

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



The Easter Bulletin

A weekly publication for the Benefice

10th May 2020

5th Sunday Of Easter

**Join us for livestreamed worship on our Facebook page
(Melbourne Parish Church) Sunday at 10.30 am!**

*I am the Way,
the Truth,
and the Life*



This Sunday's set Gospel reading continues in John's account, skipping a few chapters and landing at chapter 14. For this, I am very grateful to those who compile the lectionary, the lectionographers, as chapter 14 includes my favourite bible verse, John 14.6 as Jesus describes himself as 'I am the Way, and the Truth and the Life'.

In using 'the Way', Jesus is directing us towards that key Gospel theme of *mystery*. One theologian reminds us that 'Jesus never described himself as the *answer*, he is the Way.' I believe that Jesus is the answer but in using the description of the Way, he is freeing us to journey into mystery. Our destination (our heavenly home) is promised but the components of our journey there cannot be known straightforwardly.

As David Edwards reflects in his article later in this bulletin, the decisions that will continue to be made by our government are ones that few of us would wish to take responsibility for. The way ahead is difficult to know as we remain

in uncharted territory (I acknowledge that, by the time you read this article, more plans will have been made public by the government).

Amidst that uncertainty, there are some positive signs and I here wish to share some of those that have emerged from the meeting of the House of Bishops held earlier this week. The bishops acknowledge that *"while it is clear there will be no imminent return to normality, the emphasis is now turning towards how and when aspects of social distancing can be eased, although we remain mindful of the potential risks of a second wave of the virus.*

"Nevertheless, it now makes sense for us to start to look ahead to the potential easing of restrictions so that our clergy and churches can be prepared." Here are the Bishops' reflections on possible ways of moving forward in line with government advice when it is issued:

In a discussion led by the Bishop of London, Dame Sarah Mullally, who chairs a group examining how the Church of England might proceed once the current restrictions for COVID-19 are relaxed or lifted, the House of Bishops recognised that there have been some welcome signs of improvement in the current situation, including a reduction in new cases and hospital admissions giving evidence for hope.

While church buildings remain closed for public worship, in line with Government advice, the Bishops agreed in principle to a phased approach to lifting restrictions, in time and in parallel with the Government's approach, with three broad stages as infection levels improve:

- 1. An initial immediate phase allowing very limited access to church buildings for activities such as streaming of services or private prayer by clergy in their own parishes, so long as the necessary hygiene and social distancing precautions are taken*
- 2. Subsequently access for some rites and ceremonies when allowed by law, observing appropriate physical distancing and hygiene precautions*
- 3. Worship services with limited congregations meeting, when Government restrictions are eased to allow this*

The Bishops agreed that the decision on the timing of when to implement the revised advice on ministers or worship leaders praying and streaming from their church buildings should be made by individual Diocesan Bishops, depending on their local situation.

The Bishops were clear once again that this is guidance – not an instruction or law – and that it will be constantly reviewed depending on the national situation.

National Church of England guidance will be updated in the coming days

with further advice on how the staged process could be implemented and with factors and information for dioceses to consider.

Bishop Sarah said: “We are hugely grateful for all that our churches and clergy have been doing to support the Government’s message to stay at home, to support the NHS, and to save lives.

Source – the Church of England Website www.churchofengland.org

Whilst we won’t immediately be able to throw open the doors of our churches, there are encouraging signs that we will, when it is safe to do so, be able to explore a new kind of normal.

I think there are both challenges and opportunities regarding public corporate worship going forward – shielding, social distancing etc will continue to have an impact on how, when and where we are able to gather and in what numbers. Prayer, as ever, is needed that God might show us the Way forward (deliberate use of capital) as we continue to be faithful to our calling of worship, prayer and pastoring.

Stay safe and may God bless you,

Steve

Christian Aid Week

10-16 May 2020



As you may be aware Christian Aid Week starts on May 10th. For over 70 years, Christian Aid has been standing with the poorest of our neighbours. They work in 37 countries, with people of all faiths and none, to stand up for dignity, equality and justice.

Every year Melbourne Churches along with thousands of others, distribute gift envelopes door to door. Christian Aid then relies on the income received to carry out desperately needed work around the world. Last year the churches in Melbourne raised the magnificent sum of **£2,760.65** Because of our lockdown situation, it won’t be possible to distribute envelopes door to door this year.

