

WELCOME

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4TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

5th July 2020

COLLECT

Gracious Father,
by the obedience of Jesus you brought
salvation to our wayward world:
draw us into harmony with your will,
that we may find all things restored in
him, our Saviour Jesus Christ.



CHURCH RE-OPENING

The first phase of re-opening our churches began on Monday. Now, each day, St George's is open between 11.00am and 1.00pm for individual private prayer. From Monday to Friday, entrance is through the outer vestry door in the Labyrinth Garden. On Saturday and Sunday, you may enter through the front door. Only the church is open. The toilets and the kitchen are not available. You may also have seen that the government has allowed services to resume in a limited way. The Standing Committee is meeting next week to discuss how we might approach this phase of re-opening at St George's.

READINGS



NT: Romans 7: 15 - 25a

¹⁵ I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. ¹⁶ Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. ¹⁷ But in fact it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me.

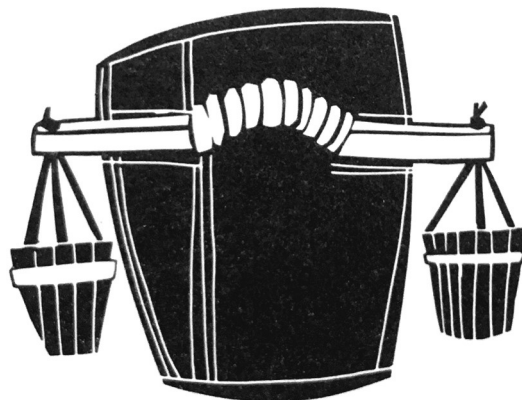
¹⁸ For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. ¹⁹ For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me.

²¹ So I find it to be a law that when I want to do what is good, evil lies close at hand. ²² For I delight in the law of God in my inmost self, ²³ but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind, making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. ²⁴ Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? ²⁵ Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!

GOSPEL: Matthew 11: 25 - end

²⁵ At that time Jesus said, 'I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; ²⁶ yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. ²⁷ All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

²⁸ 'Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.'



PRAYERS (from the Jesuits of the United States)

Jesus Christ, you travelled through towns and villages “curing every disease and illness.” At your command, the sick were made well. Come to our aid, in the midst of the global spread of the coronavirus, that we may experience your healing love. Heal those who are sick with the virus. May they regain their strength and health through quality medical care.

Heal us from our fear, which prevents nations from working together and neighbours from helping one another.

Heal us from our pride, which can make us claim invulnerability to a disease that knows no borders.

Jesus Christ, healer of all, stay by our side in this time of uncertainty and sorrow. Receive those who have died. May they be at rest with you in your eternal peace. Be with the families of those who are sick or have died. As they worry and grieve, defend them from illness and despair. May they know your peace.

Be with the doctors, nurses, researchers and all medical professionals who seek to heal and help those affected and who put themselves at risk in the process. May they know your protection and peace.

Be with the leaders of all nations. Give them and us the foresight to act with charity and true concern for the well-being of the people they are meant to serve. Give them the wisdom to invest in long-term solutions that will help prepare for or prevent future outbreaks. May they know your peace, as they work together to achieve it on earth.

Whether we are home or abroad, surrounded by many people suffering from this illness or only a few, Jesus Christ, stay with us as we endure and mourn, persist and prepare. In place of our anxiety, give us your peace.

Jesus Christ, heal us.

A special prayer for this week:

We commend Jean Leech into Gods loving hands. We pray for Bud, Jo, David, Richard and all who mourn her passing. We give thanks for what she gave to the life of our church and community over so many years. We ask God’s blessing upon all who mourn her passing and give us all the light of your hope.

Let’s say the Lord’s Prayer together.

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.**



THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

This weeks reading from St Paul, could have been specially written for the journey I and I imagine quite a few of you have had to make through the Corona Virus crisis. Many of us will be familiar with that resounding Victorian rebuke ‘The road to hell is paved with good intentions’. It sort of neatly encapsulates what Paul is talking about. We mean to be good, to do the right thing, to help, to exercise, to learn French, to read ‘Moby Dick’ but when it comes to it, Bargain Hunt, the garden chair, ‘Angry Birds’, Facebook and any number of other works of the devil very often get the better of us. They certainly do of me.

In a way, it is comforting to know that this is a problem not only of lockdown, not only for me but of the ages and for people through history. It was for Paul, it has been for millennia. We want what is good and holy and true, but we are easily led astray. I think of the dog in the fantastic film ‘Up’ who is persistently side-tracked from what he’s supposed to be doing by real and imaginary squirrels (YouTube it!) It’s almost as if being dragged off course is somehow in our nature. The author of that Victorian aphorism about the road to hell would almost certainly want to point out how well this human foible illustrates the consequences of original sin. It shows how fallen we are, the extent to which we wallow in sin.

That might have been poor old Paul's view too, struggle as he did, day by day, with whatever his mystery 'affliction' might have been.

