

ST GUTHLAC'S COMMUNITY NEWS



Parish Church of St Guthlac
Knighton, Leicester LE2 3LF

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



Sunday 22 November 2020

Christ the King

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.

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 or member of the Ministry Team.

I am pleased to report the good news that Father Michael is back at home now, recovering from his fall.
Margaret

PRAYERS FOR THE WORLD

Please remember in your prayers the people of Beirut and all Aid Workers and Charities working in the capital and throughout Lebanon. 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.

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**.

“Whatever the weather”

Last week I heard someone talking about having all four seasons of weather in just one day! I knew what they meant - one of those days that combines all the extremes, both good and bad, and consequently leaves us not really knowing how to respond. I don't think I'm alone in experiencing those sorts of days in relation to my feelings and moods as well as the weather during the pandemic.

We're now into the third week of the second national lockdown and as I write it's still very unclear what will happen when we reach the end, on 2nd December. This uncertainty may be one of the main reasons that we feel so up and down at the moment – most of us feel better when life is planned and relatively predictable.

So, as we don't know what restrictions will apply through Advent and up to Christmas we have been planning services and events that are flexible or that can go ahead regardless. Inevitably Christmas will be different this year, for churches as much as everyone else, but we want to ensure that there is a good chance for everyone to be part of some form of Christian celebration.

As long as we are allowed to worship in church there will be regular services in the run up to Christmas and within the benefice there will be a service on Christmas Eve and on Christmas Day. There will also be special worship recordings online for those who have internet access.

We aim to keep contact with all our neighbours, and especially the families who normally come to share the celebrations with us – through our Christmas card to every household and a 'special delivery' for children to enjoy.

So please remember that above the clouds the sun is still shining - and we celebrate a God who has shown through the incarnation at Christmas, his deep commitment to all people.

“He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous” (Matthew 5.45) so we can be certain that he will be with us all whatever the Christmas forecast.

Yours in friendship and Christ’s service,
Adrian

Weekly Worship during the lockdown

During the new lockdown our church buildings must remain closed for worship together, but that doesn’t mean that our worship must stop! As you can read elsewhere, our online Virtual Worship and Compline will continue through the lockdown. At St Guthlac’s the PCC have decided that our responsibility to care for each other and to ensure safety during a time of rising infection, means our smaller space should not open for individual prayer. However, the larger space at St Mary’s means that the building can open for individual private prayer, each Sunday morning from 9.45am to 11.15am.

As before we will need to wear masks and keep to social distancing guidelines in church, and of course we can’t have any structured or shared worship – but God will still be present and will still meet us there. Do drop in at any point to pray, and leave when you are ready.

Adrian

Collect & Readings for Christ the King

The Collect

Eternal Father,
whose Son Jesus Christ ascended to the throne of heaven
that he might rule over all things as Lord and King:
keep the Church in the unity of the Spirit
and in the bond of peace,
and bring the whole created order to worship at his feet;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen

First Reading: Ezekiel 34.11-16,20-24

Psalms 95.1-7a

Second Reading: Ephesians 1.15-23

¹⁵I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love towards all the saints, and for this reason ¹⁶I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. ¹⁷I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, ¹⁸so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, ¹⁹and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. ²⁰God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. ²²And he has put all things under his feet and has made

him the head over all things for the church, ²³which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

Matthew 25.31-46

Jesus said to his disciples: ³¹“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. ³²All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, ³³and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. ³⁴Then the king will say to those at his right hand, “Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; ³⁵for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.” ³⁷Then the righteous will answer him, “Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? ³⁸And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? ³⁹And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?” ⁴⁰And the king will answer them, “Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.” ⁴¹Then he will say to those at his left hand, “You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; ⁴²for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, ⁴³I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.” ⁴⁴Then they also will answer, “Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?” ⁴⁵Then he will answer them, “Truly I tell you, just as you

did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.”
⁴⁶And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.’

Sheep and Goats

Revd Canon Dr Stephen Foster

The Parable of the Sheep and the Goats as today's Gospel on the Feast of Christ the King is an interesting choice both in itself, but also as in the overall context of judgement.

In the Parables preceding this one, the disciples are told, in their readiness, to prepare for the return if the Lord, using various images...for example, last week, the use of talents seems the most obvious.

Many protestants get uncomfortable with the Sheep and Goats Parable, because it emphasises the link of judgement almost wholeheartedly with 'works' with nothing at all being mentioned about salvation by graceful faith.

Indeed, some conservative scholars attempt to play down the whole story by suggesting it is very 'Matthean' in style, and therefore its link with the Lord may be very tenuous, and compared with the weight of other texts it is an 'exception'.

Well, I struggle with that conclusion, as I struggle with how it is arrived at!

I think there are more helpful ways of looking at this Parable.

