate doc for those who just want the updated parts. I am trying something different with the music. A trial run through has yielded a vast improvement so hopefully the sound quality will be much improved.

Please click on the following link to access and join this Sunday's service:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86797841792?pwd=L3RrVDVqK1RkNmVHRjR1M0JtSjBWUT09>

You should not need the meeting ID and password but in case you do, they are:

Meeting ID: 867 9784 1792

Password: 087256

Worshipping in this way won't be everyone's cup of tea and so I highlight below, the religious broadcasts on the BBC this coming week.

TELEVISION:

Sunday 10.45am (BBC1) *Sunday Worship* A service giving thanks for VE Day from Hereford Cathedral.

1.15pm (BBC1) *Songs of Praise* The Bishop of Dover reveals the part played by churches at the end of the war in Europe.

RADIO: Friday 9.30am (World Service) *Heart and Soul* People of faith reflect on the pandemic.

Sunday 8.10am (R4) *Sunday Worship* Lord Williams of Oystermouth considers the challenges of emerging from the Covid-19 epidemic.

3pm (R3) *Choral Evensong* A repeat of last week's archive recording from Tewkesbury Abbey, first broadcast on 7 May 2014.

Wednesday 3.30pm (R3) *Choral Evensong* An archive recording from the London Festival of Contemporary Church Music at St Pancras Church, London, first broadcast on 14 May 2014.

Monday – Friday

9:45am (R4 Long wave) Daily Service

The following free resources, complimenting this Sunday's lectionary themes are available from Roots on the web:

For adults

www.rootsontheweb.com/adultsathome10may

For families

www.rootsontheweb.com/familiesathome10may

Updated Resources

You might like to consider trying one or some of these:

[Prayer](#)

Join [evening prayer live from Taizé](#), broadcast from the community on their Facebook page.

The [Time to Pray app](#) (Church House Publishing/Aimer Media) includes the orders of service for both Prayer During the Day and Night Prayer. The app is now completely free to use.

The [Time to Pray podcast](#) features daily audio to accompany the app.

[Radio 4's Daily Service](#) features a Bible reading, prayer, and music.

Music

Join RSCM in singing their [Hymn for the Day](#). A new video with music and lyrics is published every day, Monday to Saturday.

Worship

[A free phone line, Daily Hope](#), offers Church of England prayers, hymns and reflections 24 hours a day: 0800 8048044

Listen to [David Suchet read the Sunday lectionary readings](#) each week. The recordings are from the NIV Audio Bible via Soundcloud, which you can use either personally or download for use in online services (Hodder Faith).

WhatsApp Prayer Group

Please do think about joining with others to form a small prayer group – you can meet for free using WhatsApp or Zoom. We have created two groups and they are an ideal way to meet together informally to share prayer together and offer encouragement and support to each other.

If you would like to be a part of a group, please email me and we will set up some more groups.

Remember the words of 1 Thessalonians 5:11 *“Therefore **encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.**”*

Bible Study Group

Our online Bible Study Group continues on Thursday evenings (via Zoom) using the Bible Society's 'Bible Course'.

If you would prefer to join a daytime group, please let me know and I will set one up.

Pastoral Support

'Elevenses on Tuesday' – a coffee morning every Tuesday morning at 11am by Zoom. Make your coffee, bring your cake (not obligatory!) and get comfy on the sofa. Dial in to Zoom by clicking on the following link:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84014176329?pwd=QTK0ME5nYlZwaklKVUFnVGlvOW9SQTO9>

Meeting ID: 840 1417 6329

Password: 021671

We are continuing to try to ensure that congregation members receive a phone call every few days from one of our church leadership teams. Should you wish for specific spiritual support then please do be in touch with either me (my details are below) or John Le Page on 257436.

Reflection for this Commemoration of VE Day on Luke 6.31-38 from the Church of England's Easter Pilgrim Daily Reflections

³¹ Do to others as you would have them do to you.

³² 'If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. ³³ If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. ³⁴ If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. ³⁵ But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. ³⁶ Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

³⁷ 'Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; ³⁸ give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.'

Reflection

Jesus goes further and deeper. The refrain for the Church, the new community, is forgiveness: 'Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.'

Life together in families, communities and nations is only possible with the oil of forgiveness. When we hold on to slights and grudges and allow them to build up, whole lives are wasted by hate. Bitterness can ruin more lives than bombs and bullets.

Forgiving others is always hard. But it is more possible when we remind ourselves each day of how much we have been forgiven. Only then can we let go of others' debts to us.

Jesus teaches us to pray each day: 'Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.'

Look back over the last five days. What have you learned about the layers of meaning in '*Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us*'?

And pray:

Give us true repentance;
forgive us our sins of negligence and ignorance

and our deliberate sins;
and grant us the grace of your Holy Spirit
to amend our lives according to your holy word.

From the Litany

Every blessing for your commemorations today of VE Day and tomorrow of Liberation Day and for this coming week.

Gill

Revd Gill Nobes

Rector of St. Sampson

8 May 2020

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