

Walking Through Ordinary Time

with St. Michael's Church Sittingbourne



A selection of things to make, read or do to help us reflect on

First Sunday after Trinity

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1. Finding a new rhythm...

After almost 80 days of praying at home in the vicarage office, I have moved out of that space, despite the brightly coloured decorations, pictures and cards that made it a much more cheerful place.

I've moved out of the office into the dining room because, well, the office had begun to feel like a bunker. It was the place of so many devastating calls and messages on people's health since the pandemic began, sadly, the office also became the place of some of the most heart-breaking moments of ministry so far, and we still do not know the full extent and human tragedy this virus will leave in its wake.

But, rightly or wrongly, Britain is beginning to unlock...

Stepping out of the office and into a much brighter space in the house, I am stepping into the new rhythm of gradually unlocking the lockdown which will include churches beginning to open their doors too.

From Monday 15th June some of our local churches may well open for private prayer alongside some 'non-essential' shops, however re-opening churches at this stage is a "may do" and not a "must do" according to the advice of Bishop Rose and Senior advisors at Canterbury Diocese. There are many things we will need to consider at St. Michael's and this will form part of our reflections and discussions as a PCC when we meet later this month with Team Rector Mike Resch on Zoom. There are no plans to open Holy Trinity or Bobbing Church buildings at this stage either. We will of course, keep you posted...

In the meantime, let's continue to stay connected, care for one another, and maintain the steady rhythm of prayer. We hope you will find material in this week's booklet to support your faith journey at this time through words, music, prayers and poetry to aid your reflections. We also have material from Roots on the Web, a mini reflection from Revd Pam, poetry, and music plus links to videos from Holy Trinity Sittingbourne which you will find on You Tube.

Feedback on our weekly resources thus far has been very positive; if you would like to get more involved and make a regular contribution please do get in touch. We would love to hear from you!

With best wishes,

Revd Lesley Jones

On behalf of the Resources Team.

2. Words to reflect upon

Another poem recommended by Revd Pam Beckinsale, a poem written for Choral Evensong by Tracy, and a third poem shared by Bishop Rose this week:

Daily Poem

Pauline A Greasby, Wendover, Bucks. Daily Mail 25th June 2002

Every single evening as I'm lying here in bed
This tiny little prayer keeps running through my head.
God bless my nearest and dearest and other family
Keep them warm and safe from harm for they're so close to me.
And God, there is one more thing I wish that you could do
Hope you don't mind me asking, bless my computer too.
Now I know that it's not normal to bless a mother board
But listen just a second while I explain to you, my Lord.
You see, that little metal box holds more than odds and ends
Inside those small compartments rest so many of my friends.
I know so much about them, the kindness that they give
And this little scrap of metal takes me in to where they live.
By faith is how I know them, much the same as you
We share in what life brings us and from that our friendship grew.
Please, take an extra minute from your duties up above
To bless those in my address book that's filled with so much love.
Wherever else this prayer may reach to each and every friend
Bless each email inbox and the person who hits 'send'.
When you update your heavenly list on your own CD-Rom
Remember each who've said this prayer sent up to God.com.

Amen.

1 Kings 19:9, 11-16 – a mini reflection from Revd Pam Beckinsale

"I was thinking about this passage a few weeks ago. It occurred to me that many people want God to be found in the wind, earthquake and fire, and then when he doesn't appear to be doing anything dramatic to make things good, lose faith. They don't realise that God is in the silence, the quiet acts of kindness, or service to others, the word of encouragement, faithful prayer in the face of difficulties when God carries us. (Footprints in the sand)."

“I want to be in God’s hands”

I want to be in God’s hands

His hands

Hands that love and hug

That caress and care

That gentle the scared

That shape and mould our lives...

His hands

Hands that defend

-that protect

That close firmly around us when we need it

That let us go...

... and wait empty for us to return.

I want to be in his hands

Hands that Weigh our lives

That reach out in love

That rest quietly and enfold us as we sleep

Hands that keep evil and terror at bay

That care, and heal, gently, always.

I want to be in God’s hands

They are holding my hand –

- And they Command me, empower me, to

- reach out to others.

That’s where I want to be

I want to be in God’s hands

Tracy Williams 2019

We Wear the Mask

BY PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR

We wear the mask that grins and lies,
It hides our cheeks and shades our eyes,—
This debt we pay to human guile;
With torn and bleeding hearts we smile,
And mouth with myriad subtleties.

Why should the world be over-wise,
In counting all our tears and sighs?
Nay, let them only see us, while
We wear the mask.

We smile, but, O great Christ, our cries
To thee from tortured souls arise.
We sing, but oh the clay is vile
Beneath our feet, and long the mile;
But let the world dream otherwise,
We wear the mask!

Note: This is the poem Bishop Read out at a meeting on wellbeing with ministers in the Diocese earlier this week...

3. Bible Readings

Exodus 19:2-8

New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised

²They had journeyed from Rephidim, entered the wilderness of Sinai, and camped in the wilderness; Israel camped there in front of the mountain. ³Then Moses went up to God; the LORD called to him from the mountain, saying, 'Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the Israelites: ⁴You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. ⁵Now therefore, if you obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession out of all the peoples. Indeed, the whole earth is mine, ⁶but you shall be for me a priestly kingdom and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the Israelites.'

