

ST GUTHLAC'S COMMUNITY NEWS



Parish Church of St Guthlac
Knighton, Leicester LE2 3LF

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

Vicar: Revd. Adrian Jones 0116 2704268
adrian.jones@zoho.com

Associate Priest- St Guthlac's: Revd Canon Dr Stephen Foster
07966 376905
safpta6@gmail.com

Curate: Revd Matthew Gough 07754 961997
revgough@gmail.com

Churchwardens:
David Hunt
Tina Jarvis

churchwardens@stguthlac-knighton.co.uk

Sunday 26 July 2020 Seventh Sunday after Trinity

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.

How do we live as the Church now? - Eating together

*“⁴⁶ Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes **and ate together with glad and sincere hearts**,⁴⁷ praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. “ (Acts 2.46-47)*

During this corona virus ‘season’ I’m reflecting week by week on the ‘holy habits’ that marked out the life of the first church, as Luke describes it in Acts. Perhaps it is time for us to go back to these key aspects of being the church, in our own challenging times.

Today we’ve reached the seventh of the ten ‘holy habits’: *“They broke bread in their homes **and ate together with glad and sincere hearts**”*.

On the face of it this is one of the most straightforward habits that the first Christians practised, but to really understand what it meant to them we need to look a bit further back into Luke’s previous writing. In his Gospel Luke includes 60 references to food and drink and ten occasions in which Jesus is seen sharing a meal. This may explain why Luke was particularly keen to place food and eating together at the heart of discipleship community. Eating together allowed the early Christians to continue the way that Jesus himself had lived, sharing “table fellowship”.

The Gospel shows us that Jesus shared food with all types and conditions of people, often the most unlikely or unpopular, and he did this deliberately as a sign that God’s kingdom includes everyone, despite our own tendencies to exclude those ‘unlike’ us. The early church followed his example, and their gatherings to eat together were down-to-earth representations of the heavenly banquet that Jesus often described in his parables and through his actions.

It was also at these times of eating together that Jesus himself 'got personal' as he told stories and taught, encouraging his companions to reflect a little more deeply on God and themselves. Here Jesus was entering into the more intimate and open nature of our relationships in those times when we share food. The first Christians also did this, since their shared meals were marked by their 'glad and sincere hearts'. These were clearly unthreatening and welcoming times, when people of all sorts could be themselves, in company with others, accepting each other.

The aftermath of our corona virus lockdown will not make it easy to eat together - quite naturally many of us will feel reticent about being so close, for so long, to other people. So we must rebuild our confidence in this key 'holy habit'. Perhaps the weather this autumn will be kind to us and allow us to meet and eat outdoors at first; or perhaps we might start by eating with trusted friends in our gardens. However we do it though, we need to remember the importance of these times and the opportunities they offer to grow in relationship with each other. Re-establishing this holy habit of meeting and eating together will also allow us, as the church, to demonstrate to the world that God welcomes and accepts us all, unconditionally and gladly – and that is a message of hope that we all need to hear.

In the meantime, 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.

Sad News: Last week we heard the sad news that our friend **Ray Wood** died peacefully at Welford Court earlier in the week. Ray played such an active and cheerful role in church life at St Mary's that he was well known to many, and a great source of encouragement too. He will be very fondly remembered. Our thoughts and prayers are with his children Sue and Dave, and with their wider family.

Ray's funeral will be on Wednesday 29th July, and it is hoped that the hearse will stop by outside St Mary's at around 9.30am for a prayer and a final goodbye from the church he loved.

Brian Small: Early this week we heard from his family that Brian Small had also died, just six weeks after his wife Veronica. Brian, like Veronica, was a real fixture of the life of St Mary's and his contribution over the years was inestimable - he was a member of the PCC until just two years ago and his wise and perceptive counsel, mixed with a hint of mischief, was valued by all the recent vicars.

Brian had been unwell for a long time but seemed to have been successfully adjusting to a different life after a move to a local care home. After a short spell in hospital, Brian died at home surrounded by his family, just as he had wanted. Please remember Helen, Stephen and Judith in your prayers this week. Brian's funeral will be on Friday 14th August and we hope to hold a joint service of thanksgiving for him and Veronica in October.

