

# Connected

Sunday 27th March 2022

4th Sunday of Lent

## Sermon Snippets

John 19: 23-37

### Mothering Sunday



This passage is perhaps arguably the saddest in the whole Bible. In the first century, widows (it would seem Joseph had died before Jesus' crucifixion) were unable to support themselves, so Jesus entrusted John with the care of his mother Mary.

This is a similar situation to many in the Ukraine are facing – handing a loved one over to another to look after.

Mary shows us the costliness of parenting, in watching her firstborn son, an innocent man, die on the cross. It wasn't easy being the mother of the son of God - even in the comparably good times - let alone at the foot of the cross.

In this week's sermon, I will explore how those keeping vigil at the foot of the cross, shaped the life of the church and its future ministry.

I will look at how the witness and actions of Jesus, Mary, John, Mary Magdalene and the women at the foot of the cross

- Reveal God's love;
- Were a threat to the power of Roman society and birthed a gentler, humbler more loving church;
- The inclusion of people like Mary Magdalene commits the church to taking seriously personal redemption and transformation;
- Revealed God's working in difficult situations;
- Encourage us to be fruitful as parents and non-parents.

## 2ND ANNIVERSARY OF DAILY PRAYERS



As far as I can see on my computer, the first "Daily Prayers" we recorded was 23rd March 2020. At that stage we were in the first lockdown and the future for all of us was unknown. Isolation was to become part of our lives. I remember sensing that two things were to become really important for all of us – being in touch with each other and being in touch with God.

We tackled the first with phone calls, life group zoom meets, practical help and the weekly "Connected". For the second need, I sensed a 5 minute guided time with God would also help . . . and so "Daily Prayers" was born. This gave the opportunity to receive strength and guidance every day from God and not just reserving it for special occasions. A bit like we need to eat every day; so we need a bit of spiritual "daily bread" every day too!

Certainly this was true for those lockdown periods – but, in truth, it's always needed. I'd like to thank the team that loads them onto the website and Facebook and also those who record their thoughts for the occasional week.

As we mark the first two years of these prayers, it's encouraging to see every day we have about 35-50 "clicks" to access these prayers – they are quite easy to access – if you haven't already why not give them a try?

*Tou*

## Watch the Morning Service

at [www.ccwsm.org.uk](http://www.ccwsm.org.uk)

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

# Prayer Pointers

**Monday** – Let us give thanks for all that Phil Scott has achieved whilst he has been our Church Administrator and pray for God's blessing and refreshment for his retirement.

**Tuesday** – Ukraine continues to need our prayers for a cessation of hostilities, as well as peace and safety for civilians.

**Wednesday** – Thank God for Emma, our new church administrator, who starts on 1st April. May God ease her into this role with enthusiasm and inspiration as well as our support and blessings.

**Thursday** – Pray for Afghanistan, and for those with a UK connection who are now stuck in that country separated from their families.

**Friday** – Thank God for all the signs of springtime, for His amazing creation, for new growth, warm sunshine flowering trees and a hope for the future.

**Saturday** – Pray for the many who are now finding themselves with a Covid infection. This may be milder than previously but it is still disruptive. Pray that this virus will soon leave us.

## Verse For The Week

"When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing near by, he said to her, 'Woman, here is your son,' and to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.'"

*John 19: 26-27a*

## CAP Newsletter

The latest CAP newsletter is available to view on the Christ Church website. Do have a look at this and pray for the amazing work which goes on in our town. [Please click on this link](#)



# What's On This Week

## Mon 28 Mar

Ladies Together at 2.30pm in the Spire Centre

## Tue 29 Mar

Parish Prayers at 09.30 at Emmanuel Church  
The Beacon at 12noon at Emmanuel Church

## Wed 30 Mar

Seedlings Toddler Group at 10.15 at Christ Church  
(*please note that this event is currently full*)  
Alpha Course at 7pm in the Spire Centre

## Thu 31 Mar

Welcome Group at 2.30pm at Emmanuel Church  
Craft & Chat at 2.30pm in the Spire Centre

# Notices

## *Electoral Roll Reminder*

Don't forget the deadline for any new additions to the Electoral Roll for either church will be Thursday 31 March. Please contact the office or speak to one of the Church Wardens for a form. (*Note - this is not the same form as a Data Consent Form for those who have completed one of these recently*)

The dates for our Annual meetings are as follows:

- Emmanuel: Sunday 24 April after the service
- Christ Church: Monday 25 April at 7.30pm

If you have any questions about what it means to be on the Electoral Roll please get in touch with Phil in the Church Office.

## *Change to Office Opening Hours*

Please note that, as from the 1st April, the Church Office opening hours will be 9:30am to 12:30pm.

## *Open Gardens*

Open Gardens are wonderful opportunities to mix with other people from our two churches. They are social not horticultural events - just somewhere to sit and enjoy a cup of tea and a slice of cake.

If someone would like to host an event there is one date left. Please have a word with the Church Office or with Tom if you would like more details.

# Coffee after the Service...



## Christ Church Baby & Toddler Group

Our group is run by a committed and loving group of people from our church family. A lot of love and effort goes into each session and we need some help.

We need someone to come at the end of our sessions on Wednesday mornings (term time only) at 11:45am and wipe down tables and high chairs whilst we clear away toys and then Hoover.