Firstly, it is a Parable... and like many of the Parables in the New Testament we are forced to decide 'who' or 'what' we are in its timeless universal scenario.

What sort of soil are we at any one moment in The Parable of the Sower?

Which kind of Servant are we in the Parable of the Talents?

Which character are we most like in the Parable of the Prodigal Son?

The moments change as do our situations which therefore help us determine where we truly fit into these stories.

In this Parable of Judgement, the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats we are asked to decide what sort of 'animal' we are as Christians at any one time. There are only two to choose from, and the context suggests the answer has eternal repercussions.

In a very real sense, who we are is actually determined by ourselves in how we treat the disadvantaged. We come before the Lord as a sheep or as a goat already, and therefore we judge ourselves by the quality of how our faith is or has been expressed in the care of the needy in many and varied ways... a recurrent theme in Scripture.

Our faith needs to issue in self-giving works of love for that faith to be recognised as genuine.

These works seem to be second nature to the sheep, as they don't seem able to recall the specific examples mentioned.

The goats by contrast can't recollect their neglect!

Therefore, it is simply wrong to suggest that Christ the King from his throne arbitrarily judges folk in a way that reminds us of those countless medieval paintings which depict judgement in a rather graphic and fear provoking way.

Here we judge ourselves before the Lord by how our faith is expressed, and his separation of one from the other is, in this story, the justifiable final reaction.

Reflection on Matthew 25.31-46,

Rev Matthew Gough

Here we are at the end of the Church Year, with Advent next week, Christ the King-the High point of the liturgical calendar. I must admit I don't feel very high. I wonder if you like me, have had it with Covid-I hate it. Our worlds have shrunk. As our freedoms and horizons diminished with normal life as we knew it and took for granted gone.

I wonder if we cannot stand the lack of control which the pandemic has brought. Though I note many of parishioners who manage to cope the best, are those who are used to isolation, impairment and restrictions dues to health and mobility conditions.

Our reading today, has weakness at its heart. How we identify with and find Christ amongst the weak, poor, vulnerable and lonely. It's a challenge to the Protestant mind-set as it appears to reward salvation based on good works rather than faith alone, How we look after the 'least' echoes into eternity deciding our destination into heaven or eternal fire. We pay more attention to it as it is the only Eternal Judgement Passage in the Gospel of Matthew and it doesn't appear in the other gospels.

The language of brothers being the least has led some commentators to conclude that Jesus may be talking about his disciples, how we look out for those following Christ matters. And in following Christ, one should suffer and struggle and therefore we should help them, and that is us, then we help each other. Most writes seem to conclude the poor are the poor of society and how we help them, shows how close we are to Christ-the natural outworking of our faith should lead us to help the destitute.

20 years ago, I was working in Israel amongst homeless Russian immigrants. I spent a brief time teaching them English. And the many of the homeless were addicted to drugs and alcohol and often found lying around on benches or slumped on the ground in the Mediterranean sun. One of their community's main leaders was a guy called Alex who himself has gone to Israel from Russia as a missionary to the homeless but himself managing to end up homeless and needing to get himself off alcohol which he did. Christ worked through him and he had the respect and high regard of all the other homeless men. It taught me something about God working in surprising ways even when things do not go as planned, even the ways that Christian plans say they should.

This high point of the Christ the King is in part using this gospel of Matthew as it promises the return of the Son of Man which is the finale of the Christian story. We look forward to a time of Jesus' return. Advent will be a time of preparation. In 2020, we will not have our usual comforts and freedoms, perhaps we will better identify with the least. Perhaps we will see more of Jesus in others, and experience Christ in our own sufferings.

That is the comfort I take. That again and again we most likely find Christ most when we are least and in our own weaknesses. In this time of preparation, may we know Christ as we learn to dwell in a state of vulnerability.

LIVING IN HOPE-YORK ADVENT COURSE

4 Advent Sundays, Starting 29th November 7-8pm. Getting to the heart of Advent's message, how we live our lives in preparation for the return of Christ. We will focus each week on the York Course themes of Living well, Dying well, & and the afterlife (Hell? Heaven?). The big questions we all ask in an enquiring, supportive space, hosted by our Living Waters group. £2 suggested donation for the course book. You can join in over the phone or on Zoom. Contact Matthew to secure a place and a booklet and the joining details.

Email: revgough@gmail.com, or phone/ text 07754961997

CHRISTMAS FAYRE

Thank you to those who have already submitted an order. We are selling out, so please place your order as soon as possible. If you have not got an order form, just phone your order through to Anne & David Hunt.

We have a few items remaining these are:

Christmas Cakes

Christmas Orange Marmalade Medium

Single hyacinth bulb in a bowl

Plum & Cinnamon and Festive Ginger Fruit Cordial

Christmas Wreaths

Festive Face Masks

Wrapping Paper 3, 4 and 5 metres

MAKE YOUR CHRISTMAS GREETINGS GO FURTHER.

