

REFLECTIONS

There is no pleasing some people. John the Baptist couldn't please them with his austere lifestyle and message of judgement; Jesus couldn't please them by feasting with outcasts and sinners. A generation, so set in its ways, rejected God's word for their time, whether it came in a solemn, judgemental way or in joyful, mercy-filled way. But God's ways are not our ways: he is always going ahead of us doing new things, in unexpected ways, so Jesus counsels that the proof of God's pudding will be in the eating! (cf v.19)

Those who are receptive to Jesus' message are not the wise and the intelligent, that is the religious leadership with its vested interests, but the simple, humble souls who are free from preconceptions and prejudice - those whom Jesus terms 'infants'. And this is the way God has willed it: 'All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.' (v.27). Jesus will reveal the Father and the Son to anyone humble enough to listen to him.

Verses 28-30 emphasise the rest or relief that Christian discipleship brings. The fastidious demands of the Scribes and Pharisees tied heavy burdens on people's shoulders (Matthew 23.4) with no prospect of relief; following Jesus, whilst still a very demanding task, releases us from legalism. To take on his yoke is to commit oneself to a lifetime of learning to follow him.

Through it he promises rest for our souls, although we should never forget that he still walks the way of the cross.

Going deeper

Romans 7 describes our universal human experience. In our best moments we echo the psalmist: 'Your decrees are my delight, they are my counsellors' (Psalm 119.24), but then we discover that we wallow in our own selfish desires. Despite a determination to obey God's commandments, we continually disobey (in thought if not in deed). A war rages within us and it can seem like a losing battle. The question is, are we fighting this battle alone or is there someone to help us? Paul declares: 'The answer, thank God, is that Jesus Christ can and does.' (v.28 The Message Translation). This is the answer we need to hear and in Romans 8 Paul will tell us more!

I wonder... Am I too set in my ways to recognise when God is doing something new?

THIS WEEK'S SERVICES ONLINE

Sunday - Live on Zoom	President: Paula Griffiths
9.30am Holy Communion	Preacher: Caroline Curren
9.30am Family Service with Sunday School	Leader: Tim Hardingham
10.00am Holy Communion	President: John Saxon
Pre-recorded (youtube)	
Act of Worship	Leader: Alex Jeewan
Tuesday - Live on Zoom	
5.00pm Evening Prayer	Leader: Joe Hordern
Wednesday - Live on Zoom	
9.30am Holy Communion	Alex Jeewan Caroline Curren

BIBLE READINGS FOR THIS WEEK

Mon 6th	Morning Psalm 80 & Luke 17:20-end Evening Psalm 85
Tue 7th	Morning Psalm 89:1-18 & Luke 18:1-14 Evening Psalm 89:19-end & Romans 15:1-13
Wed 8th	Morning Psalm 119:105-128 & Luke 18:15-30 Evening Psalm 91
Thurs 9th	Morning Psalm 92 & Luke 18:31-end Evening Psalm 94
Fri 10th	Morning Psalm 88 & Luke 19:1-10 Evening Psalm 102
Sat 11th	Morning Psalm 97 & Luke 19:11-27 Evening Psalm 104

SAFFRON WALDEN & VILLAGES TEAM MINISTRY

The Grapevine

COVERING THE PARISHES OF SAFFRON WALDEN, WIMBISH, DEBDEN, ASHDON AND HADSTOCK.

Fourth Sunday after Trinity
5th July 2020

Collect

O God, the protector of all who trust in you, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy: increase and multiply upon us your mercy; that with you as our ruler and guide we may so pass through things temporal that we lose not our hold on things eternal; grant this, heavenly Father, for our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

First Reading: *Romans 7.15-25a*

I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. But in fact it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me. So I find it to be a law that when I want to do what is good, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God in my inmost self, but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind, making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!

Gospel: *Matthew 11.16-19, 25-30*

At that time Jesus said, 'To what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the market-places and calling to one another, "We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not mourn." For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, "He has a demon"; the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, "Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax-collectors and sinners!" Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds. I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.'

See St Mary's church, SW, website at www.stmaryssaffronwalden.org to find out more.

Please 'Like' our Facebook page so we reach more people! Click on the link on our website, or go to: www.facebook.com/saintmaryschurchsaffronwalden



PLEASE PRAY FOR:

Churches Together Prayer Cycle: In July please pray for:
Saffron Walden Salvation Army Corps, Katherine Semar Schools

The family and friends of those who have died recently:
Donald Calcott, John Ellingham, Christine Wood

EVENTS

BISHOP STEPHEN COTTRELL WILL BE CONFIRMED as the 98th Archbishop of York at 11am on **Thursday 9th July 2020**. To view the service, you will need to click on the following link <https://www.churchofengland.org/aby98>

July's edition of **PARISH NEWS** is available on the website at <http://www.stmaryssaffronwalden.org/parishnews>

MINISTER'S LETTER

Dear Friends,

Regular watchers of *Gardener's World* may remember Monty Don encouraging us to stop in the midst of our labours and take the time to look and listen, noticing the sights and sounds of the natural world. Maybe our enforced hibernation has given us the opportunity to do just that, and perhaps to see God there too, remembering the words of the priest-poet Gerard Manley Hopkins: 'The world is charged with the grandeur of God'. It is so easy to miss the signs of God's presence in the everyday moments of life. I like these words from Elizabeth Barrett Browning's poem *Aurora Leigh*:

Earth's crammed with heaven,
And every common bush afire with God;
But only he who sees, takes off his shoes,
The rest sit round it and pluck blackberries.

