**Sunday 23rd February 2020**

**Sunday before Lent**

**THOUGHT FOR TODAY**

 Why and how do we tell others?

I wonder if you, like me, have one or more special people to whom you will be forever grateful that they shared their faith in Jesus with you? I have two, my lovely Aunty May who first took me to church as quite a young child, and a very important Sunday School teacher Mr Griffiths, who through his telling of Bible stories with excitement and imagination brought them to have life and meaning. Both shared faith as if it was the most important and exciting thing in the world and I have never forgotten that my faith was nurtured with such excitement and vitality.

It wasn’t until I was older, and probably knew my bible better that I realised why telling others was so important to them. They shared because knowing Jesus’ love was so important and so good, that to tell others was absolutely irresistible. The love of God in their lives had given them so much joy, hope and certainty for the future, that they could do nothing else but share. I also later learnt that Jesus told his followers to live as he did, and that includes being people who *‘go’* and *‘tell’.* For those of us who find talking about our faith difficult or even embarrassing, please think of those who shared faith down through the centuries, and where we would be today if they hadn’t overcome their difficulties and be bold!

If this still doesn’t help be encouraged by words attributed to St Francis of Assisi who sent his co-workers out with these words: “***Preach the Gospel at all times****.* ***Use words if necessary.”***

*Rev Margaret*

**THIS WEEK AT ST. JOHN’S**

Sunday

9.00 am Morning Prayer (1st 3rd)

 Holy Communion (2nd 4th 5th)

**FORTHCOMING EVENTS**

**Coffee Morning at St. John’s**. First Wednesday of each month at 10.30 am. £2.50 including tea/coffee, biscuits and home-made cakes. Come along for a chat. You will be very welcome.

**Curry and Quiz night** at St. Michael's Church on Saturday 29th February, 7:00pm, £5. Please let Alison Tabernor know in advance if you will be coming (01889 804587). Come in teams of 4 or make a team on the night! Meat and veggie curry options available, wine sold by the glass!

**Children against climate change** monthly event. Tuesday 3rd March,
4-5pm at St A’s. Ideas and activities to encourage recycling and looking after our environment.

**Lent Lunches across the benefice:** This year we visit different churches across the benefice. All on Wednesdays, start at 12.30pm with short reflection on Lent, followed by bread soup and cheese.
4th March at St John’s, Armitage
11th March at Holy Spirit
18th at Good Shepherd
25th March at St Michael’s
1st April at St Augustine’s.

**World Day of Prayer – Churches Together.** Friday 6th March 2pm at the Church of the Holy Spirit.

**The Big Breakfast** with talk is back! The first Saturday of the month, breakfast is served in St. Michael's Hall (cereal, toast, cooked breakfast) 9:15am for a 9:30am start, followed by a talk. The first talk will be Rev'd Jo Wood talking to us about her life and faith, on Saturday 7th March. All are welcome. Donations only. Please let a minister or St. Michael's Warden know if you plan to come.

**Mavis Harvey’s funeral** will be at 2pm on Friday 13th March at St Augustine’s.

Saturday 21st March - **Open House at the Curate's** - drop in anytime between 2pm to 5pm. Enjoy some Lenten friendship and fellowship at Jo, Andy & Grace's at The Vicarage, 14 Peakes Road.

**Parish Easter Trail**, Saturday 28th March, St. Michael's Church. Planning meeting on Wednesday 4th March at 7:30pm, St. Michael's.

**ACROSS THE PARISH**

We are happy to say that we have been able to **send the Pathway Project £300** out of the proceeds of the Christmas Tree Festival at St Augustine’s.

**Electoral Rolls**: Will everyone please check their entry on the roll and make any amendments necessary. i.e. change of address, spellings,, etc, and tell us if you know anyone has moved away from the area.

**HAVE YOU BOOKED YOUR PLACE ON THE PARISH WEEKEND AWAY 26th-28th JUNE 2020? ? THE DEADLINE FOR BOOKING YOUR PLACE IS THE END OF FEBRUARY.** Find a brochure and booking form at the back of church today! This is for everyone. We do not want cost to be a barrier to people coming, so if that is a factor for you, talk in confidence to Revds Brian, Margaret, Jo, George or David. Folks who went to the last weekend away loved it, so do sign up!

**The Changing Room Counselling service.** Call **075 9125 7737.**

*The Changing Room is now available three days per week – Tuesday, Wednesday and Fridays!*