

Connected

Sunday 21st March 2021
5th Sunday of Lent

Verse For The Week

"Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"
They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and
you will be saved - you and your household."

(Acts 16: 30b-31)

Sermon Snippets

Acts 16: 16-34

Today we're looking at the apostles Paul and Silas who end up in jail after a "severe flogging".

It's a reminder that the Christian life is not always a comfortable ride to put it mildly. The wonderful thing is that these two men both determined to discover God in their situation, and – in the midst of their pain and discomfort – prayed and praised by singing hymns. Can we manage to summon up the courage and determination to discover God in the midst of our difficulties by thanking him? It's not easy, but we'll discover some real treasure if we can.

Their example had obviously made a huge impression on those around. Even when an earthquake makes escape possible – they stay put and a very relieved jailer is so amazed he asks them "what must I do to be saved?" Have another read of Acts 16 (or look at the Verse For The Week above) to find out their reply!

Watch this Sunday's Service

at www.ccwsm.org.uk

Go to the 'Church Life' menu and click on the 'Sunday Services' page.



The first edition was published Sunday 22 March 2020, and has grown and developed during the course of the year-long lock-down that we have been experiencing.

I must express my thanks to the many people who have contributed articles over the last year. I also want to thank Dawn for stepping in when I have been away. It's great to know that I can relax knowing that *Connected* is in safe and creative hands! The other people I'd like to thank are Dina, Felicity, Mary, Dave and Jane, and Dave and Sandra for their commitment to delivering the printed copies every week to those without computers.

Do you remember some of the things we have been including? Who can forget the Open E-Gardens series of photos last summer? There have been poems and puzzles, reflections and reviews, cartoons and Signs of the Times, all of which I hope have blessed, encouraged or amused folk during what has been a hard 12 months for a lot of people.

The main point of *Connected*, of course, is hinted at in its title, and that is that through the isolating periods of lock-down we have been able to feel connected with one another in God, especially for those who do not have access to watch the online services.

My prayer is that this spirit of unity and support for one another will continue to grow as we open our churches again for worship.

Phil

Prayer Pointers

Sunday

We come to God with thanksgiving in our hearts for all that He has done for us; for his sacrifice on the cross, for our salvation, for life everlasting and sin forgiven. Praise God today!

Monday

Pray with Church Mission Society Pioneer Minister Fiona Mayne as she ministers in Haywood Village in Weston. She is asking for prayer for wisdom and discernment in establishing a café / church and for more people to join her in this venture.

Tuesday

Remember before God those who are not so well and those who mourn. Pray for God's transforming, healing power to come to those for whom we pray today.

Wednesday

Give thanks for all the blessings and benefits of this life – for our creation, preservation and for God's goodness and loving kindness to us each and every day.

Thursday

We remember before God our neighbours, those who live on our street, those who pass by our front door and those whom we greet when out on exercise whose names we may never know.

Friday

Pray for the church worldwide, particularly for those who are imprisoned and persecuted for their faith. Pray for the governments in those lands that there may be a softening towards Christians and greater freedom to worship.

Saturday

Remember before God our Bishops, Peter and Ruth; give thanks for Bishop Peter's ministry in our Diocese these last 7 years, for his leadership and pastoral care, integrity and faithfulness, and pray for recovery of strength and renewal of hope in his illness. Pray for wisdom for Bishop Ruth and our Archdeacons as they lead our Diocese through the coming Vacancy.

Palm Sunday - 28th March

To help celebrate this day, palm crosses are now available for people to collect from the Christ Church lobby.

Mission Newsletters

The latest edition of the CAP newsletter is now available. It includes details of an online Money Course being run over three evenings in April.

If you would like a copy of the latest newsletter from the Morrisseys, please contact Phil in the Church Office.

Notices

Church Services

Both churches will be open for the 10.30 services on Easter Sunday morning. If you would like to come to the service at Christ Church you will need to book seats in advance. We will be sorry if we have to turn people away, but this will be because of Government rules on social distancing. Please email or phone Phil in the Church Office as soon as possible to book. It will not be necessary to reserve seats for the service at Emmanuel.

Phil is also taking bookings for the 'Walk Through Easter' event on Good Friday. See page 3 for more details.

Emmanuel Church Open Good Friday

At 10.30 Julie Birkett will be leading a 40-minute service of meditations. This will also be available to watch on the Christ Church website.

Annual Parochial Church Meetings

The Annual Church Meetings will be held towards the end of April. The actual dates will be in next week's *Connected*.

If you are not on the Electoral Roll and would like to be, forms are available from the Church Office. You will need to be at least 16 years old, be baptised, and either a resident in either parish or have been engaging regularly with the online services for around six months.

If you have any questions please get in touch with Phil in the Church Office.

Office Closure Dates

Please note that the office will be closed on Friday 26 March, Good Friday, Easter Monday, and Tuesday 06 April.

Plants for sale

Penny is planning on growing lots of bedding / vegetable plants again this year, for any church members who would like them. Donations will go to Christ Church and Weston Hospicecare.

Please email Penny with requests of any plants that you would like her to grow. (pennylester3@hotmail.co.uk)



It may sound like an obvious question, but what does "sin" mean? Most of us would say "doing wrong" or even as a child might put it "being naughty". Is that it? Well, that's certainly an important part of it but it's not so easy to define what's "wrong" when the morality of our society is slowly shifting. One example might be what the commentators are calling our "post truth society" where things that used to be seen as wrong are now more acceptable. So – if a politician says something is the case and it (factually) isn't is that so bad if it helps him to make a wider point?

