



Parish of St. Mary's Swynnerton & St. James' Cotes Heath
 Sunday Sept.13th 2020 (Trinity 14)



Contacts: Church Warden Ray Lewney: 01785 760366
 Ministry Team: Nicky Beasley, 01782 856656, Doreen English, 01782 796426,
 Alex Baines, 07462 616426 June Steed, 01782 643183, Chris Stokes, 01782 796610
 Children and Families' Worker: Anna Hawkins, 07725 124583
 Newsletter: chrisandjackie77@btinternet.com



As we approach 6 months of time spent apart, there are different ways to connect with friends and church family members so that you don't feel isolated.

The contacts at the top of this newsletter (our "Ministry Team") are always available if you are in any kind of need or would just like a chat.

St. Mary's and St. James' churches are open each Sunday between 10 and 11.30 and a morning service is read at 10.30. Social distancing and hygiene regulations are in place and you must wear a mask.

"Zoom" get-togethers are available for those who have mobile phones or other access to the internet. On a Sunday afternoon at 3pm there's a chance to look at the Bible reading for the day and have an informal discussion. On a Thursday at 7.30 pm there's a prayer time, when we remember all those in need in our parishes. Alex Baines will help you get started on "Zoom".

The newsletter will help you catch up on church news and pray for each other. It's sent out to over 80 people by email, by post and by hand delivery. It's also posted on "A Church Near You" website and viewed by large numbers each week. The weekly service sheet provides a routine if you prefer not to come to a church building. If you would like to contribute some news or ask for prayer, or if you know someone who'd like to receive the newsletter, please contact Jackie Stokes.

Our children's worker Anna has stayed in touch via the internet with the youngsters in the parish and has now resumed socially distanced meetings. She continues to be in touch with Toddler parents and Messy Church families. Contact her if you would like more details.

The Church of England and Lichfield diocese have lots of resources to help in your spiritual journey. (www.churchofengland.org and www.lichfield.anglican.org) and The Church of England Daily Hope Line is a free telephone service on 0800 804 8044 with encouragement, reassurance, hymns and prayers.



SEASON OF CREATION

It was good to see Ken's band of churchyard workers looking after St. Mary's surrounds last weekend. Thanks also to Nathan and his team from Oak Tree Farm who keep the grass cut and the graveyard looking neat. An important way to celebrate and care for God's creation.



And as we move through "Creationtide", the diocese's Environmental Officer, Richard Clarkson writes: "The creation of the world was not a one-time burst of energy that left God exhausted, rather it was a pouring out of something deep within God—a desire to create, to bring about beauty and order and all that is good. The world is filled with creativity because it was created by a God whose art and talent are inexhaustible...."

(Thanks to Frances Bathurst for these lovely flowers in church last weekend)



****FOR SALE: "Adjustamatic" bedstead, (no mattress), excellent condition, provides automatic elevation of head and foot of bed. Any reasonable offer considered. Contact Alex or Jackie, details at top of newsletter. ****

Matthew 18:21-35 NIV

²¹ Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?" ²² Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times. ²³ "Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. ²⁴ As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold^[a] was brought to him. ²⁵ Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt. ²⁶ "At this the servant fell on his knees before him. 'Be patient with me,' he begged, 'and I will pay back everything.' ²⁷ The servant's master took pity on him, cancelled the debt and let him go. ²⁸ "But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins.^[b] He grabbed him and began to choke him. 'Pay back what you owe me!' he demanded. ²⁹ "His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.' ³⁰ "But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. ³¹ When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened. ³² "Then the master called the servant in. 'You wicked servant,' he said, 'I cancelled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. ³³ Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?' ³⁴ In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. ³⁵ "This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

On Sunday 13th September the plan was to celebrate our mum being 90 years old, sadly though we lost her on the 5th May this year to Corona Virus. This passage really speaks to me about mum and the influence that she was on my life. I don't ever remember my mum saying that she was keeping away from someone or that she would never forgive someone who had argued with her or wronged her, in fact she often used to say the best way to prevent an argument is not to start it in the first place. To her the idea of carrying on a disagreement with someone was just not an option, for her forgiveness was a life choice that she chose on a daily basis.

When Jesus is asked in verse 22 how many times should we forgive? he says "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times. Some versions even say 70 x 7; now that is a lot of times but Jesus is trying to get across the point that he doesn't want you to keep a record, he wants you to do it so often that it becomes second nature. If we get into the habit of forgiving it becomes easier to do. Anger, hate and vengeance just burn us up from the inside, it becomes like a poison that we drink that makes us ill and rotten from the inside out.

