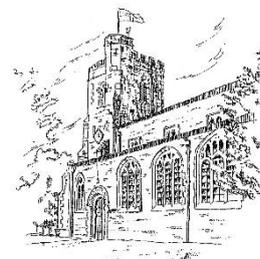


All Saints Church Caddington

Pastoral Letter 10th April 2020



Dear Parishioners,

These are challenging times for everyone, but Easter gives us hope. Christ is risen and nothing can separate us from his love, the love he has for each and every one of us.

As we prepare to celebrate Easter, we know that this is going to be a very different Easter service than we are used to. We usually come together to worship but instead we will worship within our homes alone, with our families or with our partners. But with the aid of technology and through various websites, including the Church of England website (www.churchofengland.org) and the St Albans Diocese website (www.stalbans.anglican.org) we still have the chance to come together to worship.

As you know, Rob has also sent out a link for the combined service on Easter Sunday to help with this. I am very much looking forward to celebrating Easter with as many of you who can join in as possible. It could be that this is Church as we know it for now until we know that it is safe for us to meet together again.

The Bible reading for Easter Sunday is John 20:1-18.

The reading describes how Mary Magdalene visited the tomb and became distraught when she thought Jesus' body had been removed. She ran to tell Peter and on her return to the tomb she saw two angels and someone who she thought was the gardener, who lovingly revealed himself to be Jesus. It was at that moment she knew that death was unable to hold her Lord! Jesus' resurrection is the key to Christian faith. It is the basis for the church's witness to the world.

Jesus is more than a human leader; he is the Son of God, and God is at work in the resurrection of his Son, starting something new, the beginning of a new world promised so long ago.

At this time, we are all seeking new ways to work, to exercise, to shop, new ways to express and live our faith together. So, this Sunday we need to remember that we are filled with hope. We need to remember that Christ always walks with us, and he understands our concerns, and our fears.

Today we still live with social distancing, but that does not mean that we can't reach out to those in need. We just need to do this differently, to protect ourselves and those within our community.

We can phone those who are more vulnerable, to offer comfort, reassurance, a friendly voice to say 'hello', to check to see if they require any groceries, etc. You can be the support at the end of the phone, you can be the friendly voice of hope.

Our prayers have been with Boris Johnson this week as he deals with this virus, but our prayers also reach out to all those who are fighting this virus, to those who have been told to remain at home due to their vulnerable conditions. The families who have lost loved ones.

We pray for the NHS and volunteers helping to do their bit for the communities and the other key workers who are still required to go to work. May God protect them as they carry out their day to day work.

We pray also for those whose businesses are struggling at this time and especially the self-employed.

I would like to finish with a prayer that the Christian Police Association shared with us this week, which I found comforting:

(To be prayed slowly)

Heavenly Father, I wait upon you. I pause, still my mind and still my heart. I wait upon you. I stop, and listen beyond the everyday. I wait upon you. I rest and allow my soul to have space. I wait upon you. Quiet, at rest, held. I wait upon you. And call Abba, Abba Father. I know you have searched me and you know me. I know you are the beginning and the end. I know you are the Redeemer. I wait upon you, allowing your grace to penetrate my whole being. And in this place, close, protected and eternal I find that this grace renews my strength, wipes away my tears and promises new hope. I wait upon you. Amen.

Yours with love and prayers from All Saints,

Lindsey

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