⁷So Moses came, summoned the elders of the people, and set before them all these words that the LORD had commanded him. ⁸The people all answered as one: 'Everything that the LORD has spoken we will do.' Moses reported the words of the people to the LORD.

Results of Justification

⁵Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we^[a] have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ²through whom we have obtained access^[b] to this grace in which we stand; and we^[c] boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. ³And not only that, but we^[d] also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, ⁴and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, ⁵and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

⁶For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. ⁸But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us.

Footnotes:

- a. [Romans 5:1](#) Other ancient authorities read *let us*
- b. [Romans 5:2](#) Other ancient authorities add *by faith*
- c. [Romans 5:2](#) Or *let us*
- d. [Romans 5:3](#) Or *let us*

Matthew 9:35-10:8

New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised

The Harvest Is Great, the Labourers Few

³⁵ Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and curing every disease and every sickness. ³⁶ When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷ Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; ³⁸ therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest.'

The Twelve Apostles

10 Then Jesus^[a] summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to cure every disease and every sickness. ² These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon, also known as Peter, and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; ³ Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax-collector; James son of

Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus;^[b] ⁴ Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed him.

The Mission of the Twelve

⁵ These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: 'Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, ⁶ but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. ⁷ As you go, proclaim the good news, "The kingdom of heaven has come near."^[c] ⁸ Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers,^[d] cast out demons. You received without payment; give without payment.

Footnotes:

- e. [Matthew 10:1](#) Gk *he*
- f. [Matthew 10:3](#) Other ancient authorities read *Lebbaeus*, or *Lebbaeus called Thaddaeus*
- g. [Matthew 10:7](#) Or *is at hand*
- h. [Matthew 10:8](#) The terms *leper* and *leprosy* can refer to several diseases

4. Things to Make and Do

Live your faith

14-20 June 2020

Read, pray, reflect at home this week



This week's Bible readings Exodus 19.2-8a • Romans 5.1-8 • Matthew 9.35-10.8,(9-23)

Call to action

Notes on the Bible readings

- The backdrop to this scene is Jesus' miracles of healing. The disciples have experienced incredible events. Jesus sent them out to mirror his actions: to heal and to preach. In doing this, he also commissions them, giving them authority over unclean spirits to cast them out, and to cure every disease and sickness.

- Jesus warns of the dangers that the disciples face, likening it to sheep facing wolves. But he assures them that they are to stand firm in the Father's protection and will be given the words to say from the Holy Spirit.

- As Christians we are called to mirror Jesus and the disciples, to 'Go out' into the world. But this passage reminds us that we don't do that in our own strength. When we do not have the words to say, the same Spirit of the Father that spoke to the disciples can speak to and through us.

Good news

Jesus told the twelve to 'proclaim the good news'. So, make some good-news cards. You will need blank postcards (or card cut to post-card size) and crayons. Design a card that includes just a few words to describe – or, if you prefer, an image to represent – one bit of good news that comes from knowing Jesus. Make the card colourful and exciting.

Consider who you might send the card to. You could post it to that person, or pop it through a neighbour's letter box – maintaining social distancing, of course.

Questions for reflection

- ▶ How does this image relate to your experiences of going away?
- ▶ What do you think gives us, today, Jesus' authority to go out and make disciples?
- ▶ When do you most feel like you are doing Jesus' work (particularly as 'going away' is not an option at the moment)?



A prayer of praise

*We unite with the whole world in praising you, creator God.
We come before you with gladness and thanksgiving.
We praise your goodness; we praise your faithfulness;
we praise your tenderness.
We are yours and we worship you.
We bless your name for ever. Amen.*

A prayer for others

Loving Lord, you call and equip us to serve you. Watch over those who risk their own safety by caring for others. Strengthen and protect all those who are persecuted for their faith in places where living a Christian life in peace is not allowed.

Loving Lord, you empower us to live out our discipleship. Give wisdom, imagination and the strength to persevere to those who face apathy as they seek to live out their discipleship.

*Loving Lord, you understand what it means to suffer for what is right. Give comfort and courage to those who are treated unjustly because of their faith, and indeed to all who suffer, whatever the reason.
In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.*

A personal prayer

Lord, may I know your guidance as I seek to be a faithful disciple in the places to which you send me. Amen.

Live your faith

When you pass or go through a doorway, think about being sent out by Jesus to share the good news – who could you share some good news with?

FREE [worship at home](#) resources, including up-to-the-minute reflection on this week's Bible reading, available at: www.rootsontheweb.com

Activity: Reaching Out from Roots on the Web

Gather together a selection of family magazines – whatever you have to hand – and cut out images that say something to you about how your church community is already reaching out.

Stick these images onto a large piece of paper to make a collage. If you are working with others in your household, talk together about why you have chosen the image that you have. What themes or connections with particular people can be identified? Place the collage in a suitable place to help you continue to ponder these things in the coming days, and as an inspiration to prayer for your community.