Jesus used the everyday world around him to teach us of God and his love – the lilies of the field, the birds of the air, the mustard seed, the oyster's pearl, and so on. He commended those with the eyes to see and the ears to hear, but others stubbornly refused to recognise him. He just wasn't what they expected, he didn't fit into their categories of what a messiah should be, and they missed their opportunity to welcome and befriend their Lord.

The Bible leaves us in no doubt that God's ultimate purpose is to renew his creation: in its penultimate chapter the One who sits on heaven's throne says 'Behold, I am making all things new.' (Rev.21.5) The God of resurrection, who raised Jesus from the dead, is busy at work in order to make all things new. At no point has he become tired or stuck for ideas, rather he is constantly at work bringing gospel newness in unexpected ways – in situations, attitudes, and relationships – he is the God of surprises.

Our government has further loosened its lockdown restrictions and churches are beginning to explore re-opening for services. Also many of us continue to pray, both privately and via occasional Zoom meetings, about the search for, and selection of, a new Team Rector for these parishes. All this means that we are on the threshold of new beginnings that will set the course for whatever our future 'new normal' will be. In the coming days may we hold in our prayers those charged with discerning our way forward, and may we all be open to and trust in the God who makes all things new.

With love and prayers,
Andy Colebrooke

PRAYER FOR THIS WEEK

Teach me, my God and King,
In all things Thee to see,
And what I do in anything
To do it as for Thee.

George Herbert

NEWS

ALL CHURCHES IN THE TEAM REMAIN CLOSED FOR PUBLIC WORSHIP, in line with government and national church guidelines. **Please check St Mary's website for updates.**

PRIVATE PRAYER St Mary's Church, Saffron Walden, is currently open for private prayer on Wednesday and Sunday 12-4. *Gill and Denis*

ST JAMES CHURCH, SEWARDS END, will be open for private prayer on Sunday 2.30-4.00pm. *Lynne & Mike*

ALL SAINTS, ASHDON will be open for private prayer on Wednesday and Sunday between 11am and 6.00pm.

EMAIL BULLETINS We are issuing regular email bulletins that highlight information from the website, attach the Grapevine and service sheet and provide the Zoom links for live services that weekend. Please email Dawn at office@stmaryssaffronwalden.org if you would like to be added to the distribution list.

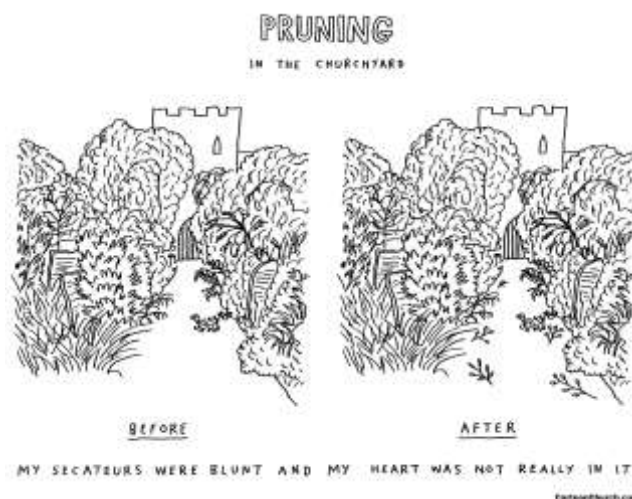
WORSHIP ONLINE There are several ways of joining in our team worship which can be accessed from links on St Mary's Church at Home webpage.

<http://www.stmaryssaffronwalden.org/churchathome>

You can watch a pre-recorded services and you can participate in live Zoom Services around the team. The service sheets and Grapevine are also available on the webpage.

YOU CAN NOW JOIN LIVE WORSHIP BY PHONE - you don't need a computer or tablet. If you would like to know more please contact Steve Hasler 01799 525041 s.hasler@btopenworld.com

ST MARY'S C OF E VA PRIMARY SCHOOL in Saffron Walden is looking to recruit 2 volunteers as Church Governors. We can offer an enthusiastic, dedicated staff and existing governing board and a primary school with a nurturing learning environment. A teaching background is not necessary and most of the current governors have different career backgrounds. We are currently all working remotely due to COVID19, so access to a computer/tablet and some basic knowledge of how to use Zoom/Microsoft teams is helpful, but training can be provided. If you are interested please contact Vicky the Chair of Governors on chairofgovernors@st-maryscofe.essex.sch.uk



MINISTRY TEAM

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Revd Tim Hardingham	01799 542874
Revd Alex Jeewan	01799 531153
Revd John Saxon	01799 541619
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