

PARISH OF ESHER

CHRIST CHURCH, ESHER with ST GEORGE'S, WEST END

SHARING THE POWER OF GOD'S LOVE IN ESHER

Reconciling - Sustaining - Guiding - Healing

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

21 FEBRUARY 2021

CHURCH SERVICES

Christ Church	Parish Communion at 10.30am led by Revd Darren McCallig
Preacher	Revd Darren McCallig
Reader & Prayers	Rebecca Warner
Musicians	Stuart Whatton, Oliver Macfarlane, Keith Chapple

MUSIC

Opening Music	<i>Chorale Prelude 'O Gott, du frommer Gott'</i> (Karg-Elert)
Hymns	A&M 621, 652
Post Sermon	<i>Sonata in G minor</i> (Sebastian de Albero)
Communion Music	<i>A Clare Benediction</i> (Rutter)
Closing Music	<i>Fugue sur les jeux d'anches,</i> <i>from Messe pour les Paroisses</i> (Couperin)

THE COLLECT FOR THE DAY

Heavenly Father,
your Son battled with the powers of darkness,
and grew closer to you in the desert:
help us to use these days to grow in
wisdom and prayer
that we may witness to your saving love
in Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Lord God,
you have renewed us
with the living bread from heaven;
by it you nourish our faith, increase our hope,
and strengthen our love:
teach us always to hunger for him
who is the true and living bread,
and enable us to live by every word
that proceeds from out of your mouth;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Message from our Rector, Darren

My dear friends,

Today is the First Sunday of Lent - a season marked by self-examination, spiritual re-commitment and preparation for the great feast of Easter. One of the more common disciplines of Lent is fasting -

something which draws inspiration from today's Gospel Reading (Mark 1.9-15) and Jesus's forty days in the wilderness.

However, as the temptations faced by Jesus in those days attest, and as many writers have observed, fasting is about much more than simply abstaining from food. As Saint Basil the Great wrote in the fourth century:

'Do not limit the benefit of fasting merely to abstinence from food, for a true fast means refraining from evil. Loose every unjust bond, put away your resentment against your neighbour, forgive him his offences. Do not let your fasting lead only to wrangling and strife. You do not eat meat, but you devour your brother, your sister; you abstain from wine, but not from insults. So all the labour of your fast is useless.' (quoted in *Passion for Pilgrimage* by Alan Jones)

Those words set the essential tone for the season of Lent and remind us that whatever we do - whatever spiritual practices we undertake for these forty days - all must be done in the service of love.

God bless,



READING Genesis 9.8-17

Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, 'As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.' God said, 'This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.' God said to Noah, 'This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth.'

PSALM 25.1-9

1 To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.
2 O my God, in you I trust; do not let me be put to shame; do not let my enemies exult over me.
3 Do not let those who wait for you be put to shame; let them be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.
4 Make me to know your ways, O Lord; teach me your paths.

5 Lead me in your truth, and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all day long.

6 Be mindful of your mercy, O Lord, and of your steadfast love, for they have been from of old.

7 Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions; according to your steadfast love remember me, for your goodness' sake, O Lord!

8 Good and upright is the Lord; therefore he instructs sinners in the way.

9 He leads the humble in what is right, and teaches the humble his way.

GOSPEL Mark 1.9-15

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.' And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness for forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him. Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.'

HYMNS

Dear Lord and Father of mankind

Dear Lord and Father of mankind,
forgive our foolish ways;
re-clothe us in our rightful mind,
in purer lives thy service find,
in deeper reverence praise.

In simple trust like theirs who heard
beside the Syrian sea
the gracious calling of the Lord,
let us, like them, without a word
rise up and follow thee.

O Sabbath rest by Galilee!

O calm of hills above,
where Jesus knelt to share with thee
the silence of eternity,
interpreted by love!

Drop thy still dews of quietness,
till all our strivings cease;
take from our souls the strain and stress,
and let our ordered lives confess
the beauty of thy peace.

Breathe through the heats of our desire
thy coolness and thy balm;
let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
speak through the earthquake, wind and fire,
O still, small voice of calm.

Guide me, O thou great Redeemer

Guide me, O thou great Redeemer,
pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but thou art mighty;
hold me with thy powerful hand:
Bread of heaven,
feed me now and evermore.

Open now the crystal fountain
whence the healing stream doth flow;
let the fiery cloudy pillar
lead me all my journey through:
strong deliverer,
be thou still my strength and shield.

When I tread the verge of Jordan,
bid my anxious fears subside;
death of death, and hell's destruction,
land me safe on Canaan's side:
songs of praises
I will ever give to thee.

