

ST PETER & ST JOHNS CHURCH

Our Aim is to grow closer to God,
to grow closer to each other,
and to grow closer to the community

CHURCH SERVICES

As our services are slowly moving back to being in Church,
please see below details of the services this week:

SUNDAY 16TH AUGUST

10:30 am - Holy Communion **IN CHURCH**

This service will be live streamed on facebook



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WEEKLY READINGS

*Your word is a lamp to my feet,
and a light to my path.*

Psalms 119: 105

PSALM 133 NLT

1 How wonderful and pleasant it is when brothers live together in harmony! 2 For harmony is as precious as the anointing oil that was poured over Aaron's head, that ran down his beard and onto the border of his robe. 3 Harmony is as refreshing as the dew from Mount Hermon that falls on the mountains of Zion. And there the Lord has pronounced his blessing, even life everlasting.

MATTHEW 15: 10-28 NLT

10 Then Jesus called to the crowd to come and hear. "Listen," he said, "and try to understand. 11 It's not what goes into your mouth that defiles you; you are defiled by the words that come out of your mouth." 12 Then the disciples came to him and asked, "Do you realize you offended the Pharisees by what you just said?" 13 Jesus replied, "Every plant not planted by my heavenly Father will be uprooted, 14 so ignore them. They are blind guides leading the blind, and if one blind person guides another, they will both fall into a ditch." 15 Then Peter said to Jesus, "Explain to us the parable that says people aren't defiled by what they eat." 16 "Don't you understand yet?" Jesus asked. 17 "Anything you eat passes through the stomach and then goes into the sewer. 18 But the words you speak come from the heart—that's what defiles you. 19 For from the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, all sexual immorality, theft, lying, and slander. 20 These are what defile you. Eating with unwashed hands will never defile you." 21 Then Jesus left Galilee and went north to the region of Tyre and Sidon. 22 A Gentile woman who lived there came to him, pleading, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! For my daughter is possessed by a demon that torments her severely." 23 But Jesus gave her no reply, not even a word. Then his disciples urged him to send her away. "Tell her to go away," they said. "She is bothering us with all her begging." 24 Then Jesus said to the woman, "I was sent only to help God's lost sheep—the people of Israel." 25 But she came and worshiped him, pleading again, "Lord, help me!" 26 Jesus responded, "It isn't right to take food from the children and throw it to the dogs." 27 She replied, "That's true, Lord, but even dogs are allowed to eat the scraps that fall beneath their masters' table." 28 "Dear woman," Jesus said to her, "your faith is great. Your request is granted." And her daughter was instantly healed.

SERMON SUMMARY REVD SHEILA BRIDGE

The two parts of this gospel passage are linked by one question, "what is in your heart?" In the first section Jesus says that it is the words that we use that reveals our heart and it is the issues in our hearts which 'defile' us. The Jewish audience which Jesus was addressing were obsessed with dietary laws, believing that it was their outward behaviours and actions that might make them unacceptable to God. Jesus gets to the heart of the matter by pointing out that it is our internal attitudes which damage us and cause us to be less than the children of God we are called to be. All of the attitudes Jesus list result from being a person who does not trust in God for his or her well-being but instead commits to ways of living which seek to control or manipulate the outcome, to meet their own needs either for pleasure or prestige.

The story of the Canaanite woman petition is also a story about "what is in your heart?" The woman appears to be subjected to some rather blunt and challenging questions by Jesus who seems if not actually rejecting, certainly verging on being rude, but bear in mind that at the end not only is her daughter healed but she receives the unique accolade "woman, you have great faith".

When God looks into our hearts it is the discovery of faith which causes him delight. The woman, even though she is not Jewish, shows a confident and persistent trust that this "son of David" somehow represents a God who is compassionate, powerful and willing to act on our behalf, no matter how distant, in different or unwilling he may at first appear.

And God is those things: compassionate, powerful and willing to act but he does expect and look for persistence as a demonstration of our faith.

So what is in your heart? God sees and God knows so right religious actions might be a veneer that impress others but they never impress God who sees our hearts. Is there faith in your heart? Remember Jesus only asks for faith the size of a mustard seed, a tiny speck and he always responds positively to those who ask 'Lord increase our faith'. There may be no better prayer to pray in response to this passage.

PRAYERS

A Prayer for Scotland

Gracious God, we pray for all those affected by the train crash in Scotland, that the bereaved may be consoled and the injured comforted and healed. We pray for all the emergency services who put the care and protection of others before their own and give thanks for their courage.

Amen



A prayer for the people of Lebanon

Merciful God, be with the people of Lebanon today. Comfort all who are distressed and anxious, protect the emergency services, restore the injured to health, and abide with all who mourn, for the sake of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord

Amen

Be with us, Lord, in all our prayers, and direct our way toward the attainment of salvation, that among the changes and chances of this mortal life, we may always be defended by your gracious help, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

VERSE OF THE WEEK

For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.

Ephesians 2:10 (NLT)

THOSE IN NEED OF PRAYERS

Louise Bradshaw, Kenneth Timson, Brian Copperwheat, Kay Grocock, Edwina Goodwin, Rachael Coysh, Claire Boulton, Claire Worster, Roy Jackson, Ida Price

"We are most effective as believers when we join together in love and prayer "

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY FROM LIZ JONES

This is what the LORD says: "Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls. But you said, 'We will not walk in it.'" Jeremiah 6:16

I find it hard to believe that we are over half way into this year. What a year it has been so far! Since March we have been in a lockdown which is now easing but with lots of restrictions still in place. There has been an incredible pace in which things have changed and continue to change. In the hospital environment there are daily updates about the Covid situation for the Trust and the changes that are taking place.

We may feel that in this ever changing world that we are in, the direction in which we are travelling also keeps changing and it can be hard for us to process what we do and which way we should be going in our daily lives.

The prophet Jeremiah speaks of standing at a crossroads and looking. There is something about that which can be helpful to us all. Stopping and looking, pausing at a crossroads to see which is the right path to take. For some of us, we may need to wait at the crossroads for a while, allowing ourselves to process the journey that we have been on, before making plans to move forward. We may also need to ask directions from a trusted source to help us on our way.

Finding the good or right way is not always straight forward and there are often many voices clamoring to be heard, which suggest different directions. Waiting on God to guide and help us find the good way is what Jeremiah is encouraging God's people to do. He encourages them to look at the ancient paths where God has led them in the past and to find them once more to follow, and in doing that they will find some rest.

Psalm 27 echoes this theme of waiting and following God to help us: 'Teach me your way, O Lord: lead me in a straight path....' And finally; 'Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord'.

Liz Jones is a chaplain at University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust

NEWS AND NOTICES

CHURCH OPENING TIMES

This Sunday 16th August, there will be a Holy Communion service IN CHURCH at 10:30am.

Sunday 23rd August, there will be a service on Zoom at 10:30am.

DAILY HOPE - 0800 804 8044

If you are not able to get to church via the Internet in any way, why not listen in to this every day? You could even agree with a friend or two that you will all listen in on a particular day and then give each other a call to discuss what you've heard.



PARISH GIVING

During the current pandemic giving to our church is more important than ever. The practical impact of not holding services and not having anyone hire the hall is immense.

We still have bills to pay (eg insurance, standing charge for gas, parish share, building maintenance) we are losing on average £1,700 a month through no hall rentals and no giving through weekly donations on the plate.

Therefore we need to find other ways of giving and there are many ways this can be done. To find out more information about giving please [click here](#)

A huge thank you to everyone who has supported the Church during the last 4 months, each and every donation (no matter how big or small) has made a huge difference.