



St John's, Stoneleigh Weekly Newsletter

Easter Day, 12th April

Collect

Lord of all life and power, who through the mighty resurrection of your Son overcame the old order of sin and death to make all things new in him: grant that we, being dead to sin and alive to you in Jesus Christ, may reign with him in glory; to whom with you and the Holy Spirit be praise and honour, glory and might, now and in all eternity.

Amen

A MESSAGE FROM REV. KEN HOBBS

A very happy Easter to you all. In these strange and difficult circumstances may you know the joy and reassuring presence of the risen Christ in your hearts and homes.

Ken

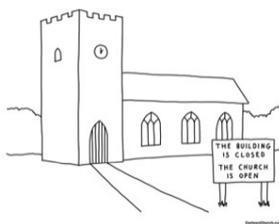
WORSHIP ONLINE

I hope you have been able to see the two reflections I posted this week for Good Friday. They are available on the website, Facebook and the WhatsApp group. The worship at home section this week is based around the online service which we hope to do live via Zoom on Easter Day at 10 am. By now you will have received an email with instructions on how you can join us at home for 30 minutes including a celebration of Holy Communion. Do have some bread and wine/juice handy if you wish to join in. This service will also be recorded and should appear later on Easter Sunday on all our platforms.

My Easter reflection/address for that service is also printed below. Whatever we do in our homes on Easter Day do make time to worship our risen Lord Jesus.

Rev. Ken Hobbs

KEEPING IN TOUCH



Thank you for keeping in touch with St John's during this challenging time. You can keep in touch by joining the WhatsApp group, visiting our website and following us on Facebook. All your contributions to these groups during this time provide great encouragement to us all. For details of the website and

where to find us on Facebook, please see the bottom of this page. To join the WhatsApp group, you will need a smartphone and to have installed WhatsApp. Please contact the office if you have any questions.

Rev. Ken Hobbs

RELIGIOUS BROADCASTS

Listen out for Bishop Jo from the Diocese of Guildford giving the 2 minute sermon on BBC Radio Surrey at 7:50am.

BBC Radio 3 - Choral Evensong Wednesdays at 3.30.p.m and Sundays at 3.00.p.m.

BBC Radio 4 – Sunday morning services at 8:10am

BBC One – Sunday Worship, please check your TV times

BBC One – Songs of Praise at 1:15pm

RSCM – The Big Easter Evensong – SUNDAY 6pm

The Royal School of Church Music have put together a complete set of practice materials so that you join them for a live-streamed service at 6pm on Easter Day. The service will be led by the Very Revd Dr John Hall, RSCM Chair of Council (and recently retired Dean of Westminster). Music will be led by a selection of choirs which you will be able to join in with. More information can be found on their website

<https://www.rscm.org.uk/online-resources/the-big-easter-evensong/>.

To watch, tune in on Youtube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g2Oo1tUSQs&feature=youtu.be>

CHURCH AND PARISH CENTRE

Please be reminded the Church and Parish Centre are both closed until further notice. This includes the office too. If you need to contact the office please send an email rather than leave an answer phone message as these are not being listened to. If you do not have access to email and need to get in touch with the office, do call either Jean Tutton (020 8393 3687) or Joan Simon 020 8393 6155. Thank you.

Kerrie Winter

KEEPING IN TOUCH

For many of us the next weeks and months are going to be difficult and stressful with worries about our families, friends and ourselves. Even though we can't meet face to face it will be important to keep in touch with our church family. If at any time you are feeling anxious or overwhelmed or need some practical help do give me a ring - even if just for a chat. I'd be very happy to hear from you. **Jean Tutton 020 8393 3687**

PRAYERS

As the church is now closed it is no longer possible to put prayer requests on the prayer board. If you do have a request which you would like to be included in the newsletter please either email Kerrie at office@stjohnsstoneleigh.org.uk or ring me and I will pass the details on to Kerrie. **Jean Tutton**

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VIDEOS

Rev. Lynn Helmuth has kindly allowed us to share her devotional station of the cross videos please see the website.

