

COLLECT

Merciful Lord,
absolve your people from their offences,
that through your bountiful goodness
we may all be delivered from the chains of those
sins
which by our frailty we have committed;
grant this, heavenly Father,
for Jesus Christ's sake, our blessed Lord and
Saviour,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

FIRST READING

1 Samuel 16:1-13

A reading from the first book of Samuel.

The LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons." Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me." And the LORD said, "Take a heifer with you, and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.' Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you." Samuel did what the LORD commanded, and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, "Do you come peaceably?" He said, "Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice. When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely the Lord's anointed is now before the LORD." But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the LORD does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart." Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. He said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen any of these." Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all your sons here?" And he said, "There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here." He sent and brought David in. Now he was ruddy, and had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. The LORD said, "Rise and anoint him; for this is the one." Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the presence of his brothers; and the spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

PSALM Psalm 23

R *I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.*

The Lord is my shepherd;
therefore can I lack nothing.
He makes me lie down in green pastures
and leads me beside still waters. **R**

He shall refresh my soul
and guide me in the paths of righteousness for
his name's sake.
Though I walk through the valley of the shadow
of death, I will fear no evil;
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff, they comfort me. **R**
You spread a table before me
in the presence of those who trouble me;
you have anointed my head with oil
and my cup shall be full.
Surely goodness and loving mercy shall follow
me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for
ever. **R**

SECOND READING

Ephesians 5:8-14

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Ephesians.

Once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light – for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly; but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, "Sleeper, awake! Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."

GOSPEL John 9

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

As Jesus walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. The neighbours and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." He kept saying, "I am the man." But they kept asking him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' Then I went and washed and received my sight." They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know." They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see." Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner

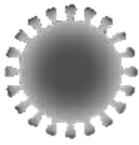
perform such signs?" And they were divided. So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened." He said, "He is a prophet." The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him." So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner." He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?" Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." The man answered, "Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?" And they drove him out. Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" He answered, "And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him." Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." He said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshipped him. Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgement so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind." Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, "Surely we are not blind, are we?" Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains."

POST COMMUNION

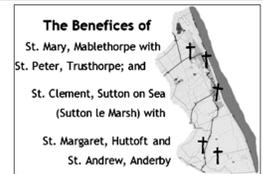
Lord God,
whose blessed Son our Saviour
gave his back to the smiters
and did not hide his face from shame:
give us grace to endure the sufferings of this
present time
with sure confidence in the glory that shall be
revealed;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.



The Parishes of St. Mary Mablethorpe, St. Peter Trusthorpe, St. Clement Sutton on Sea, St. Margaret Huttoft and St. Andrew Anderby.



You will know from the news media that the epidemic of Covid-19 has meant that we have had to take the unprecedented step of closing our Churches for public worship for the time being. This means that there will be no Sunday services, no mid-week services and no activities or events until further notice. Limited funerals will continue to be able to be held.



However, that does not mean that we cannot all continue worshipping God and living out the Christian life – it will be difficult but not impossible, and there are things our parishes will do to help.

One step, is issuing our weekly notice sheet in this new form – the week’s readings and prayers are on one side (as usual); on this side a “Thought for the week” and some other prayers along with announcements and other information. We intend to put this through the letter-box of as many members as possible each week.

Another idea is that the clergy (maybe other members of the ministry team) will ring our congregation members from time to time to chat, share news and offer prayer. HOWEVER we do not have everyone’s up-to-date phone number, so if you haven’t heard from us please ring Rev Peter (01507 443948) or Canon Chris (01507 440039) and we will be delighted to hear from you.

We shall also be putting information and ideas on our web-site and Facebook page (the details are below): if you use a computer or smart-phone please look at these. Among other things, we hope to include pointers to Church services which you can join in from home. See also the Church of England website.

This Sunday is Mothering Sunday and many of us will be prevented from seeing, hugging, maybe having lunch with, our mother and/or our children: it may be frustrating and upsetting. But we understand that this is a small step in the (probably lengthy) process of keeping ourselves safe and – eventually – overcoming the virus. There is a special prayer for Mothering Sunday at the bottom of this page.

Our Church leaders have also made Sunday a day of prayer about Covid-19 and you are invited to put a candle (or lamp) in your window at 7pm to show that you are praying and as a sign of hope to our community.

We are also in the fourth week of Lent: as you read the Bible passages overleaf you will notice (in the first reading) that God uses the prophet Samuel to choose the most unlikely of Jesse’s sons (David, the youngest one) to be, not just the next King of Israel, but the greatest of her kings.

He would go on to defeat the giant Goliath with his shepherd’s sling-shot; to befriend Jonathan the son of the present king (Saul); to win battles, to calm Saul’s rages with his harp-playing, to reign over the nation, to build Jerusalem, to write many beautiful Psalms; and – yes – to commit adultery and murder too. Yet in spite of his failings, he sought God’s forgiveness and ruled well. He was part of Jesus’ ancestral line (Joseph’s family, you may remember, came from the city of David – Bethlehem) and Jesus is sometimes called the Son of David.

We may think that we have nothing to offer God, particularly at this time of isolation and restraint; we may even feel that he has forgotten us or has no use for us. The anointing of David assures us that nothing could be further from the truth: God has plans for everyone (even those who seem, or feel, insignificant) and in the longer term will use each of us for his glory and to build his kingdom.

The challenge to each of us is to be ready to respond to that calling, to work at God’s speed and in his way, and to carry on trusting no matter how difficult things become.

A prayer for Mothering Sunday

God of love,
passionate and strong,
tender and careful:
watch over us (and our families)
and hold us all the days of our life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

A Prayer about Covid-19

Keep us, good Lord, under the
shadow of your mercy.
Sustain and support the anxious,
be with those who care for the
sick, and lift up all who are
brought low; that we may find
comfort knowing that nothing can
separate us from your love in
Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

A prayer for healthcare-workers

Loving Heavenly Father,
we thank you for those who are
caring for others, in hospitals,
care homes or their own homes.
Protect them from infection,
strengthen them when tired,
restore them when long-
separated from their own loved
ones. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

Parish Website: <http://lincoln.ourchurchweb.org.uk/mablethorpesutton> (or Google “Mablethorpe Church”)

Parish Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/St-Marys-Church-Mablethorpe-501639153553226/> (or fb search St Mary’s Church Mablethorpe)

Clergy: Rev Peter 443948 rev.p.lilley@btinternet.com Canon Chris 440039 chris.lilley@btinternet.com