



*Welcome to*  
St John the Baptist, Midsomer Norton  
**The 5th Sunday of Lent**  
**Passion Tide Begins**  
**21.03 2021**

**Sunday Services on YouTube**

During lockdown we will be recording and uploading the 9.30 service to YouTube. You will be able to watch the service from around 11am each Sunday. The link to our YouTube channel is on the front page of the [church website](#).

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***Please pray for:-***

**The Residents of:** Rock Road,, North End, Burlington Road, Florida Terrace & Wishford Mews.

**The Sick:-** Miranda Cooper, Rose Stenner, Paul & Margaret Knott, Irene Leet, Fr Roy Boots, Nicholas Hambleton, Betty Chiplin, Ethan Horwood, Patricia Flagg, Pat Gilham, Bishop Peter Hancock, Vince Marriot, Christopher Watts, Faye McDermott, John Norman, Joan Martindale.

**The Departed:** Daphne Spooner

**Years Mind:-** (S) Winifred Lilly, Maud Rogers, Alice Goldsmith, Philip Dentus, Peter Garvey, Ronald Hobbs, David Fisher (M) Marian Gill (T) Agnes Holmes, Frederick Elvin (W) James Nott, Richard Bowen (T) Ada Turner, Christopher Sobey, Arthur Tincknell (F) Peter Hickmott, Glenys Appleton (S) Jennifer Broadhurst.

## **The Collect**

Most merciful God,  
who by the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ  
delivered and saved the world:  
grant that by faith in him who suffered on the cross  
we may triumph in the power of his victory;  
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.

## **Reading from Jeremiah chapter 31 verses 31-34**

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt – a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, ‘Know the Lord’, for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.  
Blessed are those who have endured temptation;  
they have stood the test and will receive the crown of life. *James 1.12*

## **Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John chapter 12 verses 20 – 33**

Among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, ‘Sir, we wish to see Jesus.’ Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. Jesus answered them, ‘The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honour.

‘Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say – “Father, save me from this hour”? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name.’ Then a voice came from heaven, ‘I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.’ The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, ‘An angel has spoken to him.’ Jesus answered, ‘This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. Now is the judgement of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.’ He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.

This is the Gospel of the Lord,  
**Praise to you, O Christ**

### **A Reflection from Fr Guy**

*“Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies it bears much fruit.”*

Questions of life and death. Big questions. Questions which bind the whole of humanity together. Questions which our modern culture struggles to confront.

Questions which many of us try to avoid. Questions which many are having to face during the Coronavirus pandemic.

Why do people have to die? Why do some die tragically young? Why does death often come so suddenly, out of nowhere; here today and gone tomorrow? Why is it that “the good”, so often, “die young”, whilst others who long for death, and whose lives, on the face of it, seem to have little to offer, hang on for years?

Difficult questions about the value of each human life, and its quality. Uncomfortable questions, which tempt us to pass judgement on the lives of others, to assess “usefulness” and “meaning” and “purpose”. Painful questions, which at first invite, and then force, us to face up to our own lives, their usefulness, meaning and purpose, in the face of our inescapable death.

Mysteries, which I, for one, am content not to try and explain. I can't. I don't know. But I believe I know someone who does.

Jesus knew the value of death because he knew what came next. He understood how his own death would open for us the treasures of the kingdom of God, and our place within it. He knew this in advance since, according to our Gospel writer, John, he had lived within its realm before, in John's words, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God.” He was preparing the way, giving us a different meaning to death, as an inescapable fact of life, And, as ever, he was using an example from the everyday, natural world, which they, and we, can see, and know to be true from our own experience.

At one level he was talking about himself and the experiences he would undergo for us: treatment which appalled his followers, because they could not imagine any good coming from the loss of their Master. Jesus knew that all the promises of God could not come to fruition until he had fulfilled all that was asked of him; God could not make all things new without his obedience.

But he was also talking about human experience in general. How many times have we had to experience a loss before we could fully appreciate a fruit of life we would not otherwise have been granted? The leaving of something, or having something taken away, or someone, important to us, when we thought we had lost our world, but later discovered a newness of life coming to birth out of the loss. But it still seems like death each time it happens.

We might easily ask the question of God, “But why must I lose before I can gain, why can’t I just move into another realm of being without hurting?” Jesus himself asked the same question of his “Father”; but he himself refuted the possibility of avoiding his fate, in declaring that accepting God’s will glorified God’s name, a mystery which he understood and we must trust.

In his teaching Jesus always urges us to growth, to keep learning in our knowledge of God, to move forward willingly, to prepare ourselves for a truly Christian life. To advance sometimes means leaving things behind in order to do so, and to find in our losses a closer unity with Jesus, a greater freedom to become the people God had intended from our birth. We need to try to accept what is, instead of what might be, or could be; and to try to believe in what will be if we dare proceed in the way given to us, as willingly as we can and with trust that God will take us through to another and better place.

This goes for all the losses of our lives, as well as the acceptance of our ultimate loss, on this earth, which will see us safely home, our eternal lives saved, as Jesus promised. The surrender of ourselves to God’s will and our willing acceptance of the responsibilities of discipleship are just as pleasing to the God who makes all things new in us, too. And, if we falter, we need only look to the natural world which surrounds us, and of which we are a part, for reassurance that God’s promises are true and eternal.