Joan Simon

HOPE

I have heard from Churches Together Ewell that sadly, given the current COVID-19 crisis the HOPE event scheduled for the end of June will no longer be taking place. **Sue Pennington**

PASTORAL CARE

Thank you to all those who are involved in our pastoral care in the parish. If you would like to receive a call from St John's during this time, please contact Jean Tutton to make arrangements. **Rev. Ken Hobbs**

The New Traidcraft Catalogue – Spring/Summer 2020

During the Coronavirus (COVID-19) situation, it is impossible to have a monthly Traidcraft Stall in church, but there is another option. We have 10 copies of the new catalogue which we obviously cannot leave in church, but if you would like to peruse a catalogue, please let us know and we will get one to you. Please browse this fabulous new catalogue, or look online at www.traidcraftshop.co.uk and contact us if you would like to place an order. We can still process orders and offer an 'isolating' home delivery service. However, we need to group individual orders together to reach a cumulative order value above £50 – otherwise we receive a disproportionate carriage charge. Please contact Veronica & Michael Gittins, 138 Stoneleigh Park Road, Tel: 020 8393 9988 or email: mvgittins@btinternet.com

Some of the stock we hold have 2020 "sell by" dates. It's not a problem yet, but please help us by ordering:

Vanilla Fudge – @ £1.55 each, sell by 7th August

Double Chocolate Chip Cookies – @ £2.00 each, sell by June

Dry Pineapple – @ £2.50 each, sell by June

Ginger Cookies – @ £2.00 each, sell by June

We look forward to hearing from you.

Veronica and Michael Gittins

FOODBANK

Thank you for your ongoing support of the Foodbank during this crisis. Whilst we can no longer bring contributions to St John's, there are still collection points at most supermarkets and the Foodbank warehouse on Ruxley Lane, Ewell remains open for donations (Monday to Friday, 9am until 3pm). Stoneleigh Baptist church building is open on Wednesday mornings between 10am and 12pm if you wish to drop off any Foodbank items.

If you'd like to donate money, you can do so in one of the following ways.

1. open www.epsomewell.foodbank.org.uk and you'll see a red DONATE button, click on that and follow the instructions to pay online.

2. cheques should be made payable to Epsom and Ewell Foodbank and may be posted to Epsom and Ewell Foodbank, Generation Resource Centre, Ruxley Lane, Ewell KT19 0JG **Please put your name and address on the reverse.**

3. If you are unhappy with any of the above or prefer to give cash and you can get out or ask someone else to deliver, you may put your donation in an envelope marked 'for foodbank'

and post it through my door 59 Highfield Drive and we'll get it to the Foodbank.

At the moment the Foodbank is in urgent need of the following items. **VERY URGENT** - Hand gel sanitizer, men's deodorant, adult toothbrushes, tinned rice pudding, instant mash, shower gel, shampoo, jam, powdered milk, tinned vegetables - not sweetcorn and biscuits. **URGENT** - Tinned fish, tinned meat, cooking sauces, custard, long life fruit juice, noodles - not pot noodles, coffee, UHT milk. Thank you.

Polly Elder

Worship at Home for Easter Day The Lord is Risen!

He is risen indeed Hallelujah!

Play an Easter Hymn eg "Jesus Christ is Risen today"

Collect for Today

God of Glory, by the raising of your Son you have broken the chains of death and hell: fill your Church with faith and hope; for a new day has dawned and the way to life stands open in our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Scripture Reading John 20 .1-18 read by Chris Redrup

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.' Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went towards the tomb. The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. Then the disciples returned to their homes.

But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. They said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping?' She said to them, 'They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.' When she had said this, she turned round and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping? For whom are you looking?' Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, 'Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.' Jesus said to her, 'Mary!' She turned and said to him in Hebrew, 'Rabbouni!' (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, 'Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, "I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God."' Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord'; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

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Reflection

“He is not here he is risen!”

