



St Peter & St Paul's Church, Cranfield

NEWS & DIARY

May 2020

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“Peace Be With You”



Of all the ways Jesus could have greeted the apostles when he appeared to them as they were in lockdown in the upper room after Easter Sunday, he chose four simple words, “Peace be with you.”

During these unprecedented times, as we too face lockdown, Jesus sends us that

greeting today and every day. A greeting that will help us as we face troubling circumstances, a greeting that will help us as we struggle not to get swallowed up by anxiety or anger or fear.

As we imagine Jesus speaking those words they bring a quiet confidence to our hearts that can guide us as we face these challenging times. The peace of Jesus depends not on the events of our day but on the boundless love of the Lord.

We are reminded of that boundless love when we read stories of the heroism and the generosity of so many as they battle against the coronavirus to comfort others even in their dying moments. I was humbled by the story of a nursing home manager who fought back tears as she described the commitment of her staff: “No one dies alone in our home,” she said.

In Matthew 20:16 Jesus said “He who is last shall be first”. If the coronavirus pandemic has taught us anything, I hope it will be how much we rely on so many of our low paid workers: the nurses, the carers, the supermarket staff, the binmen and many others whom society has put last – we now realise that they are first in the line of battle. We are seeing on a regular basis how many have “laid down their lives for their friends” (John 15:13). Greater love has no one than this.

As we seek to find the peace of Jesus in our lives I heard some good advice in a recent online sermon. When you get up in the morning, before you listen to the news or read the newspaper, pick up the Bible and read a passage from the New Testament; this will set you in the right frame of mind to deal with the horrors surrounding us.

May the Peace of the Lord be with you.

Trevor Dimmock

A big thank you to Rev Caroline Weaver, the Methodist Minister, who is kindly sending uplifting and thoughtful reflections for each Sunday and to Chris Hartley who adds these to our church website, along with any other streamed services he finds.

The Rainbow – Symbol of Thanks & Hope

Paintings and drawings of rainbows, with messages of thanks for the NHS, have been popping up in windows around the village. These turn our thoughts to those who have, so tragically, given their lives caring for others, and to those who continue to put themselves at risk as they continue to work on the front line in this battle against an unseen enemy. As Trevor reminds us, those who serve us in so many ways should have our deepest thanks.



The rainbow has another significance in the Bible. When Noah and his family and all of the creatures who had survived the flood, emerged from the ark, God spoke to Noah. We can read about His covenant in Genesis 9: 8-17: “I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh: and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh.” (*Ch 9: vs 14,15*)

The old testament passages, telling the story of Noah and the ark (Genesis chapters 7, 8 & 9 up to v 19) are the ones chosen in the Lectionary for the first three Sundays in May. I wondered what the association might be with this season which leads up to the Feast of Pentecost on the last Sunday.

The Jewish Feast of Pentecost – Shavuot – was also known as the Feast of Weeks as it occurred seven weeks (a week of weeks) after the Passover. It was primarily a thanksgiving for the first fruits of the wheat harvest. Hellenistic (Greek) Jews gave it the name of Pentecost from the Greek meaning fiftieth day. During the Hellenistic period (from Alexander the Great 323BC until 31BC when the Roman Empire became supreme) the ancient festival also became a day of renewing the Noahic covenant.



After the destruction of the Temple in 70AD offerings could no longer be brought to the temple and the focus moved to the giving of the Law on Sinai.

The Christian Holy Day of Pentecost is celebrated 50 days after Easter Sunday and commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles, when they were together in Jerusalem, celebrating Shavuot.

Dr Marjorie Cotton

Captain Tom Moore

Captain Tom, a veteran of WW2, has been uplifting our spirits during these harrowing times. He has put Marston Moretaine on the map! He will have celebrated his 100th birthday on 30th April and raised more than £25 million for NHS charities by his walking 100 laps of his garden and still going strong. He has taken part in a recording of “You’ll Never Walk Alone” with Michael Ball and an NHS choir. He has distantly opened the Nightingale Hospital in Harrogate. I hope he can find HM the Queen’s card among the more than 30,000 cards which the Royal Mail are delivering! In The Times on 17th April: “How fitting that one of the heroes to emerge from this crisis is someone who, campaign medals glinting on his chest in the spring sunshine, served his country throughout its last epic battle eight decades ago. It is not just his tenacity that endears and impresses; it is his impeccable manners, modesty, good humour and optimism. “Tomorrow is going to be better than today, even though today was a good day.”

Friday 8th May – VE Day 75th Anniversary

The early spring bank holiday was moved so that the nation could celebrate this anniversary, although sadly it seems that most of the plans for public commemorations and celebrations will have to be cancelled. VE Day marks the ending of the Second World War on this day in 1945. At the news of Germany's surrender, crowds took to the streets. In Cranfield the focal point was outside the Swan. Pearl Cartmill, who attends our church, lived in the East End of London and was there to celebrate with the crowds and soldiers as they danced in the streets. She was 16 at the time. There was no rowdiness, just spontaneous good humour and enjoyment. She joined the crowds as they thronged to see King George VI and Queen Elizabeth on the balcony of Buckingham Palace. She returned home in the early hours on the "milk train" and was met by a very worried Mum and Dad!

Reflective Diary for May 2020

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21st May – Ascension Day

Acts 1: 1-11 You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. (vs 8, 9)



Luke 24: 44-53 "I am sending you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high." Then he led them out as far as Bethany and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and they were continually in the temple blessing God. (vs 49-53)

Sunday 24th May – The Seventh Sunday of Easter – One with the Father

1 Peter 4: 12-14 & 5: 6-11 This passage includes our Motto Text. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you in due time. Cast all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. Discipline yourselves; keep alert. (Ch 5: 6-8)

John 17: 1-11 Jesus' words to his disciples at the Last Supper referring not only to the disciples but to us. I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. (vs 20, 21)

Sunday 31st May – Day of Pentecost

Acts 2: 1-21 When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divide tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the spirit gave them ability. (vs 1-4)

John 20: 19-23 When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. (vs 19, 20)

We need the Holy Spirit, the unseen Power of God, more than ever in these uncertain times. May His Love heal us, our nation and our world.

Reflective Diary for May 2020

The following are the chosen bible readings from the Lectionary in "Common Worship", following the Church's year, with some selected verses.

Sunday 3rd May – The Fourth Sunday of Easter – Jesus The Good Shepherd

1 Peter 2: 19-25 He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that free from sin, we might live in righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls. (vs 24,25)

John 10: 1-10 "I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved. I came that they might have life, and have it abundantly. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep." (vs 9-11)

Jesus needs us to be His ambassadors today, so that by our lives and witness, through His love, we can help to bring people back to the Shepherd.



Sunday 10th May – The Fifth Sunday of Easter – We must carry on His work

1 Peter 2: 2-10 Peter describes us as "living stones" and Jesus as being the stone the builders rejected but who became the cornerstone.

John 14: 1-14 This wonderful passage is often read at funerals as we have the promise that Jesus is going to prepare a place for us in the kingdom. He first tells us that we should not let our hearts be troubled (vs 1-4).

Very truly I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will also do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it. (vs 12-14)

If we get rid of "self" we can become channels for Jesus, doing His work today.

Sunday 17th May – The Sixth Sunday of Easter – Jesus promises the Holy Spirit

1 Peter 3: 13-22 In your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be ready to make your defence to anyone who demands from you an account of the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and reverence. (vs 15, 16)

John 14: 15-21 If you love me, you will keep my commandments, and I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you for ever. This is the Spirit of Truth, which the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you. (vs 15-17)

They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me: and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them. (v 21)

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