PARISH COVID INFORMATION

Parish Covid-19 (Coronavirus) Update -

In light of continuing high rates of COVID, Bishop Andrew - on receipt of a request from the Rector and the PCC - has given permission for our Sunday services to move online. Funeral services will continue to be held in-person, subject to Government restrictions and guidelines. Although we cannot be together in our church buildings, we can remain united in prayer and service.

Daily Hope Helpline 0800 804 8044 -

Daily Hope offers music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England at the end of a telephone line 24 hours a day. A Church of England initiative (in partnership with Holy Trinity Claygate, and Faith in Later Life).

'Time to Pray' App - The 'Time to Pray' app presents everything you need for Prayer during the day and at night, with variations according to the day of the week and the season of the Church's year. The app is compatible with both smartphones and tablets. To download the app go to <https://www.chpublishing.co.uk/apps/time-to-pray>

Help & the Parish Office - The office will continue to work remotely. If you need support, do please let us know via the office email and telephone. For urgent enquiries contact the Rector, the Revd Darren McCallig (rector@esherparish.org.uk or 01372 461088) or a churchwarden - Helen Coulson on 07506 701454 or Sandra Argent on 07973 909152. Many thanks.

Call to the Nation - The Archbishops of Canterbury and York, Justin Welby and Stephen Cottrell, have issued a call in an open letter to the nation, to pause, to reflect, to remember the more than 100,000 people across the UK who have died from COVID-19. The Archbishops write: "100,000 isn't just an abstract figure. Each number is a person: someone we loved and someone who loved us. We also believe that each of these people was known to God and cherished by God." Everyone is invited to reflect on the "enormity of this pandemic" and to pray. The Archbishops amongst many things give thanks for NHS and social care staff, whom they describe as "a blessing and lifeline for our nation"; for clergy, other frontline workers and "so many good neighbours". They give thanks for the development of vaccines and reiterate a call to everyone to take the vaccine when it is offered. They also urge people to support each other both by following the guidelines to limit the spread of the virus and in practical ways, reaching out in care and kindness. They conclude: "Most of all, we have hope because God raised Jesus from the dead. This is the Christian hope that we will be celebrating at Easter. "We live in the hope that we will share in his resurrection. Death doesn't have the last word. In God's kingdom, every tear will be wiped away." For details and for the full letter please go to <https://www.churchofengland.org/news-and-media/news-and-statements/coronavirus-archbishops-invite-nation-pause-pray-and-remember>

The Archbishop's letter invites everyone to join in pausing and praying each day at 6pm from February 1. Do please go to: <https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/call-prayer-nation>

PARISH NOTICES

Lent Appeal - Children are doing their school work at home, many with limited or no access to technology - eg. siblings and parents are sharing one laptop. Our Lent Appeal will aim to provide computer aid for local families in need. We would like to not only raise money to buy laptops but also ask if you have any unwanted Macs or PCs under 10 years old (Windows 7+) please get in touch with the Parish Office. We can give them to a local charity with the expertise to wipe data and reset to factory settings before giving them to local schools. For further information please see the Lent Appeal notice on our website at: <http://www.esherparish.org.uk/?q=content/ent-appeal-2021>

Heart Stones - Here's an idea for these days in lockdown: paint a stone or pebble with something close to your heart. It could be words of hope and encouragement. It could be someone or something which helped you through these difficult times. It could be a painted prayer offered for those in need. Then, when you're out on your daily exercise, drop by Christ Church and add your 'Heart Stone' to the growing line snaking around the building. Who knows, if we all join in, we might be able to encircle the church with beautiful expressions of faith, hope and love!

Zoom Bible Reflection & Prayer - All are welcome to join this informal Zoom gathering at 9am on Tuesday mornings. Contact the Parish Office for details.

'Zoom' Morning Prayer & Zoffee! - Morning Prayer continues on Wednesdays at 9am, led by Darren, on Zoom. All are welcome.

The Art of Lent - A painting, a poem and a prayer, with time to ruminate, reflect and respond. That's the simple recipe of this year's Lent offering. On the four Thursdays in March (4, 11, 18 and 25) we'll explore four themes - *Sorrowing, Sitting, Seeking and Seeing* - in the company of some great art, and in the Zoom-enabled company of each other. The sessions - which will begin at 6pm and last 30 minutes - will be led by Stewart & Carol Henderson, Jonathan Andrew, Becky Warner and Darren McCallig. Please contact the Parish Office for the Zoom sign-in details.

