



Parish of St. Mary's Swynnerton & St. James' Cotes Heath
 Sunday August 9th 2020 (Trinity 9)
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The Bishop of Lichfield this week begins a pilgrimage to the 27 churches in the diocese which bear the name of his ancient predecessor, St. Chad. Bishop Michael (pictured here on a walk 4 years ago), will visit and pray at churches across Staffordshire, Shropshire and the Black Country and he says "I hope that this will help us all to call to mind our shared direction of travel, 'COME FOLLOW CHRIST IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF ST. CHAD'".

The seventh century saint was the first bishop of Lichfield and took to the road to share the good news of Jesus with the Mercian people. Bishop Michael adds "Chad's message of gospel simplicity, friendly welcome and the crossing of boundaries is one which we all need to recover as our churches and our society seek to rebuild for the future."

- It's good to remember in a time of isolation, that we are part of God's family not only within our diocese but much further afield. This week we've had news from former church members in Wales and Scotland.



Andrea Butler now lives in Llanrhos near Llandudno and worships at St. Mary's church in Conwy, originally a Cistercian abbey. She is taking part in the "Great Orme Goat Challenge" during August, a fund-raising event for St. David's hospice in North Wales. "I will always be grateful to the Hospice movement for the care they gave to my lovely husband David and the care we received as a family" says Andrea. "I'm not very fit but hope to complete at least 5 turns around the Great



Orme". If you would like to support her in this, go to <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/AndyButler14>

(The goats on the Great Orme you may recall, became overnight TV personalities when they headed into town during lockdown).

Meanwhile, old friends from Yarnfield, Linda and Wilson Brown write from north of the border:



"Last October we moved from Dollar to Abernethy, Perthshire and it has been a timely move in view of Lockdown. We are in easy walking distance of Louise and Alison. Louise has two children now aged 3 and 4 years and they are a real joy to us.

Next week we are looking forward to a self-catering week in Galloway with all the family. David, Matthew and dog are also coming from Manchester for a few days in separate accommodation so we are looking forward to seeing them. We participate on a Sunday via Zoom with the Scottish Episcopal Church in Dollar and although not the same as being in Church it's working well at keeping folks in touch and the Rector leads the service from within the Church. Please pass on our best wishes to anyone who may remember us.

One day we may be able to turn up at a Sunday service and receive the usual warm St. Mary's welcome. If you or others are ever passing our way we would love to 'put the kettle on'. Take care and God's blessings to all."

Nearer to home, Julie and Mark Trillo have enjoyed having family with them during Lockdown. David and Gareth have both been studying with online exams. David's course doesn't finish until the end of August and he is still working on his dissertation. In London, Tom is working from his flat and will be until at least September.

CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

St. James' will be open for prayer this Sunday between 10 and 12.00. St. Mary's will be open from 10 to 11.30 with a short time of worship at 10.30 using the words of the morning service printed overleaf. If you are attending please remember your face covering, observe social distancing, and use sanitiser. If you are at home, do join in at the same time.

This week we remember in our prayers Dot Sargent, Pat Barley, Pat Lawrence, Carol Turner, Geoff Foster, Alan & Madeline Rawlings and Margaret Bailey.

Thanks to David Harman for preparing this week's intercessions.

Matthew 14:22-33

Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd. After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. Later that night, he was there alone, and the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it.

Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear.

But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid."

"Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water."

"Come," he said.

Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!"

Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?"

And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. Then those who were in the boat worshipped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."



On Sunday morning we will be listening to the song "As the deer pants for the water". I chose that because as I read this passage what leaps out at me is the idea that Peter so desperately wanted to be near to Jesus that he was willing to risk his life during a storm to get out of that boat and walk on the water towards Him.

Peter had in the previous verses seen Jesus feed well over 5,000 people with 5 loaves and two fish. Peter knew what Jesus was capable of and that he was an extraordinary man. The disciples were probably still trying to get their heads around who Jesus was and the message He was giving out. However, right now Jesus was calling Peter to walk on the water in the middle of a storm and to have faith in him. Hebrews 11 tells us that faith is to have confidence in what we hope for and assurance in what we do not see. Peter had faith, he had confidence that what Jesus was saying about being the Son of God was correct even though he couldn't see God himself.

