



St John's, Stoneleigh Weekly Newsletter

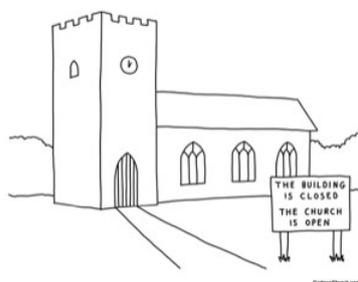
Sunday 5th April

Collect

True and humble King, hailed by the crowd as Messiah: grant us the faith to know you and love you, that we may be found beside you on the way of the cross, which is the path of glory.

Amen

A MESSAGE FROM REV. KEN HOBBS



I trust all of you are staying safe and well in these difficult times. Do keep in touch with everyone at St Johns by phone or text, this newsletter, a conversation outside your house at safe distance, visiting the church website, being part of the emails, joining the

WhatsApp group or looking at Facebook. Do share stories with us which we will post in the newsletter and on the website. The week ahead is Holy Week and I will record two messages by video for Good Friday and also a virtual celebration of Holy Communion which you can use in your own home on Easter Day. For that have some bread and wine/juice handy and join in with me.

Ken

WHAT'S APP GROUP

Thanks to all those who have been able to join the WhatsApp group. All your contributions to the group during this challenging time provide great encouragement to us all. To join, please go to

<https://chat.whatsapp.com/EhOW3GIH4027UnkycN4Eo6>

Rev. Ken Hobbs

RELIGIOUS BROADCASTS

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 at 11:45am

BBC One – Songs of Praise at 1:15pm

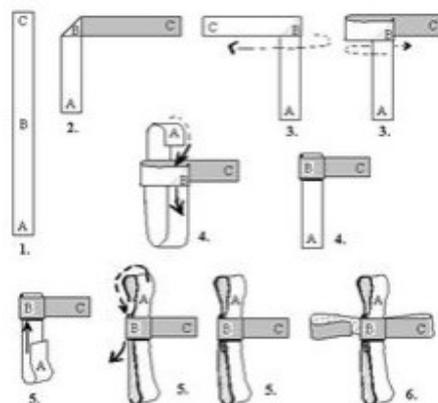
CHURCH AND PARISH CENTRE

Please be reminded the Church and Parish Centre are both closed until further notice. The legal business of the APCM has been postponed until October 2020 for all parishes.

PALM CROSS

If you have the opportunity, I'd encourage to make your own Palm Cross. There are many tutorials online if you Google it or you can use this 'how to' guide.

Rev. Ken Hobbs



Holy Communion on Easter Morning (April 12th)

For my video message for that day I propose to lead a short filmed version of Holy Communion. Do join in and you can prepare for that by having a glass of wine/juice and a piece of bread roll to hand so that together we can celebrate!

Rev. Ken Hobbs

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 us a ring - even if just for a chat. We'd be very happy to hear from you.

Jean Tutton 020 8393 3687 and Joan Simon 020 8393 6155.

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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TIME TO PRAY

A friend of mine in Germany suggested that we pick a time to pray together. I know I like to feel that other people are praying at the same time I am and hope you can join me in your own home at 10am on Sunday.

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

It's been much appreciated that so many people have tried to continue to support the Foodbank even though we have been coping with stripped shelves etc. I was able to take a fair sized donation of foodstuffs to the Resource Centre before we had to close the church.

Now, of course we can no longer put items in the box to be delivered as contributions from St Johns but I've checked with the Foodbank and they are planning to still collect from the dump bins in Sainsburys so please consider putting your donations in this way if you are able to get out and shop. Some people have asked how they can donate money instead. This is now especially useful as the Foodbank is going to have to purchase food to issue to the growing number of people relying on the service.

You can donate money in several 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 surviving with its existing volunteers but they may have to train some people up to take over if volunteer numbers drop. If you wish to offer your services please do so through the website.

If it's at all possible for you to support the Foodbank please continue to do so; if you cannot, don't fret about it but please would you include the Foodbank in your prayers as it strives to cope with the huge effort required to help the people in need our local area. Thank you.

Polly Elder

I CANNOT TELL

In his sermon on 22 March Revd Sam Wells offered his version of William Fullerton's hymn 'I cannot tell', which speaks to what we are all going through today. This is sung to Londonderry Air.

