

the foreseeable future. Our community, along with the whole nation, began to travel through the storm of lockdown and social isolation with an acute awareness of our frailty and vulnerability. As has often been said, we are all in the same storm but not everyone is in the same boat and the effects of Covid-19 act as a threat multiplier to those who live in poverty, experience homelessness and struggle with their mental health.

And yet there is no darkness so dark that the Light of Christ cannot shine. At Lighthouse we have been able to adapt to the storm of Covid-19 by providing pastoral and practical support on the doorsteps of adults across the city who have multiple and complex needs. This looks like the hungry being delivered food parcels, the lonely getting a daily phone call, working alongside emergency services to calm the distressed, providing online church services and devotions for those with internet access and offering 1:1 pastoral care for the most vulnerable .

Much has changed, but love remains. We value your prayers in this season immensely. Below are a few prayer requests.

Please pray:

for those struggling with their mental health and addiction in this time when a lot of the support systems are no longer available to them in the same way. Pray that the Prince of Peace would draw close and chaos would be kept at bay.

for those who are vulnerable to domestic violence, for protection, support and courage to break free from harmful relationships.

for wisdom, grace and discernment as a team to know how best to support and respond to individuals presenting in distress and with complex needs at this time.

for God's protection against the coronavirus, as a community with many in poor physical health we are conscious of how vulnerable we are in this regard and ask that God would hide us in the shadow of His wings

ASCENSION DAY Thursday 21st May

Readings for Ascension Day

Acts 1:1-11 and Luke 24: 44-53

“THY KINGDOM COME” is an annual worldwide call to prayer in the 11 days between Ascension Day and Pentecost (Sunday 31st May 2020)

Download the Church of England's free Daily Prayer app for “Thy Kingdom Come”. Or get Alexa or Google home to “Ask the Church of England for today's ‘Thy Kingdom Come’.



All Saints' notices for Sunday 17th May 2020

Collect for Sixth Sunday of Easter

God our redeemer,
you have delivered us from the power of darkness
and brought us into the kingdom of your Son:
grant, that as by his death he has recalled us to life,
so by his continual presence in us he may raise us to eternal joy;
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.

Post Communion

God our Father,
whose Son Jesus Christ gives the water of eternal life:
may we thirst for you,
the spring of life and source of goodness,
through him who is alive and reigns, now and for ever. Amen

Readings for 6th Sunday of Easter

Acts 17:22-31 and John 14:15-21

What is love?

I have spent the week recording people's thoughts to the question; “What is love?” It is not an easy question to answer! I have also been amazed at the variety of responses. Our Gospel reading comes right after that defining event of Jesus' ministry, the Last Supper. Jesus sets out a new commandment for his disciples; “Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.” The love that Jesus showed in his life, death and resurrection did mirror much of what my interviews discovered. People spoke about service to others, giving, sacrifice and humility. During the Passover, the great celebration and remembrance of God freeing his people, Jesus spells out God's heart for his creation, the driving force behind it all, the true law of God is love! Most of us know that there are different kinds of love. In many languages there are specific words for different types of love. For example in Greek we have the word

Agape for God's love, the deep bond in a Christian community and Eros for romantic and sexual desire. Through my interviews it became apparent that love was often at its most intense when it was confronted with a person who was difficult to love or had caused deep hurt. The 'tough love' that we see in the sacrifice of Jesus and God's self giving (Kenosis) to the world is maybe the most difficult commandment to keep. If Jesus offers a new commandment to love, and if love looks like Jesus, then we are brought to the realisation that it is in bearing suffering that some of our deepest and most disturbing experiences of God's love are found. Even Jesus was betrayed at the very feast where he was celebrating freedom, yet returned to those who abandoned him, and loved them.

How can we live a love like that? God does not leave us alone with the task of love. We are left God's Spirit as a consoler, comforter, convincer, one who strengthens, our defender (advocate), teacher and provider of wisdom. As Alan Stanley said in the online service last week, God's home is not a future place of bliss, a reward for a good life, but the living presence of God, now, today here! This is our home. We are not left orphaned in the world, and God is not left helpless unable to act, because he can find a home in us. *Bob*

A prayer and blessing

Thank you Father for showing us the depth of your love through Jesus.
Help us to love you, ourselves and those in need.

When those we need to love are difficult;
when we struggle to see the good in ourselves;
when darkness clouds our thoughts;
when it is easier to hurt others than bear their pain;
in all things may we find our home in you
and you find your home in us.

Strengthen, challenge, comfort, disturb
and give us your peace we pray;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among us and remain with us always. Amen.

A hymn for this Sunday - Great is thy faithfulness

Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father;
there is no shadow of turning with thee;
thou changest not, thy compassions, they fail not;
as thou hast been thou forever wilt be.

Refrain:

Great is thy faithfulness! Great is thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see:
all I have needed thy hand hath provided--
Great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

A choice of Sunday services

You have two options. Firstly at 10am Alan Stanley leads the telephone dial in service using the 0330 336 0036 number. And if you are quick you can still make it to our live streamed service on YouTube at 10.30am. This Sunday we are exploring the theme of love in our all-age service which will be streamed live on the Benefice YouTube channel here: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC2ID3IKifaJisVxxttTBJJg> from Bob, Jess, Reuben, Jacob and Rose's house. You can also catch up with it later. Plenty to enjoy for all ages. Post service coffee and catch up will be via Zoom at 11:30am. The links will be emailed out on Saturday. For information or prayer requests contact Bob on 07885 386932.

Prayer

If you would like to pray with us via Zoom on a Thursday morning, please let Bob or Kathryn know. With the lifting of some social distancing restrictions, Bob will also be praying every Sunday evening in All Saints' at 9pm, continuing our prayers for the families of those bereaved during this time. If you would like a prayer said for someone please let me know. Tel. 07885 386932 / rev.bob.bailey@gmail.com.

For further information;

prayer, pastoral care, practical help or some conversation contact;

Revd Bob Bailey 0113 260 7721 rev.bob.bailey@gmail.com

Leslye Thomas 0113 281 2488 leslyeanglican@btinternet.com

Carole Cassidy 0113 281 2149 carole.cassidy39@gmail.com

Online links;

including daily reflections and Sunday worship.

<http://www.barwickcofechurch.co.uk>

Lighthouse

A message from Jon Swales shared with the St Philip's congregation via email last week which I thought would provide a good focus for our prayers this week.

Thanks to Alan for sharing this with us:

Lighthouse West Yorkshire is a hope filled Christian community for those who have been battered and bruised by the storms of life. For the past six years we have held a cafe-style church service and community meal in St George's Crypt every Sunday lunch time, accompanied by discipleship groups, drop ins, bible studies and extensive pastoral support throughout the week. Our community has grown to around 150 people who would call Lighthouse their church and it has been a joy to see lives being changed, community being formed and the love, peace and hope of Christ being experienced in a very real and tangible way

However, things changed dramatically with the outbreak of Covid-19. As with all churches, we found ourselves no longer able to meet together physically and our services, bible studies and drop ins that had been a lifeline for so many put on hold for