**SUNDAY, 28TH JUNE, 2020 – 3RD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY**

**COLLECT**

Almighty God, you have broken the tyranny of sin and have sent the Spirit of your Son into our hearts whereby we call you Father: give us grace to dedicate our freedom to your service, that we and all creation may be brought to the glorious liberty of the children of God; 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

**PSALM 89:1-4 & 15-18**

My song shall be always of the loving-kindness of the Lord:

with my mouth will I proclaim your faithfulness throughout all generations.

I will declare that your love is established for ever;

you have set your faithfulness as firm as the heavens.

For you said: “I have made a covenant with my chosen one;

I have sworn an oath to David my servant:

“Your seed will I establish for ever

and build up your throne for all generations.

Happy are the people who know the shout of triumph:

they walk, O Lord, in the light of your countenance.

In your name they rejoice all the day long

and are exalted in your righteousness.

****For you are the glory of their strength,

and in your favour you lift up our heads.

Truly the Lord is our shield,

the Holy One of Israel is our king.

**GOSPEL** Matthew 10:40-end

Jesus said to the twelve: “Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward; and whoever welcomes a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive the reward of the righteous; and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple – truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward.”

**POST COMMUNION**

O God, whose beauty is beyond our imagining and whose power we cannot comprehend: show us your glory as far as we can grasp it, and shield us from knowing more than we can bear until we may look upon you without fear; through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen

Dear Friends,

The collect for this Sunday says *‘give us grace to dedicate our freedom to your service, that we and all creation may be brought to the glorious liberty of the children of God’.*

Some might think this prayer is particularly appropriate following the Prime Minister’s announcement of considerable relaxations to the current Coronavirus restrictions with effect from the 4th July. Freedom at last, some may be thinking but we really all must still be very cautious. I think the most important part of that collect is the phrase ‘*that we and all creation may be brought to the glorious liberty of the children of God’.*

Of course, we want freedom. Of course, we want to be able to go out for a pint; go out for a meal; meet up with a friend for a coffee; go on holiday but we want that for everyone. We want everyone to be able to safely enjoy those wonderful things that we’ve all previously taken for granted. We want everyone *to be brought to the glorious liberty of the children of God.*

Sadly we know that it will be sometime before everyone will feel safe enough to venture out into a shop or a restaurant or even feel it’s safe to go to church when the doors re-open for services. The PCC feel very strongly that St John’s has a duty of care to all people who come along to worship and to the amazing team of people who do so many vital jobs in the church – most of whom are over the age of 70 and many have underlying health problems. Several members of our congregation have been isolating over the last 3 months on medical advice and it would be irresponsible of our church to expect them to be in church doing jobs and putting themselves at risk.

At our Zoom PCC meeting last week it was unanimously agreed that we shouldn’t open the church up for private prayer. Whilst it would be lovely to offer this to our community and congregation, it was felt it would be too difficult to manage and to guarantee everyone’s safety unless someone was in attendance.

Following the Prime Minister’s statement today (Tuesday) churches will though be able to open for public worship from Sunday, 5th July but, as I explained last week, the services will not be just as before lockdown. I will let you know details in my letter next week when I have had an opportunity to talk to our Church Wardens and the PCC.

One thing I would like to stress though, even when churches open again for said services, it is my intention to continue with the live streaming Facebook service at 10.30am on Sundays and Morning and Evening Prayer each day for as long as necessary or possible because there are many people who will not be able to come along to church and it would be wrong to suddenly forget them and not provide the spiritual support that has helped them through these recent months.

*Almighty God, you have broken the tyranny of sin and have sent the Spirit of your Son into our hearts whereby we call you Father.* Whereby we call you Father. Brothers and sisters - we are in this together and we must continue to do all we can to keep each other safe so that together *we may be brought to the glorious liberty of the Children of God.*

May God richly bless you, those you pray for and those you love.

Linda

**If you want to contact me about any of the above then please telephone me on 01524 411039**

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**Bishop’s Memory: Growing Leaders – 1 Corinthians 1.17**

For Christ did not send me to baptise but to proclaim the gospel, and not with eloquent wisdom, so that the cross of Christ might not be emptied of its power.

Give thanks for all the different ways we are able to keep in touch with each other and come together virtually. Pray that we continue to learn new ways to come together and support each other.

**Vision 2026:** For all schools and academies to encourage and equip pupils to be courageous advocates for the Gospel, fighting injustice locally and globally.

**Preston Resourcing Parish:** We are blessed with a staff team. We count it as a privilege. Please pray that we maximise the benefits – for growth and to bless and resource others.

**Diocese:** Lancaster and Morecambe Deanery Officers, Rev Cindy Rigney, Ms Jacqueline Stamper, Dr Awena Carter, Mrs Barbara Gardner and all representatives on Deanery Synod.

**Braunschweig:** Deputy Bishop Thomas Hofer

**Free State:** For all involved in Ordination training

**Anglican Cycle of Prayer:** Pray for the united Church of North India The Most Rev Dr Prem Chand Singh - Moderator of CNI and Bishop of Jabalpur

**Pray for those in need of God’s healing touch** – Chris Bamburgh, Sandra Barton, Dawn & Josie Baxter, Noel Bouskill, Rona Briggs, Ronald Denson, Rob Goulding, Mark Harding, George Howling, Peter Jackson, Aiden Jones, Margaret Kelly, Claudia Lewis, Ian Macluskie, Christine Martin, Anne Millar, Orea Needham, Leslie Morgan, Nicola Nichol, Pam McDermott, Maureen Parker, Doris & Alan Shackleton, Jim Pearson, Revd John Reeves, Tania, Darren and his family.

**From the Book of Remembrance** this week we remember with love and thanksgiving the love and lives of Brian Munro, Jack Butler, Jessie Haigh, Nicola Pace, Jack Waterworth, Caroline Shafizadeh and Robert Davis.