Jean Tutton

1. I cannot tell why grief and sadness linger
Why jobs are lost, and people face despair;
When this will end, if vaccines come and rescue,
Why isolation stalks the earth again.
But this I know, Christ feels the hurt upon the cross;
The Spirit weaves our lives together still.
And some glad day, through Providence, the Father
May turn this wave of loss to glory by his will.

2. I cannot tell how we can be together
When all our ways of doing so are lost;
How we can be one body in communion
If every form of touch comes at a cost.
But this I know, we're sealed upon the heart of God
The Spirit dwells within our fearful souls.
And Christ finds ways to show his face to all of us
To lift our hopes and meet us in our mortal fears.

3. I cannot tell how long this time of fear will last
If there'll be months, or years of damaged lives;
When once again we'll gladly throng together,
To sit and laugh, to dance and play and kiss.
But this I know, we're finding things both good and true
About our God, each other and ourselves.
So after this we'll know we've met our darkest hour
And now there's nothing we will have to face alone.



Worship at Home PALM SUNDAY

You might like to light a candle to remind you of the light and presence of Christ in dark times. If you have a palm cross from previous years or one you have made, you might like to have that with you also.

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A prayer for today

Almighty and everlasting God, who in your tender love towards the human race sent your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ to take upon him our flesh and to suffer death upon the cross: grant that we may follow the example of his patience and humility, and also be made partakers of his resurrection; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Music: Try and play a Palm Sunday Hymn eg Ride on Ride on in Majesty or All Glory Laud and Honour to thee Redeemer King or Make Way Make Way for Christ the King (Kendrick)

Pray the Lord's Prayer

Scripture Reading Luke 19.28-44

After he had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

When he had come near Bethphage and Bethany, at the place called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of the disciples, saying, 'Go into the village ahead of you, and as you enter it you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, "Why are you untying it?" just say this: "The Lord needs it."' So those who were sent departed and found it as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, 'Why are you untying the colt?' They said, 'The Lord needs it.' Then they brought it to Jesus; and after throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. As he rode along, people kept spreading their cloaks on the road. As he was now approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, saying,

'Blessed is the king
who comes in the name of the Lord!
Peace in heaven,
and glory in the highest heaven!'

Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, 'Teacher, order your disciples to stop.' He answered, 'I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out.'

As he came near and saw the city, he wept over it, saying, 'If you, even you, had only recognized on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. Indeed, the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up ramparts around you and surround you, and hem you in on every side. They will crush you to the ground, you and your children within you, and they will not leave within you one stone upon another; because you did not recognize the time of your visitation from God.'

Reflection

Biographies fascinate! Everything from the iconic "Long Walk to Freedom" (Nelson Mandela) to the bizarre "Adolf Hitler- my part in his downfall!" (Spike Milligan") Most spread the events of a life across the book. The Gospels, selective biographies of the life of Jesus are different. 95% of the writing covers the last 3 years of Jesus' life and up to 50% the last week of his

life- such is the significance and the impact of Holy Week. Palm Sunday is the dramatic start of that final week as Jesus makes his triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

I have made that journey several times- from the village of Bethany, across the Mount of Olives and down to the Kidron Valley. The view of the city is one of the great views of the world. Half way down the track is the chapel of "Dominus Fleuit" (The Lord wept) where Jesus looked with sorrow over Jerusalem. Towering above you in the Kidron Valley and next to the olive grove of Gethsemane are the 15 century (replacement) walls of the Old City of Jerusalem. Etched into the walls are the bricked-up entrances of the "Golden Gate" that faces east. The orthodox Jews still believe that one day the Messiah will enter the city as prophesied by the prophet Zechariah. This was the route that Jesus took on that fateful day as he entered the city through that same gate in an earlier set of walls.

There is immense significance in what Jesus did on that day- full of historical "moment" and mystery as his Kingship is temporarily revealed. He was the 24 hour king. Earlier on the Gospel writers had noted that Jesus, in the latter part of his ministry, had "set his face to go to Jerusalem" knowing full well what lay ahead, He was prepared to go the distance for you and for me.