If we took the time to remember all the things that we have done in the past that don't line up with Gods will, I dare say that although some of us would have a fairly long list, we would *all* still have a list of some sort. Jesus' challenge here is that we consider those things and remember the words of the Lord's prayer "Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us". We can't allow ourselves to regularly speak these words and not respond to them; we need to be honest with God and to ourselves. My prayer for you today is that you look at the different situations in your life where you may have been hurt and that you ask God to help you to practice forgiveness with those who have wronged you. *Forgiveness is a choice not a feeling*, and like mum we need to choose it daily. In return, just like she has, we too will receive eternal life with our Father in heaven.

Bless you, Amen. **DOREEN ENGLISH**

Today's song is a contemporary version of "Amazing Grace" by Chris Tomlin. If you have the technology, can I encourage you to download it and sing along? Take in the words and remember how much God loves you and that he calls you to extend that love and grace to others.

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me
I once was lost, but now I'm found
Was blind, but now I see.
'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear
And grace my fears relieved,
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed.
My chains are gone, I've been set free,
My God, my Saviour has ransomed me

And like a flood His mercy rains,
Unending love, amazing grace
The Lord has promised good to me,
His word my hope secures,
He will my shield and portion be as long as life
endures.
My chains are gone, I've been set free,
My God, my Saviour has ransomed me
And like a flood His mercy rains, unending love,
amazing grace.

We're praying for Wendy Jackson and her partner Paul Bell, Dot Sargent, Pat Barley, Pat Lawrence, Carol and Martyn Turner, Geoff Foster, Alan & Madeline Rawlings and Margaret Bailey.

MORNING WORSHIP

We come from scattered lives to meet with God.
Let us recognize his presence with us. (*Silence*)

As God's people we have gathered:
Let us worship him together.

God of our days and years,
we set this time apart for you.
Form us in the likeness of Christ
so that our lives may glorify you.
Amen.

Let us admit to God the sin which always confronts us.
**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.**

May the God of love bring us back to himself,
forgive us our sins, and assure us of his eternal love
in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Let us declare our faith
in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.
**Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures; he was buried;
he was raised to life on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures;
afterwards he appeared to his followers,
and to all the apostles: this we have received,
and this we believe. Amen.**

**Collect: Merciful God,
your Son came to save us
and bore our sins on the cross:
may we trust in your mercy
and know your love,
rejoicing in the righteousness
that is ours through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

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.

Dear Lord,
We come to you with thanksgiving this morning,
thankful that we have you in our lives, thankful that we can praise you when times are good and thankful that we can praise you when times are bad, knowing that you are sovereign and are in control. We thank you that when times appear dark, that we can look to your word as a lamp to our feet and a light we can look to, to guide our path. Thank you Jesus.

When we cry, be the reason why our tears stop,
When we are sad, be the reason we smile again,
When we are scared, be the reason for our courage,
When we doubt, be the reason we believe.

How blessed we are to be able to worship in a rural church where your creation emanates everywhere we look. We lift to you our benefice, we ask that you bring us all together and unite us as one, thank you for our St Mary's community, for the people who are caring and for the people who are being cared for. All glory, honour and praise to you for our daily lives in this wonderful community.

We lift to you our leaders and those in authority including the Queen, trusting that you will bless them with wisdom, knowledge and power in your name to fulfil your will for your world, the church and our lives.

Gracious God, we lift to you all who are suffering and fighting a battle, no matter how big or small, we thank you that you are a God of miracles and can do immeasurably more than we can ever imagine. We lift to you Geoff Foster, Paul Bell and Elaine Dulson, we need your intervention right now Lord, trusting you for your healing, knowing that only you have the power to heal. We ask for courage and strength, in the waiting, in the decision making, in the battle knowing that you are cradling all who are in need and all who care for them with your love. Sustain the loved ones of those who suffer and bring your peace to those who mourn.

Finally Lord, we pray for those who serve in your kingdom, for those seeking and those already committed to their calling. Guide and prosper those who spread your gospel of good news and we pray your protection, blessing and guidance on your church across the world, knowing that one day, in your timing, we will all be as one with you. Amen.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all, evermore. Amen.



Prayers by Alex Baines.