

ST GUTHLAC'S COMMUNITY NEWS



Parish Church of St Guthlac
Knighton, Leicester LE2 3LF

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Sunday 31 May 2020 Pentecost

A prayer for the Coronavirus outbreak

Keep us, good Lord,
under the shadow of your mercy,
in this time of uncertainty and distress.
Sustain and support the anxious and fearful,
and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may rejoice in your comfort
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love
in Christ Jesus our Lord.
Amen.

Renewal in Tough Times

*“Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit”
Galatians 5.25*

Times are changing once again. Some of our lockdown restrictions are being lifted, or at least modified,, and we are beginning to imagine getting back to something like a ‘normal’ life. At the same time many of us face the need for continued isolation as the virus is still common and dangerous. We long to shake off this time and be active again.

Pentecost reminds us that *God*, by the Holy Spirit, is continually active. He has been at work as we have been confined, and needs no prompting or permission to work today.

St Paul reminds us in this one verse that our calling is not to *do* the work of God as much as it is to walk *alongside* God, to work *with* him ... or rather to observe what he is doing and then join in.

This will be the source of the Church’s renewal as we emerge from lockdown—not slicker technology that enables us to worship from home at ease, not strict hygiene that removes all risk of infection, and not a focus on instant return to “things as they should be”. We need to be attentive to what God is doing *now* by his Holy Spirit and then walk in step with the Spirit.

This is a task for the *whole* church, at parish level as well as diocese and nation—and it is the calling of *all* of us.

Please be attentive in your prayers and thoughts to what the Holy Spirit is beginning to do now in our church, what needs to change and what is new—and please let the Benefice Ministry Team know what you are hearing.

Keep safe and stay well.

Adrian

FOR YOUR PRAYERS Please remember those whom we have been asked to keep in our prayers. Please remember those who have died recently and keep their family and friends in your prayers. For other prayer requests, please contact a churchwarden.

PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN MALAWI.

Please continue to prayer for our sisters and brothers in Northern Malawi and across the world as the nations of the world deal with the pandemic. Let us pray that the remoteness of many of these rural communities will provide an effective shield to the spread of the disease in areas where medical facilities would struggle to cope.

PRAYERS FOR HEALTH CARE WORKERS

Please pray for all our local doctors, nurses, care workers and support staff, especially **Amy and Dan Barnes** and **Katherine Swanson**.

FORTHCOMING SERVICES AND MEETINGS

All services and meetings are cancelled for the foreseeable future. The church is closed until further notice. If you would like to keep in touch by telephone with others for a chat and support please contact Tina. (See front page)

STILL no change to lockdown restrictions for churches soon

This week the Prime Minister has announced some changes to our lockdown restrictions— but there are no changes for churches yet. The Vicar and authorised others (such as construction and maintenance engineers) can enter the building for essential tasks, but only with all the appropriate precautions. There are no immediate plans to allow the people of the church to gather.

The most hopeful timetable puts this date into July, and there would certainly be very many restrictions and precautions surrounding any re-opening of churches: we would have to maintain social distancing, refrain from singing and from using paper or books, take a register of all present, guarantee hand cleaning on arrival and departure, as well as deep clean the building afterwards. You will see that there are still very many hurdles to cope with before anything like Sunday worship as we know it could resume. Whilst this is disappointing it is wise and understandable caution of course.

I will endeavour to keep you updated with any changes. *Adrian*

BBC1 Sunday 10am '2020: A celebration for Pentecost'

With most faith communities still unable to meet in their own buildings, the former Franciscan friary, Gorton Monastery offers space amid its world-renowned Gothic architecture for a small, but safely socially distanced group from King's Church, Manchester to lead a live celebration of the coming of the Holy Spirit.

BBC1 Sunday Worship 11am. For the order of service: www.bbc.co.uk/orderofservice

BBC Radio 4 Sunday Worship 8.10am

BBC Radio 4 Daily Service each weekday 9.45am on long wave only

Catch up available for all these on BBC iPlayer or Sounds app.



A free phone line of hymns, reflections and prayers

0800 804 8044

Are you in need of some daily hope during this lockdown?

We have a new FREE telephone line for you to ring to hear comforting hymns, daily prayers and reflections.

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND CHURCH OF SCOTLAND CONNECTIONS

Don't forget to visit the St. Guthlac's Facebook page

and website <http://www.stguthlac-knighton.co.uk/>

'Church is Changing' on the home page includes copies of reflections and links to the You Tube recordings of virtual services. Newsletters can found on the news page.