I note firstly the "welcome" of the crowd in this story. But crowds are fickle- they inspire and they conspire. They welcomed Jesus as the king but within days that crowd would be shouting for his blood. "We will not have this man to reign over us" – a denial of the kingship they had acknowledged days before. Peer pressure, colour and atmosphere can promote declarations of commitment; promises are made at baptisms and confirmations but what happens when the going gets tough and the distance gets longer?

I note secondly the "witness" in the story. There is the witness of history from the prophet Zechariah (Zech 9.9) – even today the stones "cry out" as a testament to what happened. For some there would be the powerful witness of experience- for the disciples and for some a life changing moment.

I note thirdly the "weeping" in the story. It is a story with tears as Jesus weeps over Jerusalem. The Gospel is a costly business and Jesus' tears obscure the view of the destination. There is pathos in v 42 "If only you had known..." Within days Jesus would be rejected. Within 40 years the city would be destroyed by the Romans and the Jewish nation would be territorially and politically scattered to the four corners of the earth only to reconvene as the modern state of Israel in 1948. Temple worship, priesthood and sacrifices would disappear.

Our Christian understanding of this is that God's purposes for the salvation of the world are fulfilled, not by temples and sacrifices in some ancient city but by the life, death and resurrection of a man who enters Jerusalem on a donkey, with tears! A later New Testament comment is that Jesus "for the joy that was set before him endured the cross..." The journey to the cross in Jerusalem is called The Via Dolorosa (The way of weeping") Weeping is part of going the full distance.

It is finally a story about "walls". The Palm Sunday journey is dominated by the wall. Look from the city walls today and you can see another wall. The huge controversial security wall divides Israel from the Palestinian territories. As we move inexorably towards the Easter Weekend it is good to be

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reminded that ultimately the Gospel is about breaking down walls- not just those that separate us one from the other but also supremely about the breaking down of the wall that separates us from God.

From our Prayer Board:

Humankind to be more tolerant, thoughtful and decent to our planet and those who live on it.

RIP Christopher Pow.

We pray for God's love to enfold Cynthia, Anna and the family following their recent bereavement.

From our Remembrance Book: Audrey Elizabeth Aldridge, Peggy Eileen Prince, Vera Frances Lucy Pinn, Ronald Vernon Glands.

PRAYERS

For the vulnerable, sick, dying and bereaved

Lord, to people everywhere at this troubled time
give a spirit of responsibility,
compassion
and community;
of concern for the greater good
and a willingness to put themselves out for the sake of others.

To those who fear or know they are carrying the virus,
give the common sense to isolate themselves,
for however long is required,
no matter how inconvenient or frustrating that may seem.

To those at risk,
conscious of the symptoms taking hold of them,
and spiralling out of control,
give reassurance,
support,
and the best possible care,
that they may return safe and well to their loved ones.

To those in intensive care,
on ventilators,
in evident distress,
not responding to their treatment,
give strength and succour,
and, should it come to it,
a peaceful end.

To those mourning loved ones,
life cruelly plucked away,
give comfort in their shock,
their numbness,
their despair,
and sustain them through the darkness.

To our suffering world, Lord,
in so much turmoil,
bring hope,
help
and health.
Amen.

Doing what we can to help others in and beyond our church in this testing time

I can't do much, Lord, to help in this time of crisis,
but I surely can do something:
a message of concern,
a word of reassurance,
a gesture of affection,
an expression of solidarity –
there must be all kinds of ways in which I can try, at least, to respond.

For there is so much fear,
so much need.
so much loneliness,
so much heartache –
so many people needing something,
anything,
to offer them hope,
comfort,
cheer.

And if in some small way,
no matter how insignificant it may seem,
I can help to make a difference,
it has to be worth doing.

Open my eyes, Lord,
open my mind,
open my heart,
and help me to see where I might serve,
and to do so.
Amen.

Seeking God's Peace

Breathe your peace within me, Lord,
peace such as only you can give.
When I fret about tomorrow,
when I worry about my loved ones,
when I question whether I can cope,
when my stomach feels knotted and panic rises within me,
help me to hear your still small voice,
rebuking the wind and waves,
stilling the storm,
calming the roiling waves,
and in place of turmoil bring tranquillity,
in place of chaos, quietness,
in place of a troubled, anxious spirit,
rest for my soul.
Amen.

All prayers taken from 'For such a time as this'
by Nick Fawcett

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