All of which, as we approach week 16 of lockdown and still haven't mastered the pluperfect, Beethoven's Moonlight Sonata or that walk to somewhere other than Sainsbury's....might leave us feeling somewhat despondent. Well, if it does, as ever, remember.... Jesus always trumps Paul.

The gospel this week is also a lockdown scripture and in it, Jesus blesses us with one of the loveliest things he ever said. Follow me he says, live my way he says, it's work, it takes some effort, it's a burden, a bit like a yoke that goes over the animals shoulders so that they can pull the plough he says...but...but...UNLIKE that sort of burden, MY yoke is easy. This burden is light. It is, in fact, the sort of thing you won't only not mind wearing, you'll want to wear it. This is work that you'll want to do because following me means that all those good intentions can be fulfilled. All that good your Godly part wants to do, can be done. If you follow me, Jesus says, my easy burden, my light yoke will enable you to be the person you were always meant to be, the sort of person God made you to be.

When deacons are ordained we get a stole (churchy word for scarf) placed over our shoulder. If we're good girls and boys, a year later, we get to be priested at which point the stole is removed from our shoulder and is put around our neck. The transfer is significant. It's as if the deacon takes the burden, the yoke of Christ over her or his shoulder in a partial decision to take up Jesus' way and then in priesthood, that yoke is accepted fully across both shoulders. (I know there's also a thing about the deacon's stole being like Jesus' Maundy Thursday towel of service....before the letters page gets inundated). We promise (very much a triumph of hope over expectation) to try to follow Christ in such a way as to free ourselves from the sort of scene Paul paints in our passage from Romans. As human beings we will try and fail, we will intend but not achieve and if that's all we do, then there is indeed a risk of sliding into a hell of self-centredness. But blessed with the burden, the yoke of Christ, we are also capable of so much more. We become capable of generosity, selflessness, kindness and goodness as so many hundreds of examples during lockdown have shown. We are the priesthood of all believers together on this journey, we have all taken upon our shoulders either the actual or the spiritual stole of priesthood in our vocation and response to follow Christ. Keep going. Amen.

Richard Lane



POEM BY REV'D SHEILA CAMERON

I wrote this poem for a colleague who was doing a project on communication. It was set to music but I realised I had plagiarised, "The Magic Flute."

INCOMMUNICADO

Each day I got up early
So I could catch the bus
I held my hand out climbed on board
With the minimum of fuss

To all my fellow travellers,
I never said a word
The thought of speaking to them
Had simply not occurred.

Then one night in October,
There came a dreadful storm,
Trees fell down,
Rooves blew off,
Then talking was the norm

We riders bound for Plumstead
My how we could talk
But that was only just before
We all got off to walk.

I had three little children
The hard life got me down
I really should have talked to them
But I only used to frown

Now that they are teenagers
Going on their way
Of their staying out and drinking
I've quite a lot to say

I wish they would listen
to what I have to say
But perhaps it's not surprising
They only turn away

So mums and dads and grandparents
in charge of children small
Talk to all your children
and hold them lest they fall

NOTICES

Lewisham Foodbank

This week the food bank are asking for tinned food: rice pudding, beans, sliced carrots, kidney beans, corned beef, meatballs, bolognese and fruit cocktail. They also need halal food. Plus washing tablets, toiletries and toilet paper. If you need information, such as where, when and how to donate, then contact volunteers@lewisham.foodbank.org.uk.

Giving—From Simon Taylor, Treasurer

Good morning everybody - I hope we are all staying safe. Just a few words to say thank you to everybody for supporting the church at this difficult time. There has been much generosity since the lockdown began and it is really appreciated, given that some of us may face their own financial uncertainties. Our congregation's generosity, and the fact that some expenditure has reduced is definitely helping our position and I and Richard are very grateful. There will obviously be financial challenges over the coming months, but so far we are meeting them.

Cash, envelopes, cash or cheques can be delivered through the vicarage letterbox in Vancouver Road. If you would like to contribute electronically, you can pay into the church account our details are: St George with St Michaels & All Angels PCC National Westminster Bank plc 61 Sydenham Road London SE26 5HW Sort Code 60 21 12 Account 37302337. If you'd like to set up or amend a standing order with your bank, then email me at simont388@gmail.com and I can provide a form. I can also provide a Gift Aid form / advise if we hold one already (for income tax payers this enables the church to get an extra 25%). Thank you once again for your support. Simon

Supporting St George's School

As many of you will know, several families with children at St George's school, really struggle financially. Some of those children are finding life especially hard during these lock down days. We have decided, as a church, to support some of these families by supplementing the very small amount of emergency aid they are receiving from the government. If any of you feel you would like to support church efforts to help these families, then please make a donation to St George's church either with cash through the vicarage door, direct bank transfer into the church account (let us know you've done it!) or a cheque payable to St George and St Michael PCC (also through the vicarage door). Thank you.

BLESSING

The peace of God, which passes all understanding,
keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God
and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord;
and the blessing of God almighty, creator, redeemer, sustainer
be upon you and remain with you always.

Amen