



The Churches of
**Legbourne
Woldmarsh**

‘Sharing the good news of the kingdom of God’

WORSHIP AT HOME NEWSLETTER

Sunday 12th July 2020

The Fifth Sunday after Trinity

Dear friends,

I hope that you are all keeping well. I continue to hold you all in my prayers, and hope that this material helps you to feel closer to one another and to Christ.



Do get in touch with me if you would like a chat, or need a helping hand. Similarly please do keep up with ringing those who are having to spend time in isolation. It is hugely appreciated.

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+ SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP +

Following the ease in restrictions, we are able to start public worship again. The advice from the Bishop is to keep as our ‘key focus...safety and sustainability in any decisions’. We will therefore begin for the time being with a single service per week, at a single location, but will monitor how things go. I am aware that many of you will be longing to worship together again, whilst others will choose to remain away for now. I look forward immensely to welcoming you to church, but we will continue our live streaming and newsletters for those who stay at home.

WHEN? SUNDAY MORNINGS AT **11.15AM**, BEGINNING ON 12TH JULY (CHURCH OPENS AT 11)

WHERE? ALL SAINTS’, LEGBOURNE

WHAT? A SIMPLE AND TRADITIONAL ACT OF WORSHIP, ALTERNATING WEEKLY BETWEEN COMMUNION AND MATINS, LASTING 30-40 MINUTES. HAND WASHING STATION BY THE ENTRANCE. SEATING SPACED OUT. 2 METRE SOCIAL DISTANCING. ORDERS OF SERVICE WILL ALREADY BE ON THE SEATS. NO SINGING OR GATHERING AFTERWARDS. FACE MASKS ARE OPTIONAL.

ALL SAINTS’ WILL ALSO BE OPEN FOR PRIVATE PRAYER ON WEDNESDAY AFTERNOONS 1-2.30 (but no longer Sunday afternoons, for hygiene reasons)

Collect for the week

GRANT, O Lord, we beseech thee, that the course of this world may be so peaceably ordered by thy governance, that thy Church may joyfully serve thee in all godly quietness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Reading

St Luke 5.1

IT came to pass, that, as the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Gennesaret, and saw two ships standing by the lake; but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing their nets. And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land: and he sat down, and taught the people out of the boat. Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing; nevertheless, at thy word I will let down the net. And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes; and their net brake. And they beckoned unto their partners which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink. When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord. For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken; and so was also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not, from henceforth thou shalt catch men. And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him.

Thought for the week

I have been giving a lot of thought recently to the Providence of God. The idea that 'by his power God cherishes and guards the world which he made, and by his Providence rules its individual parts': that 'nothing happens without his knowing and decree' (Calvin).

Giving that we are living through a catastrophe, which has caused great misery and will go on to create as yet unknowable problems, one would think that such a doctrine as God's Providence would be hard to maintain. And yet I find myself holding to it all the more. It was certainly an idea that our Anglican forefathers kept central to the treasury of thoughts and prayers that they have bequeathed to us. This week's Collect is a fine example:

Grant, O Lord, we beseech thee, that the course of this world may be so peaceably ordered by *thy governance*, that thy Church may joyfully serve thee in all godly quietness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

To believe in the Providence of God is to believe in his governance and order. That he is in control, and that his desire for us is joy and peace. If this wasn't so then he wouldn't be God – not the God of the Scriptures at any rate.



Such an outlook forces us to ask questions. The trouble is we ask the wrong ones. We adopt a position of cynicism, and ask, 'If God is all powerful and all good, then why does he allow *x* or *y* to happen?'

This gets us nowhere, because it is not asked in faith. As the Epistle to James instructs 'If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. But let him ask in faith.' St Augustine would sum up this and other examples of the Biblical approach to truth with his simple maxim: 'I believe in order that I may understand'. Belief must come first.

We *must* ask questions. Nothing of God comes naturally to us, so estranged are our ways from his. But to ask in faith, we first remove the 'if' at the start, and ask instead: 'I believe that God is all powerful and all good, so why is this going on?'

This small shift means we begin to meet each crisis or downturn in fortune not as evidence against God but instead as a potential moment for grace and salvation. It assumes that there must be a purpose to any situation. We remember that we all must carry our crosses, because the cross is the precursor of the resurrection.

It is to dismiss what St Basil called 'the heathen' notions of fortune and chance, of good and bad luck. We are rather to attend to our lives and search them for the all too often still and small questioning voice of God. A belief in the Providence – in the *involvement* – of God in our lives *frees us* from the need to meet disaster with despair or to fight fire with fire.

I recently read Gilead by Marilynne Robinson, a wonderful novel which takes the form of an elderly American minister writing down stories and wisdom to pass on to his son. This brief excerpt develops what I am saying. She writes:

'When you encounter another person...it is as if a question is being put to you. So you must think, What is the Lord asking of me in this moment, in this situation? If you confront insult or antagonism, your first impulse will be to respond in kind. But if you think, This is an emissary sent from the Lord, and some benefit is intended for me...you are free to act otherwise than as circumstances would seem to dictate'. (Gilead p141)

Let us apply this system of thinking to our Gospel story. For the story of Jesus calling on some fishermen to lend him their boats so he could preach to the crowd from the shore is not just heard today to reaffirm the importance of social distancing!