Virtual Sunday Service for the Knighton Benefice. Please look out for the email giving the link to this week's Sunday Service which will be available on YouTube from Sunday.

Virtual Compline/ Night Prayer at 8pm on a Wednesday. It has proven a meaningful way to have fellowship and prayer together as well as being quite good fun, especially as we find our feet with the

technology and more people join us each week. You can join by just **phoning up** and inputting the code **or** using **'Zoom'** online. It has been democratic with several voices joining in with a line of liturgy each. If you would like to participate with a speaking part, please do contact Matthew by 4pm each Wednesday (revgough@gmail.com).

For Phone only: telephone this number **0131 460 1196**

When promoted input Meeting ID: **746 767 4408**

For internet using Zoom:

Join Zoom Meeting <https://leccofe.zoom.us/j/7467674408>

Input Meeting ID: 746 767 4408

Thank you for caring at home and in our community” : this is the message of appreciation that, as St Mary's and St Guthlac's, we want to send loud and clear to the staff of our local care homes and to all those carers who have been supporting clients, friends and relatives in their own homes during the pandemic. We are particularly conscious that we have at least nine care homes in our benefice, and that the staff will have been under extraordinary strain and pressure over the last two months—often, it seems, unappreciated by those who make key decisions, and perhaps also by ourselves, until now.

To express our appreciation to these care home workers we are aiming to give a gift to as many as possible—probably a gift token to be redeemed when times are easier and leisure seems possible again. We have a generous grant from our Ward Councillors to start things off, but if each gift is really to convey true appreciation then we want to add to it substantially through our own generosity.

Please do make a contribution to our Carers Fund to show your appreciation. We are collecting money through the St Guthlac's bank account, so please make a cheque payable to 'St Guthlacs PCC' (no cash please) . Alternatively you can pay by Direct Transfer:

Sort code 20-49-08 account 53861341 Reference "Carers"

You can send a donation by post or drop your envelope through the door of 62 Elms Road (Matthew), 5 Church Lane (Adrian) or the St Mary's Parish Centre, Church Lane (but not at St Guthlac's Church please!).

Thank you, in anticipation, for helping us thank our care staff. *Adrian*

Collect & Readings for Pentecost

The Collect

God, who as at this time
taught the hearts of your faithful people
by sending to them the light of your Holy Spirit:
grant us by the same Spirit
to have a right judgement in all things
and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort;
through the merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen

Acts 2: 1-21

¹When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. ²And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. ⁴All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

⁵Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. ⁶And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. ⁷Amazed and astonished, they asked, 'Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?' ⁸And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? ⁹Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, ¹¹Cretans and Arabs – in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power.' ¹²All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, 'What does this mean?' ¹³But others sneered and said, 'They are filled with new wine.'

¹⁴But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them: 'Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. ¹⁵Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o'clock in the morning. ¹⁶No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

¹⁷"In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. ¹⁸Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy. ¹⁹And I will show portents in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and smoky mist. ²⁰The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the coming of the Lord's great and glorious day. ²¹Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Gospel Reading: John 20: 19-23

¹⁹It was evening on the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews. Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' ²⁰After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.' ²²When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.'

REFLECTIONS:

The Holy Spirit as the power of God Revd Adrian Jones

I have been camping without a torch, but I usually regret it. True there are nights when a soft, natural moonlight picks out familiar landmarks, but more typical are the cold, wet and windy thick-dark nights when it seems a very long and difficult way to the campsite toilets.... without the power of a torch. Jesus tells his disciples to wait for 'the power from on high', the Holy Spirit.

All Christians have the gift of the Holy Spirit, but we don't all turn on the power. With that power, even in darkness, we can see our way - the way of life, the way of Jesus.

FIRE Revd Janet Gasper

“On the Day of Pentecost divided tongues as of fire appeared among them and a tongue rested on each of them, and they were filled with the Holy Spirit.”

Without the fire of the sun nothing will grow. Fire brings comfort, light, warmth. A forest fire can destroy all in its path and bring devastation, and house fires take lives and homes. Fire is a powerful symbol.

Moses experienced the presence of God in the burning bush and Elijah is taken into God's presence in a chariot of fire. At Pentecost the disciples experience God's power like a fire burning in their hearts, and in our centuries Christians like Richard Rohr experience the Spirit as this fire of love. May we look to this symbol of fire and experience the Spirit in our hearts this Pentecost. Amen.”

Wind! Revd Canon Dr Stephen Foster

Friends, I was the first to choose a word descriptive of the Holy Spirit, so I was able to choose that which theologically 'turned me on' the most. So my word is 'wind'.