The late and controversial Bishop of Durham David Jenkins described the resurrection as “a conjuring trick with bones” The Christian comic Adrian Plass described a failed cake at his mother-in-law’s tea party as a “Bishop of Durham cake”- all the ingredients are right but nothing has risen!”

Another former Bishop of Durham Tom Wright is the foremost NT scholar in the country and he says this “The resurrection is the foundation.. to have that foundation you do need a bodily resurrection not just a spiritual event which might have happened to Jesus or the disciples”

There was a survey of Anglican Clergy in 2002 which concluded that one third did not accept the bodily resurrection of Christ- they explained it away as a “spiritual happening” or a story invented years later to explain the growth of the church! I am not one of those clergy and here are some of the reasons why!

1. The evidence of History

In AD 52, approximately 20 years after the resurrection St Paul wrote to the Christians in Corinth about the historicity of that event ! Cor 15.3-7 contains four statements

- (a) Christ died (history)
- (b) Christ was buried (history)
- (c) Christ was raised on the Third Day
- (d) Christ appeared to Peter etc and then to 500 hundred people at once- most of whom were still alive at that time. In it is inconceivable that Paul would put two plainly historical statements followed by two inventions to make complete a faith that he and others would ultimately die for!

Paul goes further and says that if the Resurrection is not true- there are three dramatic consequences

(a) EMPTY FAITH “Your faith is futile”- a faith that would inspire great art, music, great buildings; that pioneered social welfare and reform and has sustained millions- we might as well rewrite history as a monument to a futile faith!

(b) EMPTY FORGIVENESS “You are still in your sins”- no sense of forgiveness or assurance or hope

The eminent humanist Margarita Laski wrote with great pathos “The thing that I envy most about you Christians is your forgiveness- I have no one to forgive me!”

(c) EMPTY FUTURE “the dead are lost”- death is extinction- have you ever been with someone when they die! There are few atheists at a death bed! “man is a useless passion- it is meaningless that we live and it is meaningless that we die” (Colin Wilson) but Wherever Paul went he preached about Jesus and the Resurrection. The central question of the Gospel is not “Is it good for us?” The central question is “Is it true?”

We have four foundations for our historical faith

1. The empty tomb There are many bogus explanations
2. The events of the Easter Weekend
3. The eye witnesses- individuals/ groups/ circumstances/time of day- not hallucinations or spooky experiences
4. The experience of Christian believers for 2000 years

2. The Evidence of Experience

Consider the case of Mary in John 20 and note the sequence of events and emotions

1. CONCERN-

• her concern to do the right thing and to be in the right place- too late on the Friday to do the task of preparing the body for burial-

• so she comes early in the morning- the first opportunity to do the necessary- Easter Sunday-

• it may feel right to be in a church on a day like today

2. CURIOSITY-

• They went to look into the empty tomb- “they have taken my lord out of the tomb.

• The Bible makes much of spiritual curiosity- eg Moses at the Burning Bush and the Samaritan woman at the well in John 4 .

• There is nothing wrong with wanting to find out more!

• The journey of faith is one of questions; doubts and discovery.

3. CRYING-

• Her world had fallen apart

• the disciples on the road to Emmaus “we thought he was the one who was going to redeem Israel”-

• there is an Easter message for those who have lost hope!

4. CONFUSED-

• She doesn’t recognise Jesus- thinks he is the gardener (vision blurred by tears)

• There is a 21st Cent confusion about the identity of Jesus Christ

• The Resurrection is the single most important event in the life of Jesus that marks him out as totally different and beyond, Mohammed, Buddha and the rest.

