

While our Rector David Tomlinson is on his sabbatical from May to the end of July 2019, Rachel Prior will write a Curate's Letter.

Curate's Letter – June 2019

Dear Friends,

At last month's Visitation Service, where church wardens are admitted to their office, the Archdeacon of Stansted Robin King spoke about how each of us is called to bear witness to Christ. He told us how if one person were to go and stand in the Market Square looking up at the sky, those in the street would continue to pass on by. However, if four gathered, stopped, and looked up at the sky, soon they would draw an extra four people. The witness of the group would lead others to be curious too. And so, we are to be encouraged: as the church, the group of Christ's followers, witnesses to the risen Christ, so others we will draw the curiosity of others.



Witnessing to others about our faith in Jesus Christ can be intimidating. We might worry about standing out and being different. We might be concerned about the questions we might be asked and how we can give a wise and faithful answer. Indeed, if we listen to our own concerns, in not very long we will have talked ourselves out of speaking about our faith all together!

But if we look beyond ourselves and turn to God in prayer, we will find the courage to witness, as we are recalled once again to the overwhelming, reckless and generous love of God for all people. Filled with the divine passion for searching out the lost sheep, we will find that the Holy Spirit leads us beyond our comfort zones to share God's love with others. Recently, at Morning Prayer, I asked God to help me to be a light of Christ in this community, and almost immediately, I had a conversation with someone in the churchyard where we prayed together. It was an encouragement to me of how God gives us many little opportunities in the day to share Christ's love and how if we are willing, God will use us to help build the Kingdom, right where we are.

Three years ago, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York invited Christians from the Anglican Communion to join them in praying for God's Kingdom to come in the lives of their friends and neighbours between Ascension and Pentecost. Thy Kingdom Come has become a global prayer movement that now spans across Christian denominations and across over 100 countries.

At St Mary's, we are again joining in with Thy Kingdom Come through hosting prayer stations during this time from the 3rd to the 10th June. We will welcome school children, adults who have never stepped foot in the church, and members of other Christian communities in the town to come and encounter the God of the Kingdom. For in order for God's kingdom of justice and mercy and peace to come in ourselves, in our families and friends, in our community and in our world, we must first look to the King.

I encourage you to use and enjoy the prayer stations and to prayerfully invite others who might not yet know the King to 'Come and see', as Philip said to Nathanael in John 1.46.

As we pray the Lord's Prayer during this time, let us heed the call to be witnesses to the King and the beauty of the Kingdom.

*May thy Kingdom come,
Thy will be done
On earth as it is in heaven.*

With love

Rachel Prior

Previous copies of Rector's Letter

[May 2019](#)

[April 2019](#)

[March 2019](#)

[February 2019](#)

[Dec 2018/Jan 2019](#)

[November 2018](#)

[October 2018](#)