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Charlotte from Holy Trinity Sittingbourne has made a series of children’s videos and they are available on HTS’s You Tube Page.... Enjoy!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VJjh0A7WcH8>



And you will find a number of fun, thought provoking videos from Curate Revd Chris Penfold on the HTS page too.

Here is this week’s offering from Chris: “Connected”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y-FZYF-cKZg>



5. Video Link – Recommended by our Music Director

Director Catherine Orton has a recommendation for us:

O Lux Beata by Will Todd. A mixture of plainsong sections interspersed with lush modern harmonies.

https://willtodd.co.uk/products-page-2/choir_and_keyboard/o_lux_beata/



6. Organists Choice:

Our church may be closed at the moment, but our organist Nigel MacArthur is still thinking about the music too and has selected a piece of music for us today:

Here is a gentle piece for Sunday's pew sheet:

Johannes Brahms - Fugue in A flat minor, WoO 8 for organ (1856) played by Wayne Marshall

<https://youtu.be/TN4TB3U5KXc>





7. Thought for the Day for 106.9 SFM Radio by Revd Lesley Jones

or if you prefer, you can listen here.

<https://soundcloud.com/lesley-jones-18/thought-for-the-day-1069-sfm-radio-revd-lesley-jones>

I don't know about you but I have got into a different rhythm during lockdown. I'm not only doing things differently, but also at a different speed, and in a different place, and suddenly things seem to take on a new significance...

For example, making the time to eat a healthy meal with my husband, instead of just grazing and picking through the day – or eating on the move – as we often did before...

Telephone calls – all of a sudden – have a different significance – it seems more important to connecting with others and keeping up with their news too.

And I have to say that there are different passages from the Bible have become much more important than they have before...

Now you might expect me to say that - being a Vicar –but it's not only me – its also the people who worship alongside St. Michael's Church as we have a service on Facebook every day.

We are finding Scripture really speaking to us – let me give you an example:

When I lead the service* we usually begin with a short meditation and they are words from Psalm 46 – verse 10 if you want to look up the full psalm. These are the words that we use to prepare:

Leader: “Be Still and Know that I am God”
All: “**Be Still and Know that I am God**”

Leader: “Be Still and Know that I am”
All: “**Be Still and Know that I am**”

Leader: “Be still and know”
All: “**Be still and know**”

Leader: “Be still”
All: “**Be still**”

Leader: “Be”
All: “**Be**”

These words remind me that whatever is happening, whatever fears I have about the pandemic, or the future, the economy or injustice throughout the world – these words remind me that there is something much bigger than my fears – God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

And I usually end my services on facebook reminding people just how precious they are in God’s sight.

But how do I trust this to be...?

How do I **know** that we are children of the Living God

How do I know that **we are loved**?

How do I **know** that **you** are loved by God?

Well I think it’s a combination of factors including:

- Faith,
- Experience,
- Prayer, and
- Reflecting on God's Holy Word.

Did you know that Jesus often referred to his disciples as family members and His Father in heaven as **their** Father too...

I'm thinking of Matthew's Gospel here – chapter 7 -

and how it is God the Father who **“give[s] good gifts to those who ask him.”**
Matthew Chapter 7: Verse 11

Not my words but the words of Jesus. And I believe Jesus describes you and me in terms of family members too –when he said:

Anyone who **“does the will of my Father in heaven is my mother, sister and brother”** Matthew 12:50

And I know that the God who loves us,
you and me,

also knows us better than we know ourselves – for example – there are comforting words such as these from Psalm 100:

“Know that the Lord is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.”

And this relationship is not down to where I was born, or the clan I belong to, it's not down to the education I received or the work I do, it's not down to anything I have done, it's got nothing to do with the colour of my skin but it is down to God's Grace...

I believe that **all of us** are truly equal in God's sight.

Equal. The Same. And Every time we turn to God and ask for our sins to be forgiven we each have the chance of a fresh start; a new beginning;

And the piece of music I have chosen, I hope speaks for itself, it's the Kingdom Choir singing "Blinded by Your Grace."

Thank you for listening.

<https://youtu.be/ciy7XqZZmY0>



8. Prayers for this Week

Collect for Trinity Sunday from the Church of England:

**God of truth,
help us to keep your law of love
and to walk in ways of wisdom,
that we may find true life
in Jesus Christ your Son.
Amen**

A prayer from Revd Lesley

**God of love and light,
you call us to be your children in this world;
invited to share your love and compassion
for the whole of creation, earth, sea, sky and all creatures.
Help us to remember you created us in your image,
one people, where all are equal in your sight,
regardless of skin colour, social status or the people we love -
one people, one family, loved by you, the Living God.
Amen.**

A Prayer from Roots on the Web

**God, in our journeying make us adventurous.
In our encounters make us kind.
In our hearts give us peace.**

**Bless us as we step out of our comfort zone,
out of the boxes we keep ourselves in much to the time.
Help us to take risks and make a difference. Amen**



You can find prayer resources on the Church of England's Website here:
<https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer>

9. Information re: Daily Prayers

Please do tune in for Daily Morning Prayer,
every day at 10.30,
on St. Michael's Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/StMichaelsSittingbourne/>

