

Dear Friends

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

Our whole Easter season has been spent in 'lockdown' and this coming week, we reach Ascension Day. We will be having a special evening service (please see details below) on Thursday 21st. At the service we will be launching this year's Thy Kingdom Come novena of prayer which lasts from Ascension Day to Pentecost. The Church of England's Thy Kingdom Come Team have prepared special resources for this lockdown period and I will be suggesting some specific prayer activities that we can all engage with. An interactive prayer map is available – allegedly for families. However, I saw the Archbishop of Canterbury was having a lot of fun using it, so I will circulate details to you all early next week!

It seems to me that it is even more important this year, in the shadow of Covid 19, that we should have a focused period of prayer. I do hope that you will be able to set some time aside, try out some of the resources and join in prayer with Christians around the world.

Stop Press!

The States of Guernsey have announced today that we will move in to Phase 3 of unlock tomorrow (16th).

The Churchwardens and I have agreed that with effect from Monday 18th May, St. Sampson's Church will be open for private prayer. If you wish to visit the church, please check the website for details of opening times. The Churchwardens and I request that you please adhere to the social distancing and hygiene notices displayed in the entrance lobby.

It is not the usual practice for St. Mary's to be open other than for congregational services and St. Mary's therefore remains closed.

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.

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

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81850845737?pwd=WIZFVnZ2Rkl3bTEwQzlyckpnYmtvUT09>

Meeting ID: 818 5084 5737

Password: 067927

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 from St Davids Cathedral, Pembrokeshire, with archive hymns.

11.15am (BBC1) *Sunday Morning Stories* The Revd Kate Bottley hears from people who are helping to lend a hand in their community.

1.15pm (BBC1) *Songs of Praise* Aled Jones looks at how hymn singing can bring hope, and Sean Fletcher's interview with Graham Kendrick is revisited.

10pm (BBC4) *Retreat: Meditations from a monastery* A visit to Belmont Abbey (3/3) (repeat).

RADIO:

Sunday 8.10am (R4) *Sunday Worship* A discovery of the gifts of the Holy Spirit with the Revd Dr Alison Jack, of New College, Edinburgh, and Fr Dermot Preston SJ, of St Aloysius's, Glasgow.

3pm (R3) *Choral Evensong* A repeat of last week's service from the London Festival of Contemporary Church Music at St Pancras Church, London, first broadcast on 14 May 2014.

Tuesday 11.30am (R4) *Art of Now: The gospel of grime* The journalist Jesse Bernard traces the relationship between secular music and black church traditions in the UK.

Wednesday 3.30pm An archive recording from Christ Church, Oxford, first broadcast on 4 May 2016.

Thursday 8pm (R4) *A Celebration for Ascension Day* from St Martin-in-the-Fields, a service for the feast of the Ascension.

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/adultsathome17may

For families

www.rootsontheweb.com/familiesathome17may

Ascension Day Service

As mentioned above, I will be leading a Parish Communion Service for Ascension Day on Zoom on Thursday 21st May at 7.30pm as we launch our prayer events for Thy Kingdom Come.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89549875024?pwd=aFFMeE5zTHd5VE5qeWt5QzM4bHVNZz09>

Meeting ID: 895 4987 5024

Password: 097796

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/87950557293?pwd=eFpXNEhSMTFXaEYrVHI3em1INGttQT09>

Meeting ID: 879 5055 7293

Password: 072056

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.

From the Bible Society – Free online resources

“Whether you’re reading at random, focusing on a particular book, or working your way through a Bible reading plan, the Bible Society have a range of free resources available to enrich your experience.

Daily Reflections/Bible in one year – Did you know we publish a biblical reflection and prayer online each day? These follow the M’Cheyne Bible reading plan but can also work as a stand-alone Bible study and devotional resource too. [Take a look](#).

Bible Book Club – Our [handy downloadable guides](#) for each book of the Bible give helpful background information including tips, discussion questions and some hints for handling those tricky sections. Great for personal study as well as exploring the Bible as a group.

Books of the Bible journals – for a limited time you can [order a free copy](#) of one of our Books of the Bible journals. Featuring 12 different books of the Bible, each journal includes space for you to write notes, verses to colour and questions for discussion or reflection.

And more! Access our online Bible – check out the glossary of biblical terms, explore our Life Bible study resources and browse hundreds of [articles about the Bible.](#)”

Prayers for the Pandemic: for a household in lockdown

God of the indoors,
who knew the confines of domestic space
at a time of little comfort,
help us in this time of confinement,
help us to see it as an act of love, in solidarity
with those who care for us and put their own lives
on the line for the sake of others.

Help us to ‘make room’ for each other, even if room is scarce,
help us to find reserves of patience we never knew we had,
to take offence less easily, to find in our hearts
an easy apology when we’re petulant.
Help us to be attentive, careful, and thoughtful.
May we draw deeply from the well
of our most loving times.

Raymond Friel

Spiritual Exercise

Between today and Pentecost, I encourage you to sit in stillness for ten to fifteen minutes and open your heart to receive God’s gift of the Holy Spirit.

This spiritual exercise will deepen your awareness of the presence of the Holy Spirit in your heart and give you confidence that the Spirit will be with you in everything you do to make Christ known.

1. Centre yourself; sit upright, two feet firmly on the floor; breathe rhythmically with deep breaths, in and out, from the abdomen; clear your mind of all preoccupations.
2. Bring yourself to bodily stillness.
3. Now welcome in your heart this gift that Jesus has for you: *“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid”* (John 14:27).
4. Quietly repeat those words of Jesus and hand over to him all worries or trouble.
5. You may find it helpful if you name to God a specific area where you need healing or forgiveness.
6. Now be still for some time in the presence of God as you welcome the Holy Spirit into your heart.
7. As you are about to finish your time of prayer, focus again on your breathing while you relax in God’s presence.
8. Bring yourself gently back to your daily concerns.

May you receive that peace of Christ each day.

God bless
Gill
Revd Gill Nobes
Rector of St. Sampson

15 May 2020 Tel: 07781 140985