

Reflection Easter 3

Fr David has asked us to share our favourite Bible verses and prayers. Especially at this time, it will be interesting so see which passages sustain us.

One of my favourite prayers is within Morning Prayer, which I say each day.

'As we rejoice in the gift of each new day, so may the light of your presence, O God, set our hearts on fire with love for you. Amen'.

I like it for many reasons: it reminds me that prayer is corporate; that our prayers join together even when we are separated by distance, lockdown or other circumstances. It reminds me that each day is a gift from God. I'm usually quite a cheery person, but I am also inclined to fret about yesterday and worry about tomorrow. This prayer anchors me in the gift of this new day. It also centres me on God; in whose presence there is light, and who draws us into his unending love. Today's gospel reading uses similar imagery when the men on the road to Emmaus meet with Jesus and say 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking?'. May this be our experience too.

I wonder what anchors you? I look forward to hearing your choices.

Rev. Sarah

ps This week sees the launch of the Creative Challenge, so there's a link on this email to a colouring sheet to get you started!

As with the last few Sundays, it would be good if we try to say our prayers in some form **together at 10.30** on Sunday mornings, and to be intentionally holding each other up to God, and praying for the wider community of St Thomas.

NEXT SUNDAY 3rd May April 2020

SERVICES Public worship suspended



READINGS

(NT): Acts 2.42-47

NT: 1 Peter 2.19-25

GOSPEL: John 10.1-10

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St Thomas, Exeter

Sunday 26th April 2020

Easter 3

The **Community Larder** is now operational, and collections are from St Thomas Methodist on Mondays, Wednesday and Fridays 10-12. People need a clergy referral to access this, so if you know anybody who is running short of supplies/money, please let me know. Because of these days of the week we are now changing **St Thomas Hall drop-off days to Tuesdays and Thursdays 10-12**. Please keep the donations coming.

Please also **keep feeding back your prayers**, bible readings or other supportive materials or activities so that we can share these with the wider congregation. You can do this either by phone or email to the parish office (info in the middle column here).

I have already said how much the pandemic is impacting on our **parish finances**: with the Hall closed we are losing c£1000 per month, and that does not include Sunday giving, of course. So please keep your envelopes safely. If you are able to set up a standing order, please consider this and I'll put you in touch with the Treasurer; or the Parish Giving Scheme <https://parishgiving.org.uk/register/>
Thank you.

Fr David



Collect

Almighty Father, who in your great mercy gladdened the disciples with the sight of the risen Lord: give us such knowledge of his presence with us, that we may be strengthened and sustained by his risen life and serve you continually in righteousness and truth; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

Acts 2.14a, 36-41

But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them: 'Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say.

Therefore let the entire house of Israel know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified.' Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles, 'Brothers, what should we do?' Peter said to them, 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him.' And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying, 'Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.' So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added.

1 Peter 1.17-23

If you invoke as Father the one who judges all people impartially according to their deeds, live in reverent fear during the time of your exile. You know that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without defect or blemish. He was destined before the foundation of the world, but was revealed at the end of the ages for your sake. Through him you have come to trust in

God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are set on God. Now that you have purified your souls by your obedience to the truth so that you have genuine mutual love, love one another deeply from the heart. You have been born anew, not of perishable but of imperishable seed, through the living and enduring word of God.

Luke 24.13-35

Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, 'What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?' They stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, 'Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?' He asked them, 'What things?' They replied, 'The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him.' Then he said to them, 'Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?' Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, 'Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.' So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?' That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, 'The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!' Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Post-Communion Prayer

Living God, your Son made himself known to his disciples in the breaking of bread: open the eyes of our faith, that we may see him in all his redeeming work; who is alive and reigns, now and for ever. **Amen**

NOTICES

Church of England coronavirus prayers

Lord Jesus Christ, you taught us to love our neighbour, and to care for those in need as if we were caring for you. In this time of anxiety, give us strength to comfort the fearful, to tend the sick, and to assure the isolated of our love, and your love, for your name's sake. **Amen.**

Gracious God, give skill, sympathy and resilience to all who are caring for the sick, and your wisdom to those searching for a cure. Strengthen them with your Spirit, that through their work many will be restored to health; through Jesus Christ our