Adrian

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**.

MALAWI In your prayers, please take time to remember the people of South America, the Middle East and Africa as cases of Covid-19 start to soar in all three areas. Thank you. *Fiona*

Prayers continue....

Although our buildings are closed, our prayers continue. Our Ministry Team pray regularly for the church and for all its congregation members, as well as for the wider church family and the local community. Prayer is God's gift to us, and releases his power into situations and people's lives in ways that are often beyond our understanding or imagining.

If you would like to be prayed for, or have on your heart someone ill or in need, then do please let us know. In the first instance contact Adrian or Matthew in confidence. We will ask if you would like a name added to the prayer requests on the newsletter or to our 'continuing prayer list', or if you would prefer not to share your request more widely.

We will pray alongside you for two weeks and look expectantly for God at work. And of course, do pray yourselves—God is listening!

NEWS OF MATTHEW'S ORDINATIONS AS A PRIEST

Now that Matthew is a year into his curacy with us it is time for him to be ordained not just as a Deacon but also as a Priest. The ordination service (usually at the end of June) has been rescheduled for either 12th or 13th September so do please pray for Matthew and his fellow deacons as they wait in anticipation.

When can we re-open our church buildings?

Please be encouraged! At some point we *will* be re-opening our buildings and re-starting worship together! The Government's review of our local lockdown later this coming week will determine what sort of timescale we can use, but our PCC has already met and agreed the steps we need to take towards making it possible once again to worship in our church – once we have the green light.

August will be time to prepare and to help us it would be very valuable to have your views through our questionnaire. It's still available on our website or directly from Adrian. Full details are in the notes that come with the questions. Very many thanks to everyone who has already completed and returned the questionnaire.

Even when we can meet together, no doubt our life as a church will look and feel very different. It is difficult to feel anything but unhappy and disappointed about this, but as you look ahead do remember how faithful God has been to his people over many centuries of turmoil in the past. Kingdoms and empires have come and gone; there have been wars, famines and plagues before; and society has changed beyond recognition between generations – but our God has remained faithful and true, walking with his people through all these circumstances and upheavals. We can be confident that his loving care will continue and we will never lose his presence, help and friendship in our lives.

“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever”
(Hebrews 13.8)

Adrian

To assist with the 'Returning to Public Worship' survey recently forwarded, if you prefer to send responses online instead of via the post, please click this link to be taken to the survey.

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/8HWXKXG>

Collect & Reading for the Seventh Sunday of Trinity

The Collect

Lord of all power and might,
the author and giver of all good things:
graft in our hearts the love of your name,
increase in us true religion,
nourish us with all goodness,
and of your great mercy keep us in the same;
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.
Amen

Romans 8:26-39

²⁶The Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. ²⁷And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

²⁸We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. ²⁹For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. ³⁰And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

³¹What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? ³²He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? ³³Who will bring any charge against God's

elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. ³⁵Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶As it is written,

‘For your sake we are being killed all day long;
we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.’

³⁷No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, ³⁹nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

³¹Jesus put before the crowd another parable: ‘The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; ³²it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.’ ³³He told them another parable: ‘The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.

⁴⁴The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

⁴⁵Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; ⁴⁶on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

⁴⁷Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; ⁴⁸when it was full,

they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. ⁴⁹So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous ⁵⁰and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

⁵¹Have you understood all this?' They answered, 'Yes.' ⁵²And he said to them, 'Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.'

The Apostle to the Apostles ***Revd Canon Dr Stephen Foster***

This title the early Church ascribed to Mary of Magdala shows the esteem in which she was held. She is always listed in scripture first in any group of women, as Peter is seen as the primary man of the twelve. She certainly appears to be a follower and financial supporter of Jesus in his earlier ministry and is highlighted as being a witness to Jesus' crucifixion, burial and resurrection.

She is mentioned twelve times in the canonical gospels, that is, more than most of the twelve, and more than any other 'non-family' woman.