So please could you consider supporting the work of Christian Aid by:

Donating on the Christian Aid website: <https://www.christianaid.org.uk>

Praying for the many partner organisations supported by Christian Aid during the coronavirus outbreak.

E-evenvelopes: you can send an “e-envelope” to friends and family to

encourage them to donate. Please do consider sending these to people you know with your own photo or video message! They are easy to create:

<https://envelope.christianaid.org.uk/>

For all of us, our experience of this pandemic will be different depending on our age, financial security, home location, job, health at the time and so many more variables. But the one thing I am sure that is common to every one of us reading this is that we have access to hot and cold running water with which to wash our hands, so reducing the risk of our family being infected. It is evident that in refugee camps or areas of the world where access to clean water and even basic medical care (let alone ventilators or PPE) are limited, then the impact of the coronavirus is going to be utterly devastating.

I am mindful that these are difficult financial times for some so please do not feel that you have to give. However, this is the opportunity, for those of us who are able to, to give generously. We may have re-connected with our neighbours in new ways during this time, but let us not forget our global neighbours in great need during this pandemic. Some of them have been here before with ebola and are only just moving forward from the devastating effects of that disease. Now is the time for us to stand with them as we are asked to, when Jesus calls us to love our neighbour as we love ourselves.

There are two other ways of participating in Christian Aid Week:

Joining in the daily morning reflection on the Christian Aid Facebook page <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/christian-aid-week/daily-prayer-reflection>

Joining in the daily quiz on Facebook Live at

7.30pm <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/christian-aid-week/daily-quiz>

Finally, if you need a boost, do watch the 2020 Christian Aid film about the positive impact an earth dam has had on the life of the wonderfully joyful Florence in her village in Kenya. [CAW20 Churches film with voiceover-2.mp4](#)

Remember coronavirus impacts all of us but love unites us all.

[Since we can't have our usual Christian Aid Services, please can you also publicise the one on youtube that John Hartley is putting together. The link below is to the website that will have the link nearer the time:

<https://www.melbournmethodistchurch.com/nfe-circuit>

Something to think about – Canon David K Edwards

I am writing this on Tuesday morning of the week in which we hope to hear something positive from the Prime Minister about how his government plans to manage the gradual release of people from the restrictions of the Covid-19 lockdown. Not an easy decision and one that few of us, perhaps, would really want to take responsibility for.

I am glad to see that the Leader of the Opposition is taking a responsible stance and giving assurance that as far as possible he would want to support the government in all of this. That isn't to say he will shy away from holding their toes to the fire if there is a call for this but in this moment of crisis we need the best minds to work together, putting aside party politics in the interests of everyone in this country.

I wondered how Suzanne and I would cope in lock down, but the reality hasn't been as bad as we anticipated; and in part that was due to the communication of facts and rules at the onset not being as clear as they might have been. Which I suppose was inevitable, given the gravity of the matter and the speed with which action had to be taken.

My biggest worry at the start had been, will I still be able to go out and cultivate the garden? It was after all, the garden that attracted me to the house when we first read the details and then came to visit. Our previous house didn't lend itself to adaptation for older people, especially old people who were less mobile. We had seen the problems my parents had when they came to visit, so we looked for something that could be adapted as needs dictated; but I was clear I still wanted a garden.

Not that the garden as we first saw it was particularly attractive; but as a famous gardener from the eighteenth century might have said, it had capabilities! It was a garden in two parts; the upper was lawned with flower borders, the lower, down two steps, was gravelled and caught the sun. Five years later it's beginning to mature into what I want it to be and a vegetable garden with deep beds has replaced the gravelled area.

Kathryn Swift's book, The Morville Hours, (published by Bloomsbury, ISBN 978 0 7475 9823 7) tells the story of a garden's construction and weaves this into the format used in a mediaeval Book of Hours. These were Christian devotional books that encouraged lay people to follow the monastic hours of prayer and contemplation. It is a book that sets the annual round of cultivation, seed time and harvest into this devotional pattern; and the garden was in some respects constructed to follow the pictures of the gardens that are depicted in the Books of Hours.