Although morals have shifted there is still, thank goodness, a basic agreement in many areas of society about what is right and what is wrong. However, how do we discern as Christians when something is wrong and how does that link with what the Bible calls "sin"?

Psalm 51 was prayed by David after he had done some considerable wrong – he had committed adultery with Bathsheba and organised the death of her husband. There is no doubt that he had grievously wronged that couple. However, look at what he prays to God in verse 4: "against you, you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight." In other words, his primary sense of the wrong he had done was in his rejection of God and his ways - and from that internal attitude had sprung these most terrible acts. Sin in the Bible is first and foremost about our rejection of God and his ways. Of course, this may well result in sinning against other people but it's root cause is to do with our internal attitude towards God.

This then gives us a reliable way of assessing what's right and wrong because it stems from our knowledge of God in the Bible and not, for example, what is acceptable in society. That's not to say that we don't faithfully and carefully interpret Scripture into a modern context but it does give us our basic compass bearings when so much is changing all around us. David had also to confess to Bathsheba who he wronged and from what we can tell he does so in marrying her and having further children. But in confessing his sin to God he not only approaches the one who he has wronged but also he comes to the one who can "blot out all his iniquity" and one who can renew a loving, God-like and steadfast spirit within him (verse 10).

Tom

A Walk Through Easter



On Good Friday (2nd April 2021)
10am - 12noon
in Christ Church

Everyone is welcome to this event, but you will need to book a time slot for you and your household to arrive - just phone or email the Church Office.

As you travel through church you will hear and see the stories of Palm Sunday, The Last Supper, Good Friday and Easter Morning.

Come and experience the true story of Easter and find out what it means for you. There will be something for everyone to take home too!

(Face masks must be worn, hand sanitiser will be provided and social distancing will be maintained)

Private Prayer

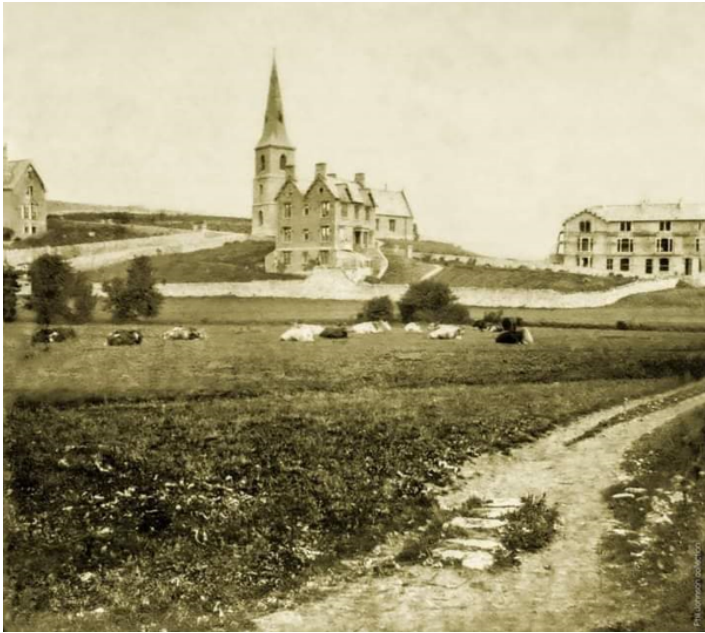
Christ Church will remain open until Easter on weekday mornings (except Tuesday 23 March) for private prayer from 09.00 to 12.00. Please use the hand sanitiser as you come in to the church and wear a face covering (unless exempt).

We also have the Stories of Jesus Trail in the garden at Christ Church. Despite the high winds recently, we are pleased to report that the angels have not flown away, and that Zaccheus is still up his tree!



Another coffee, anyone?

Christ Church in 1858



In this extremely early -1858 - photograph, the cows are relaxing in what, today, is the triangular area of properties bounded by Baker Street, Gerard Road and Christ Church Path South. Montpelier Terrace (originally Montpelier Villas) is in an advanced stage of construction on the right, with scaffolding clearly visible. Christ Church is just three years old and in its original form. The photograph is taken from what is now the garden of 47 Baker Street. The only other properties are Montpelier House, in the centre and, on the left, the Vicarage.

Many thanks to Val for sending this photo in.

Christ Church Work Party

Calling all members of Christ Church!

We need you!!!!

You are cordially invited to come and take part in a 'Socially Distanced' working party on Friday 26th March, starting at 9.30am.

There are many varied tasks waiting for you, including repairs, sprucing up and generally making things tidy. Just turn up on the day, but don't forget your face covering.

As we look forward to Easter let's pour in a little TLC (not to mention that you get to see each other in real life!)

Angie & Bev

The Great Design

If everything is created by Christ and for Christ then creation is designed to work His way.

2 Chronicles 7: 11-16

11 When Solomon had finished the temple of the Lord and the royal palace, and had succeeded in carrying out all he had in mind to do in the temple of the Lord and in his own palace,

12 the Lord appeared to him at night and said: "I have heard your prayer and have chosen this place for myself as a temple for sacrifices.

13 When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command locusts to devour the land or send a plague among my people,

14 if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

15 Now my eyes will be open and my ears attentive to the prayers offered in this place.

16 I have chosen and consecrated this temple so that my Name may be there forever. My eyes and my heart will always be there."

Rain falls haphazardly but in harmony with a great design. Nothing may seem to be more haphazard than a shower of rain. Clouds appear in the sky as if from nowhere, the rain comes down and is quickly gone. People look at each other in surprise and comment: "The last thing I would have expected is a shower!"

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Hayden

Contact Details

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