5. CLEAR-

• Jesus speaks her name Mary- the familiar voice- she “saw” Him and recognised him (like grace at the meal in the house at Emmaus)-

• here is a moment of truth and understanding- a personal encounter with the risen Christ-

• Find Jesus today in our homes like those on the road to Emmaus “He was made known to them in the breaking of the bread!”

6. CONVINCED- she obeys Jesus instructions and goes and tells the others. We hear the five most dramatic words in the NT “I have seen the Lord”

So Mary moved- from curiosity to conviction

From optimism to certainty

From a fact of history to a fact of experience

It can be just as true for you and me! By his spirit the risen Christ crosses our path this Easter Morning. Let’s welcome him into our hearts and lives as the risen Lord.!

The greatest news the world ever had came from a graveyard! The Easter story ends not with a funeral but with a festival.

A very happy Easter to you all!

Music from Sarah Tutton

Prayers and Lords Prayer led by Joan Simon

Music “Christ be with Me” (St Patrick’s Breastplate) by Stuart Townend

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Holy Communion at Home - do join us live on Zoom online at 10am or later via the website. If you are using this news letter, prayerfully read the words of institution from 1 Corinthians 11. 23-26

For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.' For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

You will recognise the words. Do take some bread and wine as appropriate.

Closing Music and Blessing

(or say the Grace "May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen "

From our Remembrance Book: Mary Rhona Manley, Thomas George Rhind-Tutt, Muriel Unwin Rhind-Tutt and Patricia Stone.

PRAYERS

Thanksgiving for all who serve us

Thank you, Lord, for those who are willing to go the extra mile, to put their own health at risk, at this time of crisis, for the sake of others;

to work extra hours,
even to give freely of their time and expertise,
for the greater good.

Thank you especially for doctors, nurses and medics, working long and demanding shifts;
for those coming out of retirement to offer their services;
for all those striving to provide care,
even though it means they may well end up needing care themselves.

Thank you for those working in shops and supermarkets,
those in our emergency and essential services,
teachers providing cover for children and young people,
delivery drivers working to supply our needs:
these, and so many more –

a host of people, recognised and unrecognised, without whose efforts our normality would disintegrate completely.

Keep them safe, we pray. Keep them well.

Watch over them and their loved ones,
and help us to appreciate in these difficult days the few to whom we owe so much.

Amen

A prayer for those who must make decisions during the present crisis.

Give wisdom, Lord, to those who must take decisions,
those who must formulate plans,
those who must weigh up the options
and decide on the path least painful for all.

See us through this difficult time, we ask you,
but see us also through the time beyond that,

and the challenges it will surely bring.
Amen

A night prayer

Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who work, or watch, or weep this night, and give your angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, Lord Christ; give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous; and all for your love's sake. Amen.

"On letting Easter in" - A poem to reflect on

When dawn stands still with wonder
when birds jubilate in the trees
when buds hurry into blossoms
and grass starts wearing green

I always know that Easter wants to come again.

But deeper yet and richer still
When Jesus, imprisoned in me,
asks me to roll away the stone
that locks him in
then Easter wants to come again.

So, let it come

It's one dawn past rising time
and Resurrection is the wildest news
that's ever touched
this crazy, mixed-up world.

It says, *yes!*

when everything else says, *no!*

It says, *up!*

when everything else says, *down!*

It says, *live!*

when everything else says, *die!*

Easter's standing at your door again,
so don't you see that stone has got to go?
that stone of fear
of selfishness and pride
of greed and blindness
and all the other stones we use
to keep Jesus in the tomb.

So here's to rolling stones away
to give our Lord the chance He needs
to rise and touch
a troubled, lonely world.

Some call it *Resurrection*.

It's wild with wonder,
It's beautiful and real
Intent on throwing life around
it touches and it heals!

Yes, Easter, you can come

An angel of life I'll be.

I'll roll the stone away

and set you free.

Macrina Wiederkehr

Our Lord has written the promise of the Resurrection not in books alone, but in every leaf in springtime.

Martin Luther

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