The Dower House at Morville, a village in Shropshire and near to Bridgnorth, came up for rental at a time when Kathryn Swift was looking for somewhere to create a garden of her own. Somewhere to earth herself after the peripatetic life she had led as a child. This book is a meditative journey through the seasons, but it is also a journey of self-exploration. It is a book about finding one's place in the world and putting down roots.

Even if you aren't particularly interested in garden construction it is a gentle book that pulls you into the story. It is full of observations on the people who

live in the village and those who once lived there. As she makes the garden, she 'unearths remnants of other people's lives; pieces of broken blue china, floor tiles, rusty nails; the indicators that others once lived here and loved this place'.

The Covid-19 pandemic, and the sudden catastrophic changes it can make in people's lives, remind us that we too only occupy our spaces in this world on a temporary basis. Matthew 6:34 underlines this, "Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

When she wrote the book, I don't suppose Kathryn Swift thought it might be used as a devotional text, though she was brought up in Christian family. Her mother was a Roman Catholic and her father was once a Unitarian minister; but I get no sense that she is anything other than an occasional attender at her Anglican parish church.

And yet that doesn't matter; she is what one friend of mine who worked for the School Advisory Service in Birmingham would have called a seeker after truth. Kathryn Swift heads the last chapter in the book Compline, the final service of the monastic day and writes this. "There is a moment in the service of Compline, the last of the Hours, when each of those present silently examines his or her conscience. Gardening has its own share of vices as well as virtues.....and so I ask myself, why after all did I do it?"

Her answer can be found towards the end of the chapter, "The concept of time being sanctified by use is fundamental to the Hours; to waste it is to waste our most precious asset, time upon this earth." In this time of Covid-19 lockdowns and tragedies I think those lines remind us as eloquently as any preaching that we need to make good use of the time that God allots to us and to spend it wisely.

Bishop Libby writes... (from Our Diocese Together):

Easter season, between Easter Sunday and Pentecost, is our time to discover what it means in practice to be a resurrection people.

The consequences of Covid-19 continue to shape our lives. As we think about resurfacing from 'lockdown', we begin to weigh up the farreaching costs of this pandemic.

For many those costs will be deeply personal: mourning loved ones, and coming to terms with having been unable to say those goodbyes as we would have wished; coping with real financial difficulty, from redundancy, loss of income, business collapse – perhaps for the first time; recognising the trauma of working through a health and social crisis on the front line; suffering abuse without respite.

And all of us will face the wider implications: readjusting after the kind of social upheaval not previously seen in peacetime; long term impacts on budgets – from domestic to global, different expectations of government at every level, changes in ways of working, the shifting of focus and priorities. The Church, our diocese, our congregations, schools and communities – as well as every household and individual within them – will be affected. We

have important contributions to make to what comes next. We have a unique perspective, drawn from experience across every aspect of life, the lessons we have learnt. We also have a vital role in responding to continuing need and offering support.

Everything may have changed – but everything stays the same. We seek first the Kingdom of God; as we pray, learn, tell and serve, we offer good news - being deeply rooted and generously fruitful; we work so that our communities are transformed for good, that we each grow in confidence as disciples of Jesus, that our congregations flourish.

In this Easter season, 'Alleluia' is our refrain. 'Alleluia' is not blind to reality but deeply rooted in it. Easter day is only possible after Good Friday. Not that we praise God for pain and uncertainty, but somehow despite it. This may not feel possible for some of us individually some of the time. And that's OK. We are the Body of Christ together. We weep with those who weep, and sometimes the tune of our 'Alleluia' song is a lament. But still we sing. For the Easter story is the ultimate reminder that love conquers all - and nothing, nothing, can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

'Alleluia. Christ is risen. He is risen indeed. Alleluia.'

Bishop Libby

Message from Jane:

Dear friends

Just a quick catch up hoping you are all well and keeping safe. Not a lot to report here. I've attached some pictures of the wisteria I took this morning on my walk/shop. I should have gone last week while it was better weather, but kept forgetting. I'm not a photographer, as you can see, but I always find the wisteria in Melbourne and Kings Newton a special joy, so I'm sharing it! At least I'm better than my mum who managed to take half a film of her own nose with her old box camera, or my mother in law who managed to take six polaroids of the central lounge light instead of her husband on his 60th birthday. None of us were quite sure how she managed it as after each one she tried again and seemed to be doing everything o.k. but obviously at the last minute something went wrong. In true sympathetic family fashion we displayed them on the chimney breast like Hilda Ogden's flying ducks up the wall with a sign saying "UFO sighting in Huyton! "Happy days!