As a lead in... in the Ancient Greek World, the word 'anemoi' from where we derive our own word 'animate' were the 'wind gods' who were each given a direction from which their wind came. Hence the classical compass with which we are all familiar. These gods were also attributed seasonal variations which characterises them in a similar way. For example, a northerly wind for us is a cold one!

Similarly, in Hebrew thought, there are again four winds, again directional, but to do with the one God Yahweh. In the Old Testament, by far the most common wind is a hot dry easterly one which is mostly destructive in character. The plague of locusts in Exodus was carried by such a wind to Egypt. But it would be a mistake to suggest that the power of 'wind' in the Old Testament is always destructive. On the journey to the Promised Land, Moses crosses the Red Sea aided by the power of an easterly wind.

More especially, think of the Priestly account of Creation in Genesis 1 written in the the time of the Exile. Here the Hebrew 'ruach' (normally pronounced 'ruak') 'hovers' or (better still) 'broods' over the waters of chaos and from whose power in the will of God the earth is formed. And in the prophet Ezekiel and the Valley of Dry Bones, the last vital part of the 'resurrection' of this totally destroyed army is the summoning of breath, of wind, this time from the four winds to enliven and raise this fallen host.

So, is it any wonder that at Pentecost that 'pneuma', a wind of renewal, re-creation, enlivening and empowering is present in exactly the place where the disciples were gathered and waiting. Here the 'new creation' is nothing less than the Church itself, where mortal flesh is endowed with spirit, with a totally new life, and empowered to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ to 'the ends of the earth' .

The Holy Spirit ...fascinating in its spiritual roots and partly to do with 'wind'.

Holy Spirit – Breathe Revd Aphro McCullough

Breathing is one of the most natural and unforced activities of the human body, one that we cannot live without. So why do we use the metaphor of breath or breathing for God's Holy Spirit? Well I think it's because the Holy Spirit is as essential to our spiritual wellbeing as breathing is to our physical wellbeing. The corona virus pandemic has shown us that unless we can breathe in the natural air around us we cannot live. The Greek words for Holy Spirit are Aghios Pneumatos, Holy Breath. So it is that unless we breathe in the Holy Spirit of God, God's Holy Breath, we cannot live a full spiritual life. As we pray on this day of Pentecost, let each of us breathe in God's Holy and life-giving breath gaining strength to face whatever the future may hold. Come Holy Breath, come. Amen

Water Rev. Matthew Gough

On my ordination stole are two hands connected, one rescuing the other from the depths of water. It is a detail from the story where Peter is saved from his fear and drowning by Jesus. Throughout the bible, water is presented as a paradox-a source of threat and the source of life. Water destroys the Egyptians but also separate the

Israelites, freeing them from captivity. Isaiah 43 promises that we as are redeemed by God waters of death will not overwhelm us. The waters of baptism offer new life. Christ himself compares himself to living water both to the woman at the well and to the temple crowds in Jerusalem.

Water is hard to control. I have traced the source of the Wash-brook to Stretton where it little more than a tiny stream. This tiny stream gives life to the fields, parks and gardens of Oadby and Knighton but also caused floods on Saffron Lane. Christ promises that faith in Him changes our hearts so living water may flow from us. The Holy Spirit is dynamic, needing us to be receptive vessels as individuals and as Church. It can flow through us and from us, but we also can become dry and need more of the Holy Spirit. Let us not despair when dry, this need not be permanent, we can pray and seek God as the prayer in Psalm 51-‘Cast me not away from thy presence and take not thy Holy Spirit from me’ and instead may we know delight in the living water of Psalm 1, seeking to ‘be like trees planted by streams’.

The Holy Spirit as a dove

Fiona Wingate

The dove descended onto Jesus at his baptism at the River Jordan (John 1:32). Noah sent out the dove to see if the waters had receded and peace had returned after the flood (Gen 8:8-12). The poor of the old testament could afford the doves to make their offering to God for their sins as their worship and law required (Lev 5:7).

