

St Matthias & St George Parish Church.
A member of “Christ the King” team ministry.
Week commencing 19th April 2020

Jesus Christ is risen, hallelujah: He is risen indeed, hallelujah

Jesus said “Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.” John 20 v 29

Have you ever wondered who you feel you most resemble amongst the disciples, or perhaps who you most admire and respect? Hands up anyone else, who like me, identifies with Thomas? Poor old ‘doubting Thomas’; yet there are other instances in the New Testament where it is said that some disciples doubted the truth about Jesus - but they are not named, therefore escaping the criticism that accompanies Thomas. But what I like about him, is in fact his openness and honesty which he shows when having felt Christ’s wounds he exclaims with total surety, “My Lord and my God!” And then, just like Peter having to accept the censure of Jesus over his denial of knowing him in the courtyard after Jesus’ arrest, Thomas also has to publicly accept Christ’s censure. “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.” Did Thomas’ eyes look at the floor, cheeks blushing, feet shuffling, did some of the other disciples smile, perhaps snigger at his discomfort, did some perhaps squeeze his arm as a mark of support? It’s a scene I can vividly imagine.

And next week we have another favourite scene of mine which was brought to life as a teenager when I saw Caravaggio’s painting of the ‘Supper at Emmaus’ in the National Gallery. Your homework for this week, apart from taking in the readings and homilies (the second provided by Father Mike) which accompany Spotlight, is to have a look at this painting in readiness for next Sunday.

Churches Together in Redditch report that ‘There are plenty of new initiatives out there; one ecumenical initiative backed by Churches Together in England is <https://yourneighbour.org/>. It’s a “one stop shop” of Covid 19 resources, advice and devotional material, and from a personal look easy to follow. More locally, Worcester Diocese have a dedicated page on their website. Particularly relevant are the sections on Hospital advice in the county and also live streaming of Services: <https://www.cofe-worcester.org.uk/news/2020/03/16/coronavirus-latest-information/>.’

But remember there are lots of resources on our own website as well as the online celebration of the Eucharist by Glenn and Compline with Victoria, please see below.

Fr Glenn Reading - Team Vicar

Tel 01527 894436 or 07964 282278

Curate: Mthr. Victoria Barlow email
victoriabarlow@hotmail.com

We pray for those who are sick: - Philippa, Rosie, Alex, Jean, Joyce, Margaret, Marion, Alexei, Dora, Margaret, Margaret, Nesta, Hazel, Heather, Carol, Carla, Carole, Tim, Jon, Pastor Robin Baker and Colin Baines.

Nightstop Foodbank: Please support the food bank more than ever during this time of considerable anxiety for many. Please give as generously as you can and place items of food and toiletries in the **box provided in the porch by the west door.**

A message from Glenn; Ann, Treasurer; and Sarah, Gift Aid Secretary:

First, we hope you are all well and keeping safe at this time

Second, thank you all for your continued prayers and support. Your support meant the ministry of

<p>Our website: Be sure to go onto our website www.astwoodbankchurch.org.uk and under ‘online resources’ see all the material that Mother Victoria has uploaded to help us through the coming weeks. She also wishes to mention that the Holy Eucharist IS live streamed every Sunday at 10.30 on the Church website, (go to Virtual Church) and that she is live-streaming Compline each night at 9.20 pm, on Facebook. Victoria also states that ‘In this way, there ARE services, and we can in a sense all worship together as a dispersed community.’</p>
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Churches Together England: For a copy of the ‘Churches Together England’ candle poster, click on the long address at the end of this newsletter.

Please pray for all the patients in the Alexandra Hospital suffering from Covid 19; for its staff and Chaplaincy Team; and for the soul of Nursing Sister Julie Omar, who recently died from the disease and for her family

the church continued and we were able to meet our financial needs last year.

The year ahead will be difficult in light of the Coronavirus and the restrictions placed on us. We will miss gathering to worship together and there will be an increased financial challenge as our income is greatly reduced. We are also thankful for the ongoing support of the Diocese which connects us to the greater body of Christ and are mindful of the challenges the wider church was facing which will be magnified at present. Our support of the diocese allows them to support us.

The largest part of our budget is the parish share, which this year comes in at £22755

The ministry and work of the Church will continue even though the buildings are closed and we would ask for your continued prayers and support.

To be good stewards of the resources we have, could we kindly ask you to review the way in which you currently give? **If you were able to give online or setup a Direct Debit this would hugely help the churches continued ministry in our community.** The details for the Bank account are below.

The sort code for our bank is:-30-96-97 and the account number is 01231758. Cheques can be made payable to 'PCC Astwood Bank'.

Thank you for your ongoing prayers and support which allow us to minister to our community at this time. May the Lord bless and keep us. Amen.

Prayer Chain: If you have someone you wish to be prayed for, please contact Pauline Jones on 892650 who will then contact other members of the Prayer Group.

Please give notices for inclusion in next week's edition to **Richard Porteous** by next Thursday on 01527 542620 or at richardporteous@yahoo.co.uk

Log onto our website for more information www.astwoodbankchurch.org.uk

What's in a name? This Sunday was traditionally called Low Sunday perhaps because of the contrast with the high festival of Easter on the preceding Sunday. Some think the word **Low** may be a corruption of the Latin, Laudes, the first word of a sequence in use in the Sarum Rite.

Many people today, however, refer to this Sunday as **Divine Mercy Sunday** which was proclaimed as such in 2000 by the Roman Catholic Church.

I can't do the reasons for this justice in a short space, but it makes interesting reading and goes to prove along with many other examples, that the organised Christian religion is constantly undergoing change.

<https://www.cte.org.uk/Articles/571088/Home/News/Latestnews/PrayersofHope.aspx>