She also appears to have a similarly important place in a number of non-canonical gnostic writings including a work called The Gospel of Mary. These gnostic writings highlight not only her own import, but also a tension between her and Peter, a tension seemingly based on gender difference and a vying for position. This unsavoury vying for position is seen in other poor examples of male discipleship in the Gospels we have in our Bibles!

Due to 'confusing' sermons by Pope Gregory 1st at the end of the sixth century, Mary of Magdala is seen to be one and the same person as Mary of Bethany and the sinful woman who

anoints Jesus' feet. There is no evidence of this, despite the Roman Church wanting to maintain such a synergy.

Another interesting theory which has more credibility, is that Mary of Magdala is 'the beloved disciple' of St John. This for some scholars has its merits, as long as we don't extend the thought to her being Jesus' 'lover' or even wife! A very famous scholar with whom I did some work in time past, Raymond Brown disagreed with me... but gently!

I guess the good people of the benefice know all this anyway from years of observing this one of two Patronal Festivals, Mary Magdalen being 25th of July.

Whether this is the case or not, who can fail to know and be really moved by the tension filled beauty of the Johannine Resurrection text telling of the meeting outside the tomb between Jesus and Mary. Her tear filled eyes mistaking Jesus for the more to be 'expected' gardener. However, his voice speaking her name enables her vision to clear and she realises on behalf of all creation, the enormity of what had happened. We can do little better on 25th July to reread this glorious text in John 20, and rejoice with Mary in the power of the resurrection both for her and for each of us.

WORSHIP INFORMATION

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 the BBC Sounds app.

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. 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



DailyHOPE
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 which is safer only **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.

HELP LOCAL SOMALI CHILDREN?

With the pandemic forcing school closure, those whose families do not have English as a first language are most at risk of falling behind in their learning. I have been approached by our nearby Somali community asking for help for primary and secondary aged children to assist with tutoring, either online or, when appropriate, in person. If you have any subject, or English language, skills that you may wish to share, please do think about whether you could spare an hour a week or fortnight, thanks.

For more details please contact Matthew or Somali Parents Association directly- Abdikayf Farah 07853290875 or info@socopa.org.uk

GREEN CHRISTIAN GROUP The South Leicester Christian Partnership have let us know that a new Green Christian Group is being set up in Leicester. Details of the organisation can be found at <https://www.greenchristian.org.uk>. Anyone interested should contact Richard Pickering leicestercity@greenchristian.org.uk

CARE HOME STAFF APPEAL-UPDATE

Sincere thanks to all who kindly donated to the Knighton care staff appeal. We raised in excess of £2400 with donations from parishioners and community alike. We will be distributing £200 each to 12 care homes in the Benefice & ward this week. Particular thanks to St Guthlac's PCC and Cllr March who have been incredibly helpful with the administrative processes. Cllr March has liaised with each of the care homes who have been really touched by the church community's gesture of gratitude which has meant a lot at this particularly challenging time.

TOGETHER in HOPE #togetherInHope

Together In Hope (TIH) is a new project set up by the Diocese of Leicester, the University of Leicester and Leicester City Football Club; it has widespread support from leaders and individuals across sports, business, arts, education, charity, faith and community organisations. Its prime aims are to remind us about the many good news stories that come out of our city and its life and to help communities across the diocese explore the twin themes of togetherness and hope during the pandemic and its aftermath.

The Cathedral will be launching a **Together In Hope** virtual message board, collecting and sharing messages of hope and all churches are being invited to explore with their local communities how best to nurture hope and work together for the common good, under the **Together In Hope** banner over the coming months.

Look out for news of more activities in the coming weeks and get in touch with Adrian if you have ideas about what we could do as a church to help draw our part of the city together in hope.

"Images of Knighton"

Entries Wanted
for
2021 Calendar
Competition



Have you got a photographic eye, or can you paint, draw, create (any medium) an image of Knighton?

Adult and under 18s categories

The panel of judges is made up of a local councillor, artists, photographer & Vicar

Free calendars to successful entrants

Please send high quality original jpeg images by -

Monday 14th September

to **spireappeal@gmail.com**

Queries to Rev. Gough-07754961997



St Mary's Knighton Spire Appeal

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