

The United Benefice of the parishes of Melbourne, Smisby, Stanton by Bridge and Ticknall



The Bulletin

A weekly publication for the Benefice

22nd March 2020

Dear Friends,

It has been quite a week in the life of our nation and the world. We know that we are facing unprecedented times. In the midst of everything, I want you to know that I am praying for you at morning and evening prayer each and every day. Please would you also pray for me?

This is a new look bulletin for these times that will still be produced weekly and feature news and encouragement from across our benefice in Ticknall, Stanton-by-Bridge, Smisby and Melbourne. It will be available on the Melbourne church website (www.melbourneparishchurch.org.uk) as usual to download as well as on the church Facebook page (I will return to Facebook later). The bulletin will continue to be emailed out every week and please do forward it to those you think would appreciate receiving it. There will also be copies left in church for delivery to those who don't have access to a computer. NB in line with coronavirus recommendations, these will have been handled only by people who have sanitised or washed their hands first. When delivering, to guard against contamination, please ensure hands are also washed or sanitised. Please do also (observing good hygiene) print off copies and deliver to others you know if convenient and safe to do so.

Almost for the first time in our history, following the archbishops' announcement on Tuesday, we are no longer able to hold public worship. Whether we are at home, or at work or in ancient building, we are still the Body of Christ, the family of the church gathered or dispersed.

One of my top priorities is to enable us to worship from where we find ourselves. **Each Sunday at 10.30am we will be live streaming an act of worship online.** For me and for many clergy, this is wholly new so please bear with us whilst we learn by experience! In the same ways that our bulletin will be available, we also hope to deliver an order of service that you can follow at home. It is important to say here that even if you do not have access to a computer, you can still hopefully have access to an order of service that you can pray through at 10.30am on a Sunday (or at anytime) knowing others are, too.

As I mentioned earlier in this article, I want to encourage you to use our

church (and benefice) Facebook page as it will be here that the Sunday worship can be followed.

To those already registered with Facebook, please ensure you have 'liked' our page 'Melbourne Parish Church' and you will be able to access all the updates and information there.

If you are not on Facebook, some instructions and encouragement. Type into your web browser:

www.facebook.com

On the website you will see 'Create a new account', enter the required information and hit 'sign up'. Facebook is a social networking site where, should you wish, you can link up with people you know. You don't have to choose this option and you will be in control of who you link up with. In the search bar enter 'Melbourne Parish Church' and it should bring up our page. There will be a button marked 'like' which you press and you will then be able to access the live worship and updates. If you need help, do let me know or, potentially, ask a relative who might already be signed up.

There are quite a few people in our communities who don't often come to church on a Sunday who are following our church on Facebook. Live worship is an opportunity to reach out to them too.

As well as live streaming worship, I also want to help you to pray at home. The Church of England has services of Morning and Evening Prayer available online at:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer>

Here you can access the services in modern or traditional language. If you have a smartphone, you can download the Church of England 'Daily Prayer' app which is a useful tool for prayer. I will also be producing a mini booklet for 'Prayer during the Day' which will be available in the same ways as the bulletin.

So we stay connected with God and with each other through our common prayer and worship.

Prayer and worship lead us to action. My other key priority is, of course, that we take care of one another. Many of you will be beginning or have already begun a lengthy period of self-isolation and our love and prayers remain with you. More than that, we want to stay in touch by phone or Facetime or Skype or by letter. If you or someone you know would like to receive regular phone calls and contact, please let us know.

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In all that we have faced in these few past days, we still find ourselves journeying in Lent on this Mothering Sunday - Lent traditionally remembering the journey of Jesus into the wilderness. Not only do we have a Saviour who promises to be with us 'at all times and in all places', we have a Saviour who knows what it is to experience challenge, confusion and disorientation.

As we continue to pray and to care for one another – the very business of the church gathered and dispersed, I commend to you these words of St Paul from the letter to the Romans:

For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. *Romans 8.38-39.*

Much love,

Steve

A pattern for daily prayer, so that, at home or at church, we can pray together:

Monday: Those in great poverty or need.

Tuesday: Those who have asked for our prayers: Ruth Barkaway, Anne Brazier, Roo Hubbard, David Ingram, Bob Smith and Margaret Stockley. Those in Derby's hospitals and hospices. All at Pool Cottage.

Wednesday: Our group of parishes.

Thursday: The church worldwide. All Christian people. The local church. The Anglican Communion.

Friday: All in need, especially the hungry, poor and homeless.

The Departed

In our prayers this week, we can remember those who have died recently, among them Dale Jackson and Elizabeth Fallon, and those whose anniversaries occur near this time among them Harry Brame, William Hancock, David Taylor and Mary Messer.

The Readings for today:

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.

The Gospel Reading: *John 19.25b-27*

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, 'Woman, here is your son.' Then he said to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.' And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

Additional Collect:

God of compassion,
whose Son Jesus Christ, the child of Mary,
shared the life of a home in Nazareth,
and on the cross drew the whole human family to himself:
strengthen us in our daily living
that in joy and in sorrow
we may know the power of your presence to bind together and to heal;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Light a candle of hope: A national call to prayer in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic:

The Presidents of Churches Together in England have issued a call to prayer in the light of the Coronavirus pandemic. This is for all churches and people of prayer to join on Sunday 22nd March, Mothering Sunday. They write....

This Mothering Sunday, 22nd March, we are calling all churches to a National Day of Prayer and Action. At such a time as this, when so many are fearful and there is great uncertainty, we are reminded of our dependence on our loving Heavenly Father and the future that he holds.

At 7pm this Sunday, we invite you to light a candle in the windows of your homes (where safe to do so) as a visible symbol of the light of life, Jesus Christ, our source and hope in prayer.