Do we have faith in Jesus to be who he says he is? If Jesus asked me to get out of a boat, I'm not sure I could and yet I know I have relationship with him and that he impacts my life on a daily basis. So, how strong is my faith? And what about yours?

When Peter looked at the storm and not at Jesus he started to sink. When our troubles overwhelm us, do we sink under the weight of them or do we turn our eyes upon Jesus and allow Him to pull us up above the waves?

As the song says "so my soul longs after you" that's where I want to be today, longing for a deeper relationship with Jesus, the one and only true son of God. The one that gave His life so that we may be forgiven and have eternity in heaven with Him.

Can I encourage you to read through the words of the song below, to sing it to yourself or the birds, but mainly to make this your prayer today, that you too can have a soul that longs for a faith in Jesus who sacrificed himself just for you. Be blessed and refreshed in Him today, Amen.

Doreen English.

As the deer pants for the water
So my soul longs after You
You alone are my heart's desire
And I long to worship You.

You alone are my strength, my shield
To You alone may my spirit yield
You alone are my heart's desire
And I long to worship You.

You're my friend and You are my brother
Even though You are a King
I love You more than any other
So much more than anything.

You alone are my strength, my shield
To You alone may my spirit yield
You alone are my heart's desire
And I long to worship You.

MORNING WORSHIP

May the light of Christ, rising in glory, banish all darkness from our hearts and minds.

Thanks be to God.

O Lord, open our lips

And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Confession: God the Father forgives us in Christ and heals us by the Holy Spirit. Let us therefore confess our sins to God our redeemer:

**Lord God,
we have sinned against you;
we have done evil in your sight.
We are sorry and repent.
Have mercy on us according to your love.
Wash away our wrongdoing and cleanse us from our sin.
Renew a right spirit within us
and restore us to the joy of your salvation,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Father, you come to meet us when we return to you:

Lord, have mercy.

Jesus, you died on the cross for our sins:

Christ, have mercy.

Spirit, you give us life and peace:

Lord, have mercy.

Statement of Faith:

**We believe in God the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.
We believe in God the Son, who lives in our hearts through faith, and fills us with his love.
We believe in God the Holy Spirit, who strengthens us with power from on high.
We believe in one God;
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Amen.**

As we come to our time of prayer, you are invited to close your eyes, take a few deep breaths and before we begin to speak or read, recognize the truth again that we are always in God's presence. He is with us, he knows everything about us, he loves each of us deeply – and he will never go away...So.....Pause and Breath

Collect: **Almighty God, who sent your Holy Spirit to be the life and light of your Church: open our hearts to the riches of your grace, that we may bring forth the fruit of the Spirit in love and joy and peace; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord. Amen**

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, you promised through your Son Jesus Christ to hear us when we pray in faith:

Strengthen Michael our Bishop and all your Church in the service of Christ, that those who confess your name may be united in truth, live together in love and reveal your glory in the world. We pray for our Parish during this unusual time and we give thanks for all those who continue to work for your kingdom even though the church building is mostly closed –those producing this Newsletter, visiting the sick, contacting the lonely....

Lord in Your Mercy **Hear our Prayer**

Bless and guide Elizabeth our Queen, give wisdom to all in authority and direct this and every nation in the ways of justice and peace, that we may honour one another and seek the common good.

We remember in our prayers all those in the NHS and the nation's Care Homes caring for the sick and vulnerable and all those seeking a cure for Covid 19 and we give thanks for the broadcasting services which keep us informed

Lord in Your Mercy **Hear our Prayer**

Give grace to us, our families and friends and to all our neighbours, that we may serve Christ in one another and love as he loves us.

May our love and care for our neighbours bear true witness to your love for all mankind....

Lord in your Mercy **Hear our Prayer**

Comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind or spirit – and we lift to you all those who mourn, those listed elsewhere in this Newsletter who seek our prayers and all those whom we know who need our prayers at this time..... give them and their families courage and hope in their troubles and bring them the joy of your salvation....

Lord in Your Mercy **Hear our Prayer**

Merciful Father

Accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen

Lord God, we thank You for calling us into the company of those who trust in Christ and seek to obey His will. May Your Spirit guide and strengthen us in mission and service to Your world: for we are strangers no longer but pilgrims together on the way to Your Kingdom. **Amen**

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among us and remain with us always, **Amen.**