If you think you could help us or you would like to be involved in the team in another way, please speak to Nicky Boardman – Family Ministry Worker.

## New Church Directories

A new Church Directory for each of our two churches will be out soon. The directories will include photographs, but only if you would like to include one!

At Emmanuel, Pat has been busy taking photos. At Christ Church, Doug took photos of many of you a couple of years ago, and will be catching up with others over the next couple of weeks.

It's perfectly ok if you don't want your photo taken, but if you do please see one of the Church Wardens or contact the Church Office.

## Church Guidelines about Covid

Since the release of all Government restrictions, we'd advise the following about how we behave as a church family with Covid.

- In Sunday services it is up to you whether or not to wear a mask – both are perfectly OK
- If you test positive for Covid, or have symptoms which could be Covid, please stay away from church activities
- If you subsequently test positive for Covid, please inform any church folk you have been near to in the last couple of days.

Thank you

Tou

## This is the 100th Edition of

Christ Church and Emmanuel, Weston-super-Mare

## Connected

*When we started Connected two years ago (at about the same time as Tom started the Daily Prayers!) I didn't imagine that it would still be going strong 100 editions later.*

*I guess it's fitting that we reach this milestone in the same week as I sign off as Church Administrator. it has been one of the many aspects of my job that I have really enjoyed, and I hope that you have enjoyed reading them.*

*We've had lots of wonderful contributions from many people. Who can forget the Open E-Gardens series we ran during lockdown for example which featured many photos of people's gardens to cheer us up as we were kept from seeing each other face-to-face. There have been book reviews, interviews, poems and many more pieces besides.*

*I'd like to say a particular thank you to Dawn who has been a tremendous help by producing Connected when I had annual leave.*

Phil



Angie took these photos showing the repairs to the Christ Church roof after the damage caused by Storm Eunice.





# More coffee, anyone?

BOOK REVIEW. 'PHOEBE - A STORY' BY PAULA GOODER.

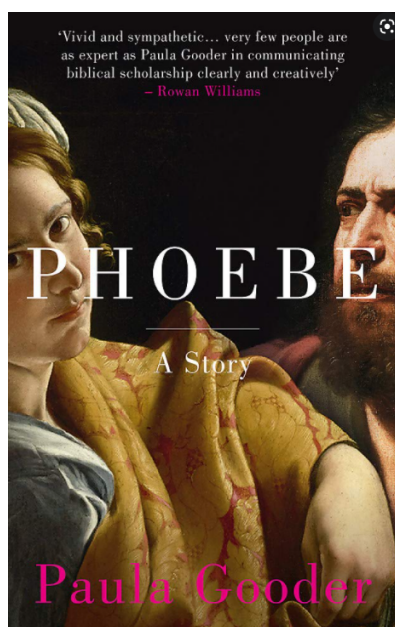
"There is a line from one of Gilbert and Sullivan's operettas in which a character asks the question: 'Phoebe? Who on earth can she be?' And we might well ask the same question of Paula Gooder, who has written a book with the title, 'Phoebe - a Story'. Phoebe was in fact a real person, born near Corinth during the first century, who was entrusted by the Apostle Paul to carry his letter to the Christians living in Rome during the latter half of the first century. Paul's letter had much to do in establishing the Christian faith as we practice it today. The opening greetings and closing personal messages in all of Paul's thirteen surviving letters, inform us about 'ordinary people' (like us!) and how they lived out their day to day lives at a time when Christianity was beginning to take root in a pagan world. Most of them get just a brief mention by name, but Phoebe gets a full two verses in our Bibles (Romans 16:1).

'I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant of the church in Cenchrea. I ask you to receive her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints and to give her any help she may need from you, for she has been a great help to many people, including me'.

Paula Gooder, a Theologian, Chancellor of St Paul's Cathedral and at some time a lecturer at Cuddleston Theological College, has taken up the story of Phoebe and given her flesh and blood, as it were, as she takes Paul's letter to Rome, where she meets Priscilla and her husband Aquila, Andronicas and Junias, Stachys and many others, who were living a communal life in Rome. We learn that as a young girl in Corinth, Phoebe had been frequently abused by her master, which resulted in the birth of a child, which was taken away from her to become the 'property' of her slave master, as was the custom at the time. Eventually, Phoebe was bought out of slavery by someone who took compassion on her and at some time around then, she became a Christian. So what became of Phoebe in Rome after she had delivered Paul's letter? To reveal much more would spoil the story for those who will read the book. The Christians living in Rome at that time endured a certain amount of mild physical and verbal abuse, but nothing like the wholesale persecution and slaughter which was soon to be unleashed by the Emperor Nero. And what of Paul? The Christian community had been anticipating his arrival in Rome, but not to have been so long delayed, and certainly not as a prisoner in chains! Was this to be his end? Luke, who wrote about him in The Acts of the Apostles, was either reticent to tell us or else didn't know. Paul's intention was to go on to Iberia (Spain). Did he get there? Paula Gooder has given us a scholarly and highly readable story of Christians living in the first century. It is a period which we often see as containing the purist form of Christianity and one which we strive to emulate, so it is good to read about it.

Published by Hodder in 2018 and available from the Life Bookshop, Waterstones or Amazon, priced at £9.99 and worth every penny!"

*Barry*



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## Contact Details

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