*“Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies it bears much fruit.”*

## **Prayers of Intercession by Beth Davies**

Heavenly Father, as your family we ‘virtually’ gather together today, not because we have to but because we want to. We offer you our worship, our prayers and our lives in service to you and to our neighbour  
Let us pray for our world and for humanity, acknowledging the need we have for God’s help in all we do. Our world is torn about by conflict and war and

now by this pandemic that we all face but where some countries will struggle to get the vaccine they need and are dependent on other richer nations for help. We pray for those who suffer discrimination, whether it be race, colour or creed, remembering that our Lord too suffered pain and death because of fear and pride and that he has equal love for all mankind.

Lord in your mercy, *hear our prayer*

We pray for the church, for Justin our Archbishop, for Bishop Peter as he prepares for retirement and for Bishop Ruth and for all clergy in our diocese and especially for Guy as he leads us in worship through this pandemic time and in our preparation for Easter.

We pray for our Queen and for her family. We pray for our political leaders that they may feel your guidance as they make decisions on our behalf especially during this time of pandemic.

Lord in your mercy, *hear our prayer*

As the trees start to burst into leaf and the flowers become so abundant, make us more aware of the beauty of your creation which is constantly renewing itself. May we act as worthy stewards of our world, treading lightly, reverently and considerately as we go about our daily tasks.

Lord in your mercy, *hear our prayer*

Dear Lord, we pray for our neighbours, may we be watchful and considerate to their needs and we especially pray for the residents of Rock Road, North End, Burlington Road, Florida Terrace and Wishford Mews.

Heavenly Father we pray for all those who are sick at this time, especially those who have Covid or are struggling to cope with the after effects of this disease. We pray for those who care for the sick whether in hospital or at home and we especially pray for those of our church community who have asked for our prayers:- Miranda Cooper, Rose Stenner, Paul & Margaret Knott, Irene Leet, Fr Roy Boots, Nicholas Hambleton, Betty Chiplin, Ethan Horwood, Patricia Flagg, Pat Gilham, Bishop Peter Hancock, Vince Marriot, Christopher Watts, Faye McDermott, John Norman and Joan Martindale. May they feel your loving presence with them

Lord in your mercy, *hear our prayers*

We pray for the life of Daphne Spooner who has recently died, and we ask for your loving support to be with her family at this time.

In our years mind we remember the lives of (S) Winifred Lilly, Maud Rogers, Alice Goldsmith, Philip Dentus, Peter Garvey, Ronald Hobbs, David Fisher

(M) Marian Gill (T) Agnes Holmes, Frederick Elvin (W) James Nott, Richard Bowen (T) Ada Turner, Christopher Sobey, Arthur Tincknell (F) Peter Hickmott, Glenys Appleton (S) Jennifer Broadhurst.

As they lived in faith may they now find eternal rest with Christ our Saviour.

Lord in your mercy, *hear our prayer*

And so, rejoicing in the fellowship of Mary, John and all the Saints, we commend ourselves and the whole of creation to Your unfailing love.

Merciful Father, *accept these prayers for the sake of Your son, our Saviour Jesus Christ.*

## **Post Communion**

Lord Jesus Christ, you have taught us  
that what we do for the least of our brothers and sisters  
we do also for you:  
give us the will to be the servant of others  
as you were the servant of all,  
and gave up your life and died for us,  
but are alive and reign, now and for ever.

**Amen**

## **THIS WEEK**

|                          |                 |  |
|--------------------------|-----------------|--|
| <b>TUESDAY</b> 23 March  | 10am – 12 Noon  | Private Prayer   |
| <b>THURSDAY</b> 25 March | 7.00pm – 8.30pm | Lent course via zoom                                   |
| <b>SUNDAY</b> 28 March   | 9.30 am         | <b>Palm Sunday</b><br>Eucharist with Blessing of Palms |

**Easter Garden.** If you would like to create the Easter Garden under the High Altar please let me know. Many thanks, Guy

**Moving House.** After 11 very happy years, Pat and Tony Daniels have decided to move closer to their two daughters and their families in Kent. Any move is a huge venture, but they know that the time is right for them to move on. They will miss so many good friends, particularly those who are part of the St John's congregation.

**John Norman** is slowly improving in hospital and is hoping he will be discharged in a couple of weeks.

**Pat Flagg** is improving well and hopes that after 18 months home confinement she will be able to get back to church before too long.

### **Because of Covid Restrictions**

A reminder to let Carol know by email or phone if you hope to be able to come to our 9.30am service on Sunday 28 March ([carolmoore226@yahoo.com](mailto:carolmoore226@yahoo.com) or 01761 412226

*For further information please refer to our website [www.stjohnschurch.org.uk](http://www.stjohnschurch.org.uk)*

## **Third National COVID 19 Lockdown**

In the light of guidance from Her Majesty's Government, the Church of England and the Diocese of Bath and Wells, our Parish Church will be open for public worship, private prayer, and funerals.

The Parish Eucharist will be celebrated on Sundays at 9.30am. This this will be recorded and streamed on our YouTube channel at 11.00am.

The church will be open for private prayer on Tuesdays from 10.00am to 12noon.

During lockdown the population are asked to stay at home. Public worship is permitted so long as the provision can show that it is COVID-safe.

We encourage everyone to follow this guidance:

Persons with any symptoms should not attend church.

Persons shielding (Clinically Extremely Vulnerable) should not be in wider circulation during the third national lockdown (commenced 5<sup>th</sup> Jan 2021).

We advise that anyone with an underlying health condition such as asthma or heart disease or in the clinically vulnerable group through age (70 years of age and over) should not attend public worship at this time.

Definitions for CEV and CV are available on the [NHS website](#).

Thank you for your cooperation and stay safe.