Let us note that the miraculous haul of fish that followed came on the back of a night's fruitless toil. And that it was this sudden change in fortune, a change that occurred only when Christ was present and was obeyed, that turned Peter from a fisherman to a fisher of men. Into a disciple. Ultimately in to a saint. The purpose of the miracle was not to make him a rich man. For he immediately abanded his catch and everything else he had. The purpose of the

miracle was to hook Peter – and James and John - to the cause of Christ. It would not have done so had that long night of labour and want not first taken place.

To trust in God's Providence is to meet each day with courage: like those fishermen, to trust God's word over recent experience, and not give up, never to stop casting the net. After all, the worst and the best has already happened. Man fell, to such a state that he crucified his divine saviour – and God in Christ forgave him and saved him from the cross. Therefore the Christian life is not so much about carving out a way forward as it is about harnessing oneself to that historical and crucial event. I began by reflecting on how many of our plans had been squandered in recent weeks. But what matter are our plans. It is our anchorage, our roots, our foundations, in the fertile mud of Calvary that matters. And the rest we trust to God, praying that under his governance our lives may be peaceably ordered.

For your prayers

Please do pray for the churches of this country as they begin to welcome back worshippers for the first time since March. We pray also for businesses and employees who are returning to work, and for those who have lost their jobs. We pray that by God's Grace we may not just return to old ways but be reformed and renewed, with the Gospel in our hearts and the Kingdom in our sight.

This week is the last week of what has been a pretty strange the school term. Please pray for the children, especially those who are leaving their school this year and moving on to the next chapter of their lives. Pray also for the teachers, who have dealt with huge pressure. Pray that all may benefit from a decent break over the summer.

LITTLE SAINTS

As you know, a focus of our ministry here has been to work closely with the schools and children. Had we not had the pandemic then a children's church should have been launched by now at Legbourne. Many of you have said how much you have enjoyed the 'Diddy Disciples' videos. I thought you may like a taste of what we have been producing for local schools, in lieu of our normal assemblies. These videos are being circulated to numerous local schools across the deanery. To watch click the links below.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-axCG53AHl8&feature=youtu.be>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DCfrvu_Zeho&feature=youtu.be

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FxhVPYgkJbE&feature=youtu.be>

DEVOTIONS FOR THIS WEEK...

There are all sorts of ways to participate in prayer and worship from your homes, and below I detail just a few of the locally organised ones via the internet. However the best thing may be to set aside 15-30 minutes a day, morning and evening, to immerse yourself in the scriptures. To join in with the Bible reading that will be happening at morning and evening prayer I include below the readings for the week.

	MORNING	EVENING
SUNDAY 12 th July 5 th Sunday after Trinity	1 Samuel 17.1-54 Mark 6.53-7.23	1 Samuel 20.1-17 Matthew 6
MONDAY 13 th July	1 Kings 6.1-14 2 Thessalonians 1	1 Kings 8.1-21 Matthew 14.22-end
TUESDAY 14 th July	1 Kings 8.22-53 2 Thessalonians 2	1 Kings 8.54-9.9 Mark 8.1-26
WEDNESDAY 15 th July	1 Kings 10 2 Thessalonians 3	1 Kings 11.1-13 Mark 6.13-end
THURSDAY 16 th July	1 Kings 11.26-end Galatians 1	1 Kings 12.1-24 Matthew 17
FRIDAY 17 th July	1 Kings 12.25-13.10 Galatians 2	1 Kings 13.11-end Mark 9.33-end
SATURDAY 18 th July	1 Kings 14.1-20 Galatians 3	2 Chronicles 12 Matthew 18.12-end

WORSHIP by TELEPHONE

-excellent if you do not have the internet: do let people who may be in this position know!

From this week the Sunday morning service is accessible by 'phone. Please 'phone Tiffany Noden (Louth parish administrator) on 01507 600929 for the ID number that you will need in order to access the service. At 10am on Sunday morning, please join the service by calling 0330 336 0036 – you will be asked to enter the ID to access the service. You can then listen live to the service!

ONLINE WORSHIP

I am using All Saints', Legbourne as my base for saying prayers and offering the Eucharist on your behalf. Unfortunately we cannot livestream from there but if you haven't as yet tried it, do go to the Louth churches Facebook page to either watch recordings of daily services, or live stream them. You do not need to sign up for Facebook (I haven't) – just click 'not now' when asked.

Although centred on St James', Louth, as a hub for the deanery, all the parish clergy are taking their turn.

https://www.facebook.com/pg/louthchurch/videos/?ref=page_internal

Monday-Friday

Morning Prayer 9.15am

Compline 7.30pm

Holy Communion on Tuesdays at 11 and Sundays at 10.

Sundays at 6pm Evensong

Two short sermons are also added every week.