Mary Teague & Betty Whitney - Very sadly, two stalwarts of our Parish community have passed away recently. Mary Teague worshipped at Christ Church for 70+ years whilst she lived at Few's Cottage. Among her many past responsibilities Mary was a choir member and vergier carrying on from her brother, Michael Teague. Betty Whitney, an established Esher Church School teacher and a long-standing West End worshipper, actively supported all parish activities and was a PCC member and a deputy churchwarden for St George's. We remember Mary and Betty and their families in our prayers.

Parish Giving - Thank you so much for your ongoing generosity to the Parish of Esher. Like most parishes there's been pressure on our income recently, so if you're in a position to do so, please consider if you can support our mission and ministry. Donations can be made via JustGiving at <https://www.justgiving.com/esherparish>. Or to donate to our Parish bank account, please contact the Parish Office or Parish Treasurer for details and Gift Aid forms.

PARISH NOTICES

Music on the Green - On 17 February, Ash Wednesday, Eri Yamamoto gave us a wonderful piano recital of Beethoven and Chopin (which will also feature on Japanese radio next week!). You can catch up with it on our YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/watch?v=h2oUPMM7BLE). Online donations are very welcome at www.justgiving.com/campaign/MOTG. Our next lunchtime concert is planned for Wednesday 17 March, when we hope to host the Fibonacci String Quartet.

Youth Group - Every Sunday at 6pm the Parish of Esher and St. Mary's East Molesey lead a Youth Worship service. Watch with along with us and then join a Zoom call at 6.30pm for a catch-up and games. If you would like to receive the details for the Worship service video and the Zoom call contact Dave at davewhymark@aol.com

Fellowship Group - Our next meeting will be at 10am on Wednesday 17 March on Zoom. All are welcome. If you're interested please contact the Parish Office.

Book Group - The group will next meet on Tuesday 2 March on Zoom and we'll be discussing 'My name is Leon' by Kit de Waal. In the book, it's 1981, a year of riots, royal weddings and 'The Dukes of Hazzard' on TV. Trying to find a place in it all is nine-year-old Leon. He and his little brother Jake have gone to live with Maureen. She feeds and looks after them and claims everything will be OK, but will they ever see their mother again? Who are the couple who secretly visit Jake? Between the street violence and the street parties, Leon must find a way to reunite his family. If you're intrigued, why not join us? The group would be delighted to welcome new members. Contact Revd Jonathan Andrew on 01372 479776 or jandrewesher@hotmail.com.

Christ Church Roofing Work - This work is now under way and is scheduled to be completed this coming week. It is being done to address damage and water ingress to the roof area above the Rector's seat. It's likely materials, scaffolding and tools will occupy some of the car park for the duration.

PLEASE PRAY FOR

Those who are ill: Yasmin Ingram, Stuart Williams, Maureen O'Brien, Viola Mason, Jaeseok Yang, Headley Williams, Geoff Walker, Elizabeth Arnold

RIP Anniversaries: Joyce Meek, Hugh Eccles, Albert Hayhoe, Doreen Trimmer, Suzanne Armstrong-Kelsey

RIP: Mary Teague, Irene May Redfern, Betty Whitney, Janette Williams, Audrey Phillips, Christopher Creagh-Brown, Patricia Sexton

BIBLE READINGS FOR THE WEEK AHEAD

Readings for Morning Prayer taken from the Church of England Lectionary.

February		Time	Reading
Monday	22		Jeremiah 4.19-end; Ps 11; John 5.1-18
Tuesday	23	9.00-10.00am	Jeremiah 5.1-19; Ps 44; John 5.19-29
Wednesday	24	9.00-10.00am	Jeremiah 5.20-end; Ps 6; John 5.30-end
Thursday	25		Jeremiah 6.9-21; Ps 42; John 6.1-15
Friday	26		Jeremiah 6.22-end; Ps 22; John 6.16-27

LOOKING AHEAD

February		Time	Event
Sunday	21	10.30am	Live streamed Parish Communion, Christ Church
		6.00pm	Live streamed Youth Worship Service, YouTube
		6.30pm	Youth Group Meeting, Zoom
Monday	22	All day	Roofing work, Christ Church
		7.15pm	Choir practice, Zoom
Tuesday	23	All day	Roofing work, Christ Church
		9.00-10.00am	Bible Reflection & Prayer, Zoom
Wednesday	24	All day	Roofing work, Christ Church
		9.00-10.00am	Morning Prayer, Zoom
Sunday	28	10.30am	Live streamed Parish Communion, Christ Church
		6.00pm	Live streamed Youth Worship Service, YouTube
		6.30pm	Youth Group Meeting, Zoom

CONTACTS

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