Message to Marton Friends for Sunday 17th August 2025

Dear Marton Friends

Please find attached the latest update from Rev Steve, including his reflection on this week's gospel reading. Lots to think about, as ever!

Huge thanks to Sarah, Rome and Jean who, as I write, are close to finishing the massive job of scything the graveyard. Sarah has suggested that we leave the cut grass ('arisings') for a couple of days so that any wildflower seeds can fall through to the soil below. From **Sunday**onwards, you are warmly invited to come and help with raking and to pile the arisings at the bottom of the car park to decompose whilst providing a bit of shelter and warmth for various minibeasts over the winter. I plan to be there on Sunday morning (10-12) and might possibly come back in the afternoon (2-4) depending on how hot it is and how much energy I have left! The best strategy we have found so far is to rake the grass onto a large sheet to drag it down to the car park. There will be rakes and a large sheet near Jean's wall. Gloves, strong shoes, sun protection are all required! No urgent hurry, but it would be good if we could have tidied it all before our busy weekend at the end of August (Quiet Day and Creationtide Service). That's the plan anyway!

We have our **Celtic Evening Worship**service**this Sunday at 6pm,** which will be led by Rev Steve. Do join us if you're able, and stay for refreshments if you can. You can admire the progress in the churchyard!

I'm genuinely looking forward to our **Quiet Day on Saturday 30th August**, as an opportunity to escape, be quiet, relax in the presence of God, pray and listen. Personally I absolutely have to carve out times to do this or else I can so easily fritter all my time away being 'busy' or just choosing to do other things! I read this quote from Nicky Gumbel recently (one of the founders of the Alpha Course) and it felt very appropriate:

*"When you are weary or worn out, you can be refreshed by spending time with God. Sometimes, you need to learn to separate yourself from the busyness of life and spend time with God in the way that Jesus did. The Holy Spirit, in  kindness, wants to bring 'times of refreshing' to you."*

So do join us if you can, even if it's only for part of the day. I've attached the flier for the day to this email for a bit more information about timings, but we'll send out more information closer to the event to everyone who has booked in. Booking isn't vital but if you already know you're planning to come it would be helpful if you could let us know please just so we have some idea of numbers...

This will be followed the following day by our Benefice's Village Churches Together **'Creationtide' Service on Sunday 31st August at 4pm.** More information to follow in due course!

I am currently planning to clean and tidy and set up the church for both these special occasions on **Friday 29th August** (10-12 and 2-4) so any help with that would also be greatly appreciated.

We had a lovely unexpected visitor at **Midday Prayers**this week, who had recently visited Marton Church for the first time, seen the invitation for **Tuesdays 11-12** and timed his day off this week so that he could walk up and join us to pray. Do come and join us if you're ever free on a Tuesday between 11 and 12. This week we finished promptly so that a couple of us could pop to Easingwold Golf Club for a 93rd birthday lunch with Bob Snowball but usually we have more relaxed timings and Bob joins us a little later - leaving at about 2.30pm - so you are always welcome to drop in later too.

I've recently started reading a wonderful book called 'A Praying Church' by Paul E. Miller. Even the blurb is encouraging!
*"Paul Miller brings prayer into the messy reality of our actual lives. Not the cleaned-up lives we're all walking around presenting to others, but the lives we're really living, with all their failures and discouragements and tears and numbness and fatigue. In other words, Paul understands prayer in a gospel way... prayer is deep power and help at the very place where we have need and weakness."*

This week I've chosen a prayer from David Adam's little booklet 'Celtic Prayers' which we keep in church. Jean turns the page each day in the prayer corner! This comes from the prayers for Saturdays and we can use it to ask for blessings on ourselves and on all those we pray for, whatever the circumstances.

**To all who are down
unable to stand,
we bring the uplifting of God.

To those depressed
and in the dark
we bring the uplifting of God.

To those who are weary,
unable to cope,
we bring the uplifting of God.

To all whose powers wane
and who lose hope,
we bring the uplifting of God.

May almighty God,
who descended into the depths,
lift us up
into light and glory.
Amen.**

Every blessing, Caroline, 878242