Life is all getting rather limited. I've not started any art work yet. Although I am not really interested in cookery I have tried a few programmes to break the monotony. However all the savoury ones (I'm not really into cakes and puddings and don't have any flour) seem to use the same ingredients, other than the basic meat, often with chilli, which I don't like, but you can leave it out, or with some outlandish paste you've never heard of, with no proper mention of quantities just referring you to a website. It confirms all the prejudices of this grumpy old woman who then sticks to what she knows! It

makes me appreciate even more the services we can share and Little Angels and the music recommendations on the bulletin. On which note I'm going to put on Fantasia on a theme by Thomas Tallis by Vaughan Williams and take my coffee in the garden as the sun is out. A dear friend of mine at Cambridge introduced me to it and said when she died if it wasn't playing she'd know she'd gone to the wrong place. Since she will certainly have gone to the right place it uplifts even more!

Take care. Stay safe.
God bless, *Jane*

Music suggestions

Many thanks to those of you who have been in touch following my recent suggestions of Eastertide, St George and VE Day music to listen to during the week. I know some of you have been using it as a resource before watching the Rector's livestream each Sunday. I will continue to do this over the next few weeks so, please do contact me with any comments or suggestions for the future via 07808 474236 or simon.e.collins@btinternet.com . Here are this week's suggestions:

Hymns

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JCsVFu78del>
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mglx_0jhW1Y
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZCz-HYlxmvE>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=txsQvkwQliQ>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n5uIWEbXgF0>

Choral Music

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=389leQkiGgk>
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ALCpsw-O_AQ
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LYHdBJUgNwk>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W8wngXcoVWM>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c4C-LTEQFx0>

Organ Music

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vBoxQrsBBb4>
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vakVkhX_tXM
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Co8w404Z3I>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2QTeN1CqmE4>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gvtekOk6mas>

I do hope everyone is keeping well and look forward to when we can meet again.

With best wishes,
Simon Collins, Director of Music

Copy of email from Village Voice:

Due to the current restrictions we are unable to deliver the Village Voice to the local community this month. However, we have published the May edition and it is available to read on our website:

www.melbournvillagevoice.co.uk

To ensure lots of people know, it would be great if you can forward this link and tell as many of your friends, family and neighbours as possible.

Thank you and best wishes.

Nicola Mortimer

Advertising

Village Voice

Tel: 07584 025852

Site: www.melbournvillagevoice.co.uk

Est. 1992

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: Anne Brazier, Roo Hubbard, David Ingram, Bob Smith, Margaret Stockley and Enoch Tweed. Those in Derby's hospitals and hospices. All at Pool Cottage. All who are suffering from Covid-19.

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 Jill Morgan-Owen, and those whose anniversaries occur near this time among them Frederick Burden, Horace Percy James-Davies, Ruth Brookbanks, Joe Winters, Leonora Wilkins and Margaret Stevens.

The Readings for today:

First Reading: *Acts 7.55-end*

But filled with the Holy Spirit, he gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. 'Look,' he said, 'I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!' But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him; and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. While they

were stoning Stephen, he prayed, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, 'Lord, do not hold this sin against them.' When he had said this, he died.

Gospel Reading: *John 14.1-14*

'Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling-places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going.' Thomas said to him, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?' Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.'

Philip said to him, 'Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.' Jesus said to him, 'Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, "Show us the Father"? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.'

Collect:

Risen Christ,
your wounds declare your love for the world
and the wonder of your risen life:
give us compassion and courage
to risk ourselves for those we serve,
to the glory of God the Father.

Contact us:

The Revd Steve Short 01332 864741

Email: rector@melbourneparishchurch.org.uk

Parish Office 01332 862153

Email: melbourneparishchurch@gmail.com

Website: www.melbourneparishchurch.org.uk

Facebook: Melbourn Parish Church or

<https://www.facebook.com/Melbourn-Parish-Church-Derbyshire-198938417583824/>