For those of you who are planning to write your Christmas cards during lockdown, we would like to let you know that we will, as in previous years, be accepting donations to Bishop Christopher's Malawi charity instead of exchanging Christmas cards with one another. Details of how to donate will follow in a few weeks. Thank you

ST GUTHLAC'S AGM ELECTIONS

Many thanks to Tina Jarvis and David Hunt, who do such a great job as our Churchwardens and were willing to stand for election again at the recent AGM. They were duly elected. Thanks also to Jean Gabbar, Jane Wright and Chris Bullough who were re-elected to the PCC and to Fiona Wingate, who will continue to serve as a representative on the Deanery Synod for a further term. If you would like a copy of the AGM brochure or AGM minutes, please let me know. Lesley Meakin (PCC secretary)

PLANNED GIVING SCHEME

Regular giving is an integral part of our church life supporting our day to day costs, ministry and mission. A good way to achieve this is through a weekly envelope or a monthly bank standing order as part of our Planned Giving Scheme. Scheme details can be obtained from David Hunt. If you are a taxpayer and gift aid your giving, our church can claim an additional 25%.

During the current Coronavirus pandemic please put aside your weekly offerings ready to bring to church when things return to something like normal. The costs of the church are largely unchanged even though we cannot meet, so your regular giving is extremely important to our collective 'health' and the mission of God here.

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.

Each week we will now usually upload a recording of the Sunday service from St Mary's or St Guthlac's onto the Knighton Benefice You Tube channel. This should happen by 1pm each Sunday. Please go direct to

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UChYDSfNmIB2Zamsaz_EdZSq?
or via the website or Facebook page.

Virtual Compline/ Night Prayer at 8pm on a Wednesday.

You can join by just phoning up and inputting the code or using 'Zoom' online. 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 CONNECTIONS

Don't forget to visit the St. Guthlac's Facebook page and website
<https://www.stguthlac-knighton.co.uk>

Please note that this is a new address with an "s" after "http" to denote it is secure connection. If you don't put the "s" in you will still arrive at the website, but your browser may indicate that the site is "not secure".

CONTACT DETAILS

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

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

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

Revd Aphro McCullough

Revd Janet Gasper

Reader: Fiona Wingate

Churchwardens:

David Hunt

Tina Jarvis

churchwardens@stguthlac-knighton.co.uk

Knighton Benefice Magazine: Nigel Siesage
stmaryknighton.magazine@gmail.com

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



2020 Charity Winter Gardens



Let's celebrate our communities and support our local charities at a time they need it most.

Taking part is easy and it's open to everyone



1. **Get creative & decorate** your house, window, front garden or office



2. **Choose a local charity** to support at oldmanandsons.co.uk/charity-winter-gardens



3. **Add your charity QR Code** to your display



4. Passers by can donate to your chosen charity by **scanning the code**

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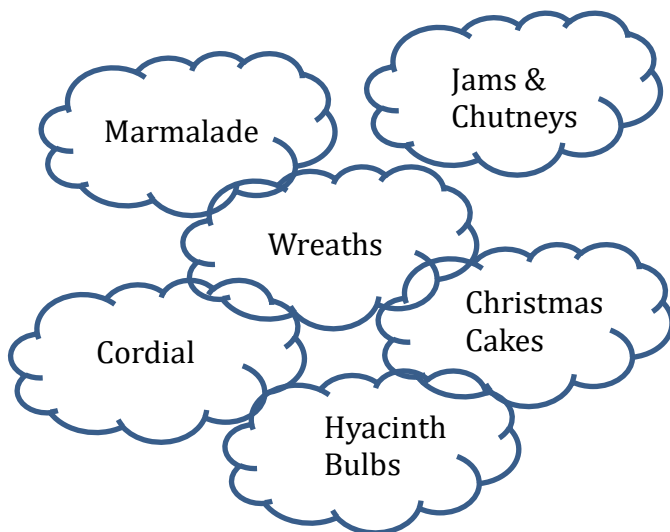
oldmanandsons.co.uk/charity-winter-gardens



Organised by:

OLDMAN AND SONS
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St Guthlac's Virtual Christmas Fayre Home-made Christmas Gifts



Although St Guthlac's won't be able to hold a Fayre this year, we are pleased to be able to offer some of our popular makes and bakes..... **the order line is now open!**

If you would like a copy of the catalogue please email fayre@stguthlac-knighton.co.uk or phone David Hunt for a paper copy.

There is a limited supply of goods so orders will be dealt with on a first come first served basis. **PLEASE SEE p11 FOR ITEMS WHICH ARE STILL AVAILABLE.**

Methods of payment and receipt of goods are detailed on the catalogue. Completed orders will be available from December 6th.