The dove,

- a symbol of purity in the whiteness of its appearance,
- of coming down from above (as God did in Jesus),
- of being available for all to offer their worship no matter how poor
- a symbol of the peace that reigned after the havoc of the storm

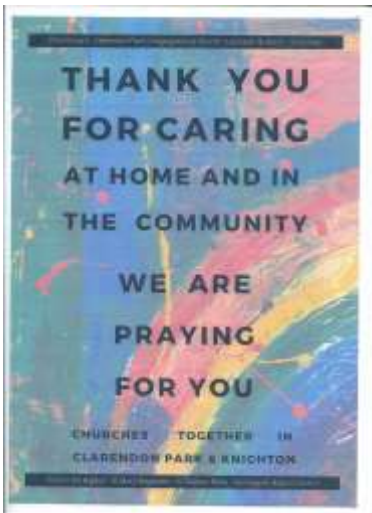
In the same way the Holy Spirit comes down from God. Where Jesus was God-with-us, the Holy Spirit is now God-in-us enabling and facilitating our daily encounter with God , there for all people and bringing the peace, which the world cannot give, into our hearts and our lives.

MINISTRY TEAM NEWS During the coronavirus pandemic the Benefice Ministry Team have met regularly online using Zoom to talk and to pray. Much of our time is taken checking that everyone in the two churches is well and safe, and thinking about the best ways to help us all stay connected and worshipping together in some way.

We would love to hear from everyone else directly too:

- if you feel isolated or would just like a chat then do please let us know;
- if you are concerned about someone else then again please let us know;
- please give us feedback about the 'virtual services' and the Reflections in the newsletters;
- please let us know if there is something else you would find helpful- we are particularly interested to know if you would like a recorded Eucharist to follow at home;
- and please pray for us! Leading is a strange and unfamiliar task in these strange days.

Thank you – *Adrian*

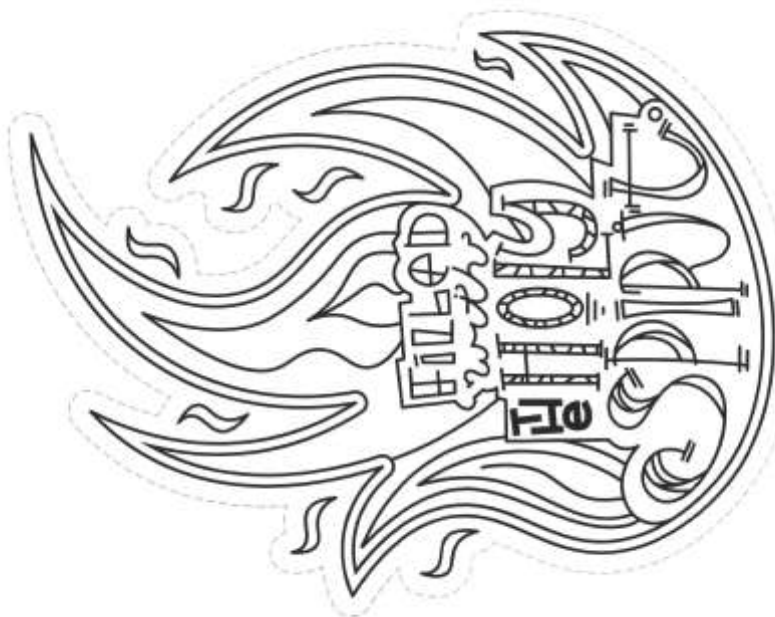


Ride+Stride 2020

For this year's Ride+Stride the coronavirus situation is being monitored carefully. Normally at this time of year, registration forms would have been sent out but registration is postponed until the situation becomes clearer.

Christian Aid You can donate to Christian Aid either at <http://www.christianaid.org.uk/givemoney/make-donation> or by phone on 020 7523 2269. If possible please quote the Leicester committee reference number OR182430 when donating.

A Pentecost poster to colour and a dove to construct:

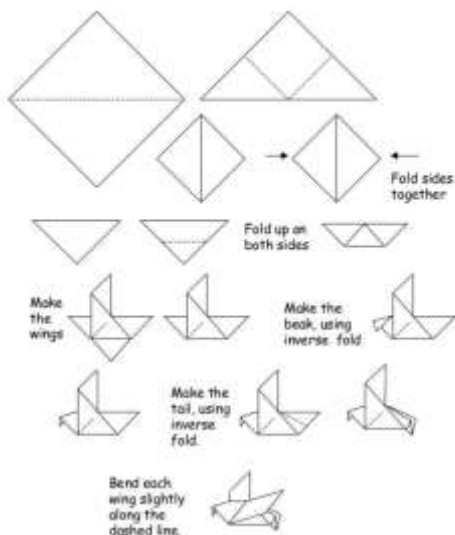


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Origami Dove

To make a dove, use a small square of paper and fold along the dashed lines as shown.



FOR THE NEWSLETTER

Please send material to be included in the next newsletter by
Thursday 10pm to
administrator@stguthlac-knighton.co.uk